



July 21<sup>st</sup> 2019

**Welcome to St. Peter's, we hope  
you enjoy your time with us.  
Please stay for some  
refreshments afterwards!**

## **When it seems that God is far away**

Today we conclude the sermon series, 'When Life Is Tough.' We have looked at some challenging themes, including suffering, loneliness, relationships, doubt, disappointment, and what it means to receive God's comfort in painful times.

Today we are looking at how we respond when we can't find God in the midst of a crisis. The devotional writer, Nancy Guthrie, deserves the right to talk about this because of the tragedy she experienced, losing two children at six months old through a genetic disorder. So when she writes of great loss and falling into the arms of Jesus, you know she's practiced what she preaches. She writes:

*We live in a world that teaches us: 'The early bird gets the worm,' 'No pain, no gain,' 'There is no such thing as a free lunch,' and 'You get what you pay for.' We're comfortable in this world where people get what they deserve, at least in theory. But when pain invades our lives, we quickly say, 'I don't deserve this!' and claim our right to justice. Believing we have a right to fairness, we feel violated when we think we haven't gotten what we deserve.*

*But if we open our eyes to the rest of the world where most people do not live with even the basics of comfort and security that we enjoy, or if we look back on the living conditions and daily-life realities previous generations lived and died with, we realise that to assume we deserve a life free of loss and pain is unrealistic and arrogant. Our insistence that we don't deserve to suffer betrays our naiveté and narcissism. Just what have we done to deserve the lives we enjoy and the people we love?*

*On the surface, a perfectly fair world appeals to us but would we really want to live in such a world? In a perfectly fair world, there is no room for grace – receiving what you don't deserve. Neither is there room for mercy – being spared from receiving the punishment you do deserve. Suffering may be undeserved, but so is our redemption.*

*A fair world might be a nice place for us to live, but it would only be as nice as we are and we know we're really not that nice. We deserve punishment but receive forgiveness; we deserve wrath but experience love; we deserve death, but God has shown us mercy.*

*Living in a world where we do not always get what we deserve, and one in which we sometimes get what we don't deserve, means that we will suffer loss. But it also means we will receive mercy. We naturally dread pain, but isn't it worth it if it means we will also experience the gift of grace and the release of mercy?*

*Paul*

## Vicar's PA and Project Administrator

Last month, Paul announced that Kismet Barber has been appointed to this post, and she will begin in September. The role involves three days a week for St. Peter's, (two days with an administration focus and one day for Inside Out) and one day each with Workplace Chaplaincy in Derbyshire and Derby City Centre Chaplaincy. We are very pleased that Kismet will be joining our Staff Team, and I know she would appreciate your prayers as she leaves Landau Forte College, where she has worked for over 10 years, and starts work at St. Peter's.

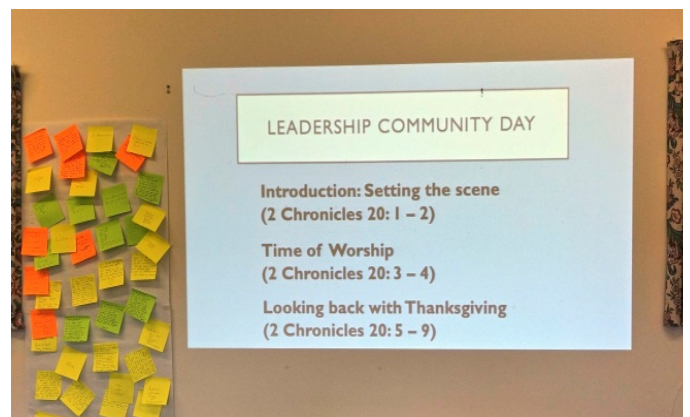


## Leadership Community Day

On Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, members of the PCC spent the day in Bradbourne, near Ashbourne, for a time of prayer and discussion. It is a Doubly Thankful Village, a rare community where no-one was killed in either World War 1 and World War 2. The key passage for the day was from 2 Chronicles 20, an inspirational story where something remarkable and extraordinary happened, and as we discussed the opportunities and challenges we face, we agreed that we too need God to do a mighty work in our midst.

Our day concluded with everyone sharing a closing thought, these included:

- Luke 5 encourages us to 'push out into the deep water'
- Simon Peter denied Jesus, what a challenging situation, but there was still hope
- There is an ebb and flow to personal life, and church life too, and we will survive and grow through these difficult times
- As a church we have received many blessings and face many challenges, but we will see progress through many small changes
- We need to wait on the Lord for His plans to be revealed to us
- Let's look at different ways to pray, such as in groups of 3, and at the same time of each day wherever we are
- We are a diverse community and need to be intentional about getting to know one other – how about sitting somewhere different each Sunday?
- What about an Autumn 'marketing campaign' to connect with people in our parish?
- Isaiah 55 v 5: *Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.*
- Proverbs 3 v 5-6: *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight*



## Archbishops launch Church's social media guidelines and charter

The Church of England has published social media advice aimed at tackling offensive behaviour and misleading content and encouraging a positive atmosphere for online conversations. Archbishop Justin Welby unveiled the social media guidelines at Facebook earlier this month. The guidelines encourage positive engagement across all national Church of England social media accounts.

The charter is centred on the five principles of: truth, kindness, welcome, inspiration and togetherness, and the opportunity for people to sign-up to show they support the principles. It is hoped that people of all faiths and none will use the charter to consider how their own online interactions can affect others, both for good and bad.

Archbishop Justin said: *"Social media has transformed the way we live our lives. As Christians we are called to engage in a way which is shaped by the example of Jesus. As we respond to the call on each of us to be witnesses to Jesus Christ, I encourage all of us to consider how we live our lives as witnesses online. Each time we interact online we have the opportunity either to add to currents of cynicism and abuse or to choose instead to share light and grace. Through these guidelines and charter we can encourage churchgoers, sceptics and those who are surprised to find themselves interested, to be open to think and experience more of the Christian faith."*

These guidelines invite you to agree to:

1. **Be safe.** Safety of children, young people, vulnerable adults must be maintained
2. **Be respectful.** Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, hateful, inflammatory, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.
3. **Be kind.** Treat others how you wish to be treated and assume the best in people
4. **Be honest.** Don't mislead people about who you are.
5. **Take responsibility.** You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, if unsure, don't post it.
6. **Be a good ambassador.** Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.
7. **Disagree well.** Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.
8. **Credit others.** Acknowledge the work of others
9. **Follow the rules.** Abide by terms and conditions of the social media platforms.

### Prayer ...

People wearing a 'Prayer Team' badge would be glad to pray for you. Do not hesitate to ask for prayer, this can be for any concern you have, it needn't be a crisis! We all face difficulties and challenges, and prayer works! Or maybe you would like to thank God for answered prayer. `Whatever your situation, we'd love to pray with you! In an emergency, call Bren (07967 183601), and those on the prayer chain will pray for you.

### IN THE WEEK

**Monday to Friday, 10.00-3.00: Church is open**

**Tuesday and Friday, 11.00-12.30: refreshments are served**

**Friday, 12.30: Lunchtime Service**

**Space to take notes from today's readings, prayers and sermon.**

**St. Peter's in the City Staff:**

**Vicar: Revd. Canon Paul Morris**  
paul@stpetersderby.org.uk

**Building Manager: Melvyn Wood**  
**Kitchen Supervisor: Gillian Wood**

**Associate Priest: Revd. Anita Matthews**  
anita@stpetersderby.org.uk

**Church Wardens: Tim Benson, Sung-Hee Lee**  
**Inside Out Team: Wayne Haycock**

**Vicar's PA and Projects Administrator:**  
Kismet Barber (beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>)  
office@stpetersderby.org.uk

**We are a community of faith, hope and love in the heart of the city**  
**Follow us on Twitter: @stpetersderby**  
**www.stpetersderby.org.uk**

**St. Peter's Centre office (01332 360790) is open:**

Monday to Thursday from 9.00-2.30

**Parish Safeguarding Link: Revd. Anita Matthews**