

REFLECTIONS

A Reflection

In Peter's first ever sermon on the Day of Pentecost, he seeks to convince the crowds of Jesus' resurrection and its significance for all people. Some weeks before, two disciples of Jesus, most likely husband and wife, meet a mysterious stranger as they make their sorry journey home, carrying their broken hopes and dreams. The stranger accompanies them as they go, and to their surprise, they find his company hugely comforting. Their misguided hope had been for a Messiah who would save his people from foreign oppression. But the stranger puts their recent experience in the context of the whole of their scriptures, showing that the true Messiah must suffer, die and rise again, in order to save them from the deeper bondage to human sin. The result is that their hearts burn within them as they talk with him on the road. We too can walk that road to Emmaus. In prayer we can air our sorrows, shortcomings and questions, discovering that, whatever our confusions, Jesus always walks with us. As we listen for his voice he will surely comfort us, helping us to make sense of our own story, and warming our hearts.

Going deeper

On reaching Emmaus the disciples urge the stranger to remain with them. It is only when they sit down to eat that they recognise him as Jesus. The taking, blessing, breaking and sharing of bread reminds us of The Last Supper in the upper room. However, Cleopas and his companion had not been present then, but these were surely characteristic actions of their friend at any meal (see the feeding of the 5000), and therefore sparked their recognition. Or it might have been the first sight of the nail marks in Jesus' hands, or simply that God chose *that* moment to reveal his Son to them. Whatever it was, their eyes were opened and he immediately vanished from their sight. Their journey of faith, without sight, had begun, and they hurried back to Jerusalem to share their story. Recall the words or actions of Jesus that most help to strengthen your faith and action.

I wonder...

What does it mean for me to walk by faith and not by sight? (2 Corinthians 5.7)

THIS SUNDAY'S SERVICES ONLINE

Live

9.30am Zoom Holy Communion President: Paula Griffiths

10am Zoom Holy Communion President: John Saxon

Pre-recorded (youtube)

Act of Worship

Leader: Alex Jeewan

Tuesday

5pm Zoom Evening Prayer

BIBLE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Sun 26th	Morning Psalm 23 & 1 Peter 5:1-11 Evening Psalm 48
Mon 27th	Morning Psalm 96 & Luke 1:1-25 Evening Psalm 61
Tue 28th	Morning Psalm 98 & Luke 1:26-38 Evening Psalm 71
Wed 29th	Morning Psalm 105 & Luke 1:39-56 Evening Psalm 72
Thurs 30th	Morning Psalm 136 & Luke 1:57 to end Evening Psalm 73
Fri 1st May	Morning Psalm 139 & James 1:1-12 Evening Psalm 149
Sat 2nd May	Morning Psalm 110 & Luke 2:21-40 Evening Psalm 27

See St Mary's church, SW, website at www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org to find out more.

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The Grapevine

COVERING THE PARISHES OF SAFFRON WALDEN, WIMBISH, DEBDEN, ASHDON AND HADSTOCK.

Third Sunday of Easter
26th April 2020

Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: Acts 2.14a, 36-41

On the day of Pentecost, Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd, 'Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.' Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added to their number.

Gospel: Luke 24.13-35

On that same day, two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' Jesus asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Jesus.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Churches Together Prayer Cycle: In April please pray for: **St Mary's Church of England, St Mary's C of Primary School** The family and friends of those who have died recently: **Dennis Sheldrick, David Davies, Marjorie Hynes, Suzanne Richardson, Roger Morgan**

EVENTS

WITH APOLOGIES, PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS ALL EVENTS ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

NEWS

On Weds 22nd April, The Revd Dr Caroline Curren was licensed by Bishop Roger as Team Vicar with special responsibility for the Parish of Ashdon. The service took place via Zoom with invited representatives from Ashdon and the Saffron Walden Team. A service of welcome will be held at a later date.

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

My heart was warmed this week by Captain Tom Moore's 100th birthday walk. His goal was to raise a £1,000 for NHS Charities but, as I write, the figure has exceeded £26 million, and who knows where it will end. Ground Control - that is, Matt Hancock - has paid tribute to Captain Tom for his astonishing efforts; the Duke of Sussex commented: 'It's not just what he's done, it's the reaction that people have had as well.' This is so true: whether it's giving generously to Tom's fund or other charities, whether it's small businesses re-jigging to produce much needed PPE kit, whether it's major international collaborations to manufacture vaccines, or whether it's children at home making plastic visors for doctors and nurses, it is so heart warming to see individuals and communities reacting to the situation and working for the common good, and it brings us hope. Of course, the same goes for the Church; as we each play our small part through prayer, contact and practical support, we are helping each other through this crisis. Thank you for all that you do to maintain the body of Christ in our area. And we are not alone, of course, for we are each branches on Christ's life-giving vine. If we remain attached to that vine, then his Spirit can flow through us and sustain us. As Christians we have Jesus' promise that he will be with us always.

Captain Tom has teamed up with Michael Ball to make a chart-topping version of the football anthem *You'll Never Walk Alone*, but there is another football anthem, sung on Cup Final day, that is fitting at this time: Henry Francis Lyte's hymn *Abide with me*. We may associate it primarily with funerals, but it deserves wider use, because of its confidence in God's presence in the most testing times. Its first line, inspired by Luke's description of the walk to Emmaus, introduces a verse which we can all use as a prayer: -

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide; The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide. When other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

When we invite Christ to abide with us, he surely will, bringing hope for the future. And when we abide in his love, then we cannot help but love those around us, which may result - like Tom's birthday walk - in far more than we can imagine.

With love and prayers,
Andy Colebrooke

PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Risen Lord Jesus, give me courage to welcome you on the road, that you may abide with me and share my life. Take into your hands the everyday things and the small interests of my life, bless and change them into something beautiful for you.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

SUPPORTING EACH OTHER DURING THE PERIOD OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

We have a team of church members who are ready to help by

- * Collecting essential shopping and medical supplies
- * Providing a regular friendly chat by phone. If you are self-isolating and would like some support or, if you would like to be part of the team who can help, please contact the Parish Office by telephone or email. *Judith Hasler*

PARISH OFFICE The Parish Office is now closed to visitors but we are contactable by telephone and email as usual. **ALL CHURCHES IN THE TEAM REMAIN CLOSED** until further notice in accordance with national guidelines.

EMAIL BULLETINS We are issuing regular email bulletins that highlight information from the website, attach the Grapevine and service sheet and provide the Zoom links for live services that weekend. Please email Dawn at office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org if you would like to be added to the distribution list.

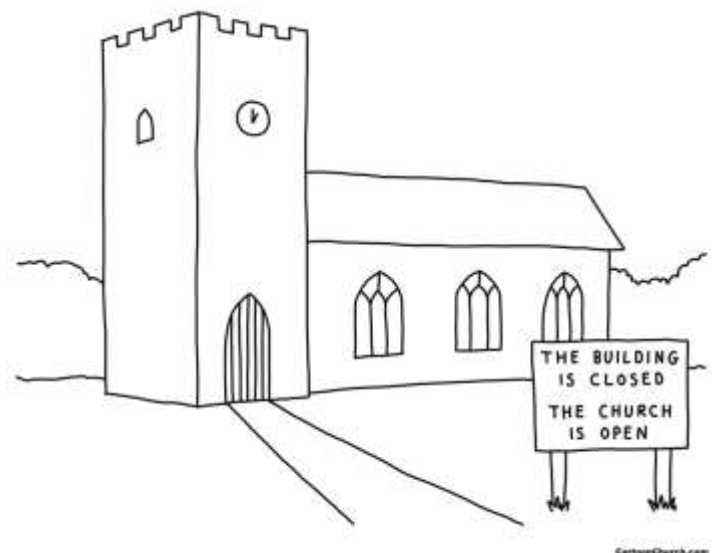
SUNDAY WORSHIP There are several ways of joining in our team worship on Sunday which can be accessed from links on St Mary's Church at Home webpage. * You can watch a pre-recorded 30 minute Act of Worship led by Revd. Alex Jeewan on youtube at any time after Friday, * You can participate in live Zoom Services led from various locations in the team. The service sheet used for these services and Grapevine are also available on the webpage. If you would like technical help in setting up Zoom, please contact Gerald Gardner gerald.gardner@ntlworld.com or Steve Hasler s.hasler@btopenworld.com before Sunday.

May's edition of **PARISH NEWS** is available on the website at <http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/parishnews>

JIMMY'S DONATIONS At this time we are not able to collect our regular donations from St Mary's Church, SW, or make our vegetable delivery. Instead as a church we are giving financial support directly to Jimmy's. If you feel you wish to give to Jimmy's please pop your monetary donations into the Parish Room letter box. *Tim Game*

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: The Bishop of Colchester, the Rt. Revd. Roger Morris will be preaching at a special Team Zoom service on **Sunday 10th May** at 9.30am. All welcome!

CARTOON BY DAVE WALKER



MINISTRY TEAM

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