

Bulletin for Sunday **19th April 2020**

Dear Friends

While I am really missing being able to worship with you all in person, I am glad that at least some of us can share a few minutes on a Sunday morning. It is also a blessing that there are services available each week, broadcast on TV, radio, or online. I hope everybody can find something which speaks to them and makes them feel they are truly worshipping, even if the personal fellowship is missing.

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Hymn: Good Christians all, rejoice and sing! (Rejoice & Sing 238)

Prayer Living God
This is the day that you have made,
this beautiful Spring day that you have given us.
May we rejoice and be glad in it,
and may we be open to you -
the maker and lover of life. Amen

Reading: John 20: 19-31

Reflection: The doors were locked for fear. There are many parts of the Bible which I feel I understand quite well... until something happens which makes me understand them better. This Easter the idea of staying in, and fearing what is outside, has taken on a new relevance. Just think about it...

And the idea of somebody suddenly appearing among them despite the locked doors? Absolutely terrifying. Those locked doors should have kept them safe, kept them hidden, kept them alive. They thought that their friends were all inside, and their enemies all outside. But they had forgotten Jesus. He can't be kept out - or kept in, for that matter. Yet his ability to join them despite all their security precautions wasn't a threat - it was the greatest reassurance they could possibly have had!

Doors and locks have their place, but they can't begin to compare with the awareness of God's presence with us - with the sense of Christ's "Peace be with you". May we have that awareness, that sense of peace, this coming week.

Amen

Hymn: Come, living God, when least expected (R&S 354)

Prayer Living God, we are overwhelmed with things to pray for:
so many people suffering...
so much fear; so much anxiety; and so much grief.....
so much uncertainty about the future...
NHS workers, and carers and other keyworkers
stretched to impossible lengths and risking their lives...
Living God, come to us all now,
and make your presence felt wherever you are needed:
whether the doors are locked or not,
whether people recognise you or not,
come... and bring your peace. Amen

Hymn: Put peace into each others hands (R&S 635)

Go in peace, to care and to pray,
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you and with all those you love
now and always. Amen

News of our church family and wider communities

We think of Liz, whose father died on Friday. Please hold Liz and her family in your prayers.

Please also think of Irene and Dave. We hold in our prayers all those missing loved ones at the moment.

Someone recently asked the question, "What do you miss at the moment about having a church building?" Lots of people answered. Some missed nothing at all, and were happy not to have a building to constrain worship; others (probably most) missed not the building but the fellowship, the people, very much; and a third group missed the sensory experience of the building itself - the light, the smells, the resonance of sound, the sense of calm and tradition. Any thoughts - what are you missing about our buildings (if anything)? And don't forget to let me know if anyone else wants a hymn book!

Have a blessed week.

Anne Lewitt