



The South West Ipswich Team Ministry

The Church of England in South West Ipswich

Remembrance Sunday – 8th November 2020

Collect

God, our refuge and strength,
bring near the day when wars shall cease
and poverty and pain shall end,
that earth may know the peace of heaven
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Post Communion

God of peace,
whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingdom
and restored the broken to wholeness of life:
look with compassion on the anguish of the world,
and by your healing power
make whole both people and nations;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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## Readings

### *Amos 5.18 - 24*

<sup>18</sup> Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD! Why do you want the day of the LORD? It is darkness, not light; <sup>19</sup> as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was bitten by a snake. <sup>20</sup> Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?

<sup>21</sup> I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. <sup>22</sup> Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. <sup>23</sup> Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

<sup>24</sup> But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

### *1 Thessalonians 4. 13 - 18*

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Alleluia, Alleluia,  
Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord,  
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest Heaven.

**Alleluia**

Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples.

‘The kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” <sup>7</sup>Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” <sup>12</sup>But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour

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This week pray for the following roads in our parish.

Hawthorn Drive, Headingham Close, Heatherhayes, Hengrave Close,
Heron Road, Hexham Close.

We remember those who have recently died.

**We remember those whose anniversary of death fall during
this week**

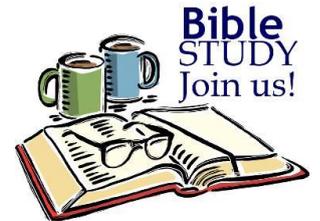
Remembrance Sunday

As part of the 11 am ZOOM service on Sunday 8th November there will be a short act of Remembrance live from Bourne Park, details of how to access the service can be obtained from revmerv@switmparish.org.uk

Please note this is not a public service in Bourne Park.

Bible Study Online

We have started a 'Zoom' Bible Study looking at the previous weeks Gospel in more detail than can be contained in a sermon. All are welcome to join, if you don't yet receive e-mail updates from Merv (revmerv@switmparish.org.uk) please ask him to add you to the list to receive instructions on how to join. This is a long-term plan that will continue after lockdown has been eased.



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## Pop Up Shop

The Pop-Up Shop will continue during the second lock down with strict protocols in place to minimise the risks to volunteers and customers as much as possible. We continue to look for volunteers who can help on a Saturday morning or with the Friday evening collections but must be under the age of 70 and not in a 'Clinically Vulnerable Group'. If you are able to help please let Rob or Sue Strutt know.

**WE HAVE BEEN OFFERED A COLLECTION AT ALDI (HINES ROAD) AT 10 AM ON A FRIDAY MORNING, IF ANYONE IS ABLE TO REGULARLY GO AND COLLECT AND DELIVER TO ST FRANCIS IT WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.**

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**PLEASE NOTE PUBLIC WORSHIP HAS BEEN SUSPENDED FROM
00:01 ON THURSDAY 5TH NOVEMBER.**

During this time we will be streaming Holy Communion on a Thursday and a Sunday at 9.30 am live on Facebook and Youtube. The informal service on Zoom continues at 11 am.

St Marys remains open for individual prayer on a Saturday between 12 and 2 pm.

Please be aware that the decision to suspend public worship has been taken by the Government and **NOT** the Church of England and forms part of the regulations that come into effect at 00:01 on the 5th November.

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## Advent and Christmas 2020

We are slowly starting to plan for Advent and Christmas this year and more information will follow as and when we become clearer about what will and will not be possible. So far we have provisionally agreed the following:

**Virtual Advent Calendar** counting the days down to Christmas direct to your inbox or via our Facebook, Instagram and Website.

**Reverse Advent Calendar** For the last two years we have been encouraging people to collect items for FIND on each day of Advent. We would like to do this again this year, a list of suggested items will be sent out in November. We are asking you to hold on to your items at home until **after Christmas** when there will be two ways of us receiving your donations. Either;

- 1) Bring them up to St Francis Church on the morning of the 31<sup>st</sup> December between 9 am and 12 noon.
- 2) Arrange for them to be collected in a physically distanced way during the week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> December.

**Display your Crib** If you have a window that can be seen from the road, we are inviting you to display a crib scene and battery candle so people passing by can see the truth of Christmas. We will also be supplying posters as part of the Church of England Christmas 2020 campaign entitled 'Comfort and Joy' for you to display in a window or your car.

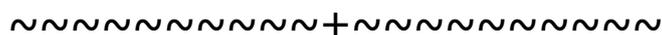
**Carol Praise** Via Zoom at 11 am on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December.

**Christmas Eve Outdoor Crib Service** Will take place in the car park of St Mary at Stoke at **4 pm** using the giant crib figures.

**First Eucharist of Christmas Night** (Not Midnight Mass) at 8 pm on Christmas Eve at St Francis Church and St Peters Church. St Peters will also be live streamed on Facebook and Youtube.

**Christmas Day** 9.30 am service of Holy Communion at St Peters in person and streamed to Facebook and Youtube.

More details will follow as we work with our sister churches in South West Ipswich and the wider Deanery.



## The PRAYER Course

We will be running this in place of the Wednesday evening Bible study before and after Christmas on Zoom. It is described as 'An eight-week journey that will help you and your community to grow and deepen your prayer life'.

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|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Session 1                  | Why Pray     | 25 <sup>th</sup> November |
| Session 2                  | Adoration    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> December  |
| Session 3                  | Petition     | 9 <sup>th</sup> December  |
| Session 4                  | Intercession | 16 <sup>th</sup> December |
| Christmas / New Year Break |              |                           |

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|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Session 5 | Unanswered Prayer | 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021  |
| Session 6 | Contemplation     | 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 |
| Session 7 | Listening         | 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 |
| Session 8 | Spiritual Warfare | 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 |

More Information can be found at <https://prayercourse.org/> and if you would like to register please let Kay in the parish office know on 01473 603229 or to [office@switmparish.org.uk](mailto:office@switmparish.org.uk)



Rev Rob writes...

As I write this article we are just a few hours from entering the second National Lockdown in England. In the last few days since the Prime Ministers announcement on Saturday evening a great deal of energy has been expended by lots of people as we attempt to understand the new restrictions and to work with them and this includes the church and faith communities. One of the regulations that relates to churches is around the suspension of public worship. This has caused a great deal of anger and frustration from various people on social media because of the work that has been done by many – including us – to make our buildings ‘COVID secure’. Like much in life I do not think there is a black and white answer as to whether this is or is not a good idea. I think that lots of the frustration is around what is and is not being permitted to continue during these next few weeks and that there is a lack of consistency and clarity. There is also some displacement activity going on, we cannot control the virus and it can make us feel powerless but we can collectively moan about the decisions of others and in the church of England if we can include a good old moan about the House of Bishops then even better.

While I firmly believe public worship is important, we do not exist in a vacuum and decisions are interconnected. I want to share where

some of my own thinking as got to since Saturday, others will of course have their own views.

As I have said before no person is an island, and to use the analogy of DNA every contact leaves a trace and this is particularly important when we talk about a virus and its ability to be passed from one person to another. The purpose of the second lockdown as I understand it is to reduce the opportunities for people to come into contact with each other and to therefore reduce the opportunities to leave a trace that is to say transmit the virus. None of us are virologists or experts in managing a global pandemic; although it is surprising the number of people in the media and on social media who seem to have become overnight experts! But if we can play a part in potentially reducing the spread, we should. However this is where the lack of clarity comes in, and people are genuinely mystified as to what is closed down and what is not and this does raise the question of are churches more or less safe than other places.

What is clear is that there is no place that is perfectly safe, the phrase 'COVID secure' simply means that all reasonable steps have been taken to reduce the risks of infection and cross contamination as much as possible. The decision to reduce the opportunities for contact is solely to reduce the possibilities of infection. We can argue about whether there is evidence that there is a significant risk from churches remaining open until we are blue in the face. Possibly it is down to personality types but my response has been that it is better to knuckle down and to do the best we can, and to bear the troubles of this present time with faith and trust in the God who is faithful and greater than the here and now.

While the Archbishops and Bishops have affirmed that Churches are key to peoples lives, and the opportunity to receive the sacraments is life giving and life fulfilling we did spend a great deal of time reminding ourselves and those around us that the church is more than just a building. This is true, and for a time we are once again in exile and are waiting for the time to return again to the promised land. Like the exiles from Israel and Judah we are not alone, God remains with us. We look forward to the day we can return to church as it has

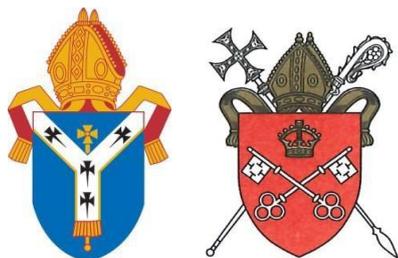
become, as well as looking for the day when we will be able to worship in the fullest sense and share in fellowship with one another.

We also need to remind ourselves that God is not contained to a building – as important as they are. In a few weeks we will be celebrating Christmas, at its heart is the incarnation, when God entered physically into the world. At the moment of crucifixion, we are told by scripture that the temple curtain that separated the most holy part from view was torn in two. The separation of God from his people was at an end, in 2 Corinthians 6:16 we are reminded by Paul that, *'I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'*

It seems to me that at a time of deprivation of much of 'normal life' and the fear, uncertainty and impact this will have on peoples lives that it is good for us to share with others. The church does not have a good history where we have set ourselves up to be separate from those we love, serve and live amongst. It tends to lead to us forgetting our purpose and if the first lockdown has taught us anything, we need a simpler and more humble church. We need to be less in palaces and more in the ordinary and the everyday.

None of this removes the pain and isolation that not being able to share in the physical worshipping life of the church as the body of Christ with our siblings. To suggest it does would be crass and insensitive, but we hold onto the hope of following Jesus. Paul in the letter to the Romans reminds us that the present age will pass away, *'I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.'* That does not mean we are glib or not affected by the present, but a reminder that the paradox of the Christian Faith is that we are both living in the present as well as looking with eager anticipation to the return of Christ. That is the whole purpose of the season of Advent, that we look to that which is to come. Like a sailor we keep an eye on the horizon for the promise of God is that there is better to come, both for the transformation of life here in the present but also for the heavenly reward when we go to the place that has been prepared for us.

My prayer for each of us is that we may continue to know the presence of Christ with us, that his love and his arms may surround us and sustain us, those we love, our community, nation and global village. Remember the words of Jesus himself in John 14; *'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.'* (NRSV) Or in the words of the Message, *'Don't let this throw you. You trust God, don't you? Trust me.'*



*To the nation*

4 November 2020

Dear Friends,

These are deeply challenging and difficult times for us all. When we are surrounded by fear and suffering, it can be hard to feel hopeful. This coming winter feels like it will be longer and darker than usual.

There is a story in the Bible where Jesus and his disciples are caught in a storm. The disciples are understandably terrified as the wind and waves threaten to overpower them. 'Why are you so afraid?', Jesus asks. This year, we too have been caught in a storm which often feels overwhelming. And yet we can look to Jesus, in the boat with us, who calms the storm and comforts us in our fear.

We are writing to share our belief that whoever you are, and whatever you happen to believe, you are loved by God. Beyond measure. We also want you to know that we are praying for you, particularly asking that Christ's love will comfort us, calm our fears, and lead our nation and our world through this terrible pandemic. Starting this week, we have asked every church to pray each day at 6pm. We invite you to join with us. You'll be able to find simple resources on the Church of England website and social media channels.

There are three other responses that we want to encourage everyone to consider -

First, let's be *calm*. By only buying what we need and not hoarding, or by reaching out to our neighbours as we did during the first lockdown, we can be stronger together in ways that are impossible if we go it alone. When things go wrong - as they always will with such complex challenges - let us look for good and right ways forward together.

Secondly, let's be *courageous*. There are many reasons to be fearful at the moment, but the story of Christ calming the waves calls us to give our fears to Jesus and have faith in Him. The British willingness just to get on with things is one of our very best characteristics – let us not be paralysed by fear. We will all need each other's courage in the months to come.

Thirdly, let's be *compassionate*. So many of us are holding so much pain - our own and the pain of those we love. We will need to be gentle, kind and patient with each other. In the first wave we showed we are a nation of compassion and kindness. Let's dig deep and keep that love for our neighbours strong in this second time of struggle.

Even though there is much darkness around us, there are also many points of light in the weeks ahead.

This Sunday is Remembrance Day. As we remember the courage and sacrifice of those who gave everything for this nation in war, we are also reminded of the possibility for hope after destruction, of new life after suffering. In the coming weeks, there are great religious ceremonies. For Hindus, Sikhs and Jains there is Diwali, the festival of light. Sikhs will celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak. The Jewish community will observe Hanukkah. Many Muslim communities have just celebrated Eid-e-Milad, the anniversary of the birth of Muhammad.

Soon it will be Christmas. At his birth Jesus was also called Emmanuel. It's a word that appears in lots of carols. It means 'God is with us'. And this is the message of Christmas: in Jesus, God is with us, sharing our darkness and our struggles, bringing comfort and joy. It is the source of our hope. As the Bible says: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5) Let us shine in the darkness of this winter.

May God bless you and keep you, and all those you love.



The Most Revd & Rt Hon  
Justin Welby  
Archbishop of Canterbury



The Most Revd & Rt Hon  
Stephen Cottrell  
Archbishop of York



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

0800 804 8044

Are you in need of some daily  
hope during this lockdown?

We have a new FREE telephone  
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comforting hymns, daily prayers  
and reflections.