



September 6th 2020

**Greetings in the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ.
In this time of uncertainty,
we declare: Jesus is Lord!**

Stories, stories, stories!

It's hard to believe that we're already in September, and the weather is beginning to feel quite autumnal. One of the things I like about this time of year is that there are often new television series and programmes released to help pass the winter evenings. I especially look forward to dramas – you can't beat a good story with surprising twists and turns which engages you and draws you in. Here's hoping for some creative things coming up, despite the challenge of Covid19!

At St. Peter's we also going to be enjoying some great stories this autumn. Starting from this Sunday we have a preaching series on the parables of Jesus, some very well known and some less well known. The parables make up more than a third of Jesus' recorded teaching, and despite their variety they all connect daily life and deeper truths in a profound and, at times, highly challenging way. The New Testament scholar CH Dodd describes the parables as follows:

“At its simplest the parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought.”

One of the things that makes the parables so powerful is that they invite us to think, and challenge us to think differently about the Kingdom of God. Jesus was a master story teller, who could engage his audience with a topic, draw them in emotionally, and then present a twist in the tale, a deeper truth, or a challenge to his listeners to rethink their assumptions.

For us at St. Peter's, as we enter a period of transition and as we begin to look to the future, studying the parables offers an opportunity to look at things in new ways and with fresh eyes. Perhaps there are assumptions we make about our faith and our worship which need challenging. Perhaps there are areas of our life where we are in a rut, and need a fresh touch from God. Perhaps God is calling us to think differently about the Kingdom and what it means. Or perhaps we need inspiration to follow God with renewed commitment and love.

Whatever it is (and it may be all of those!), let's pray that this preaching series opens us up to the Word of God in new and surprising ways. And let's enjoy some great stories!

With my prayers and love,

Anita

Praying for Schools

As September gets underway, the new school term is beginning. This year, of course, schools face particular challenges as they adapt to the reality of Covid19, and as pupils (many of whom have been away from school for almost six months) return to the classroom.

Bishop Libby, the Bishop of Derby writes: As you are aware, schools have returned to their buildings this week. This is significant for children and their families, of course. It is also significant for staff and governors as they balance the desire to deliver the best for their children, and the responsibility to ensure safety and wellbeing.

Our Schools, the length and breadth of the diocese, are such a vital part of the life of the Church, and the outworking of the Kingdom of God. I have asked Alison Brown, Acting Director of Education, to reflect for us this week:

"We owe all our school leaders and staff a huge debt of gratitude for keeping schools open during the lockdown, supporting pupils, parents and the wider school community. Thank you!

"What a year 2020 continues to be. For all those involved in schools they have, in effect, two New Years to mark and celebrate each year, in January and in September as a new academic year begins. For most of our schools that 'new year' is this week. Of course, this is going to be a particularly unusual new start with a potent mixture of excitement and anxiety. The excitement will be because at long last the whole school community can be back together. The anxiety will be multi-layered. For parents it might be around the safety of their children and their ability to fit back into the social setting of school.

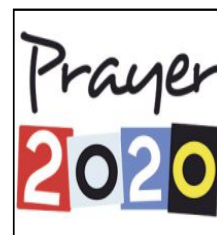
"For pupils it could be around being back in an environment in a new way with class bubbles, staggered break-times and starts and ends to the day. For staff it will be about how they help pupils to pick up and run with their formal learning whilst keeping safe and happy. For all staff there will also be anxiety for their own health and for those they care for at home.

"How can we help our precious schools and the individuals in them flourish with this backdrop? Well, we can pray for them, that they will know that 'goodness and mercy shall follow them all of their lives'. For clergy and congregations who have schools in their care, sending cards, messages, emails, phone calls wishing them well and telling them of that prayer will count for a lot (as might a box of biscuits or chocolates for the staff room!!). Visits into schools are not yet allowed and so all the support we give must be at a distance, but in the knowledge that the God who loves us all is closer than we can imagine."

As we look to transform lives: growing Church and building community, we rejoice in our partnership with our schools. As Alison suggests, please do hold them in your prayers – and translate our prayers into action of generous faith, encouraging hope and life-giving love.

Praying together in 2020

HOPE Together are calling Christians of all denominations to pray on the 20th of each month at 20.20 for 20 minutes, so this Thursday! They say: "Through Prayer 2020 we are asking God to work through all that happens this year – personal witness; church outreach in villages, towns and cities; mission events and evangelism in all its many forms. Already this is catching the imagination of Christians around the world.



Prayer ...

In this very testing time for us all, do not hesitate to ask for prayer for any concern you have. We all face difficulties and challenges, but prayer makes a difference. In an emergency, call Bren (07967 183601), and she will ask those on the prayer chain to pray for you.

Sunday 10.15am: simple service of Holy Communion

Please book in by 12 noon on Friday. If you have internet access, booking is via the Eventbrite website, using this link: <https://stpetersderby.eventbrite.co.uk>. For those without internet access, booking is by calling the Church Office (01332 360790). Please leave a message and we will book you in.

Please tell us if you are coming with others from your household. We need to collect name, address and phone details and keep them for 21 days in case we have to provide a list of attendees for track and trace purposes. The church building is now equipped with automatic hand sanitisers – just hold your hands underneath them!

Zoom details...

On a Computer, Laptop, Smart Phone or Tablet:

The easiest way is to click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/450891605?pwd=czNCTTJuaUJpQ3VlOVlnUm1zS0tKQT09>

Alternatively:

1. Open Zoom and select 'Join' or 'Join a Meeting'
2. Enter the Meeting ID: **450 891 605**
3. Select 'Join'
4. When prompted for the Meeting Password, enter **73837**
5. Select 'Continue' or 'Join Meeting' and you will be connected

By Phone – these are the numbers you must now use:

1. Pick any one of the numbers below (doesn't matter which), if one doesn't work, pick another: 0203 481 5240 ; 0131 460 1196 ; 0203 051 2874 ; 0203 481 5237
2. Dial the number and when prompted for the Meeting ID press: **450 891 605#**
3. You will then be prompted for a Participant ID, just press **#**
4. Finally, you will be prompted for the Meeting Password, press: **73837#**
5. You will be connected and able to hear everything that is happening

If you have any problems with accessing the service on Sunday, please call Anita.

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

St. Peter's in the City Staff:

Acting Vicar/Associate Priest: Revd. Anita Matthews

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Kitchen Supervisor: Gillian Wood

Church Wardens: Tim Benson, Sung-Hee Lee

We are a community of faith, hope and love in the heart of the city

Follow us on Twitter: @stpetersderby

www.stpetersderby.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Link: Revd. Anita Matthews

IN THE WEEK

**The church and church office are closed until further notice,
but telephone calls to the Office on 01332 360790 and
emails to office@stpetersderby.org.uk will be monitored**