

REFLECTIONS

A day to remember! It had been a long journey to the furthest north that Peter had ever been, but Jesus obviously wanted some time away from the crowds and with his twelve disciples. They reached a place called Caesarea Philippi, and as they rested Jesus had asked them all, 'Who do people say that I am?' They came up with several different answers from what they had picked up listening to strangers. 'Some think that you are John the Baptist, some say Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the other prophets...' And then Jesus broke in and asked, 'But who do you say that I am?' A moment's silence as they all looked at one another, until their usual spokesman, Peter, said, 'You are the Christ [Messiah] the Son of the living God!'

For three years, from the day that this teacher Jesus had called him to leave his fishing nets and become one of his school, Peter had been on a very steep learning curve. Each day was different. They would all move from place to place, where Jesus would spend long hours teaching often very large crowds. It was very clear from the start that this Jesus, ordinary perhaps in physical appearance, was in fact very different in so many ways. For a start he taught with an assured authority, totally different to the formal repetitive lessons from the religious leaders of the day. And he had powers. They saw him heal all kinds of illnesses and afflictions, he was even able to exercise authority over the winds and waves, as Peter discovered in a very dramatic way! Not only were the enquiring crowds puzzled as to who Jesus was, these twelve were slowly coming to terms with the fact that Jesus was unique. A man like them, yes, but he was also something else. And that was what Peter had articulated that day. 'You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!' Jesus recognised that this was the moment that his Father had finally opened Peter's eyes to see and work out the truth. A day to remember! And it is important to note that 'from that day, Jesus BEGAN to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected, killed and after three days rise again' [Mark 8.31] It is when God reveals to us [we discover] who Jesus is, that we may begin to understand the significance of his cross and resurrection. For Peter and the others it was a sunny day in Caesarea Philippi, for me a rain-soaked Wembley Stadium listening to Billy Graham! Where did your faith story begin?

John Risby

**THIS WEEK'S SERVICES
SUNDAY IN CHURCH**

St Marys, SW 10.00am Holy Communion
President: John Sibson Preacher: Robin King
Little Walden 11.15am Holy Communion
President: Michael Lovegrove
Hadstock 9.30am Holy Communion President: Paula Griffiths
Ashdon 9.30am Holy Communion President: Caroline Currer
Debden 9.15am Holy Communion President: John Saxon

THIS WEEK'S SERVICES ONLINE**SUNDAY**

9.30am Holy Communion President: Chris Bishop
Zoom 11.00am Leader: Service of the Word John Saxon

TUESDAY - Zoom 5.00pm

Evening Prayer Leader: Joe Hordern

WEDNESDAY - Zoom 9.30am Holy Communion

Caroline Currer John Saxon

**NEXT SUNDAY 30th August
SERVICES IN CHURCH**

St Marys, 10am Holy Communion
SW President: Alex Jeewan
Ashdon 9.30am Holy Communion President: Caroline Currer

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

Please 'Like' our Facebook page so we reach more people! Click on the link on our website, or go to:
www.facebook.com/saintmaryschurchsaffronwalden

The Grapevine

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

**Eleventh Sunday after Trinity
23rd August 2020****Collect**

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; 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: Romans 12.1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Gospel: Matthew 16.13-20

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Post Communion

Lord of all mercy, we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace: by our communion keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel and preserve us from all sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Churches Together Prayer Cycle: In August please pray for:
Saffron Walden Baptist Church, R A Butler Schools
The family and friends of those who have died recently:
Elizabeth Jones, Susan Smith, Margaret Curtis
Those who are unwell:
Pamela Bray

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

'O come let us sing to the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
Psalm 95 [The Venite]

Sadly, because of restrictions imposed by the coronavirus, we are not singing hymns in church together. How grateful we are to Oli and all those who are providing music in our services online. It may well be that when we are able to resume normal services that we will appreciate even more the value that hymns, psalms and spiritual songs provide for us in our regular acts of worship. Many of us find that the combination of a memorable tune [a catchy tune!] together with meaningful words can leave an indelible impression in our minds. And whisper it quietly that this leads us to remember words of hymns and songs better than verses from the Bible. People like Charles Wesley saw the value of hymns and music in both a teaching the faith role, as well as a source of great encouragement to the faithful. And in times of great revivals, music has always played a valuable part. Paul wrote to the Colossians, 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thanksgiving in your hearts to God.' [Col 3.16-17]

We thank God for the gift of music, and of hymns, and for those who use their gifts to lead us in worship. We look forward to the day when we can 'come and sing to the Lord' together!

With love and prayers
John Risby

PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

O God our Father, a multitude of the heavenly host sang your praises at Bethlehem, and heaven resounds with your praise in joyful worship, help us to express in word and song, on our lips and in our lives, our thanks and praise for all your love and grace made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

BIBLE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Mon 24th	Morning Psalm 86 & John 1:43-end Evening Psalm 91
Tue 25th	Morning Psalm 89:1-18 & Acts 7:1-16 Evening Psalm 89:19-end & Mark 5:21-34
Wed 26th	Morning Psalm 119:105-128 & Acts 7:17-43 Evening Psalm 91
Thurs 27th	Morning Psalm 92 & Acts 7:44-53 Evening Psalm 94
Fri 28th	Morning Psalm 88 & Acts 7:54-8.3 Evening Psalm 102
Sat 29th	Morning Psalm 97 & Acts 8:4-25 Evening Psalm 104

NEWS

Please note it is **NOW COMPULSORY TO WEAR A MASK** for services in church (if you have an exemption please let a Warden know when entering church). This is government and Church of England instructions. *Gill Caswell*

CHURCH SERVICES Some of our churches are open for services this weekend. Please see the list of services on the back page. In order to book your place at a Sunday Service at St Mary's, please email or telephone the Parish Office before noon on the previous Friday, giving your name, telephone number and postcode. You are welcome to just turn up on the day but, if the new capacity for each church has already been reached, you may not be able to join the service.

PRIVATE PRAYER St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden, is open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday 12-4. All Saints, Ashdon is open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday between 11am and 6.00pm.

EMAIL BULLETINS are issued each week 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.

WORSHIP ONLINE will continue as shown on the back page. There are several ways of joining in our team worship which can be accessed from links on St Mary's Church at Home webpage. <http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/churchathome> You can participate in live Zoom Services around the team. Please note at present there will be no Youtube services. The service sheets and Grapevine are also available on the webpage.

YOU CAN NOW JOIN LIVE WORSHIP BY PHONE - you don't need a computer or tablet. If you would like to know more please contact John Saxon on 541619
debdenwimbishcurate@gmail.com

PRAYER FOR A NEW TEAM RECTOR After our summer break, we resume the process of discernment for the next Team Rector. This will start with special prayers for the selection process and the prospective candidates during Zoom Evening Prayer with an extended time of intercessions on **Tuesday 1st September** at 5pm. All welcome.

THE TRANSITION PROJECT has assisted people looking for work, preparing CVs and giving advice as how to prepare for interviews. In the present climate the Project is looking for additional volunteers to fulfil this role. If you have time, presently on Tuesday mornings, and may be interested in assisting us do ring Gerald Gardner (01799 500543).

"A CHURCH NEAR YOU" This is a charming little book of sketches and comments on 46 local churches by Denis Dunstone, of St Mary the Virgin, Wendens Ambo. It is hoped they will be available in the Tourist Information office from Thursday 20th August. They sell at £10.00 and £7 goes to the PCC, thanks to the generosity of Denis Dunstone. *Joe Hordern*

MINISTRY TEAM

Parish Administrator: Dawn Saxon	01799 506024
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Revd Tim Hardingham	01799 542874
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Revd John Saxon	01799 541619
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