

HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus

Weekly devotions, prayers and news



Mothering Sunday

22nd March 2020

My dear friends,

We live in unprecedented times. Last Sunday I was moved that despite the unfolding situation over Covid-19, over 100 people still managed to attend our main act of worship. Now we are not meeting for the foreseeable future. However, we are the Body of Christ and intimately connected to both Jesus and our brothers and sisters in Christ. During this period, let us seek to connect to the best of our ability, keeping in touch with people and revealing the love at the heart of our Faith in whatever ways we are able to.

You will begin to find resources for home worship on the church website. Some of these will also be posted on Facebook. I hope that they will allow us to interact and support each other and all those we know prayerfully. I also wanted you to know that I will still be celebrating worship in the church at the regular times, although you will not be able to attend. Please join me in prayer wherever you are. I also hope to keep in touch through regular postings.

Let us pray for each other and for the world. We know the wonder of a God who loves each one of us with a great love. This is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. In a sense, we are in a desert place at the moment - something which seems appropriate during this season of Lent. But remember that after Good Friday came Easter Day - the wonder of Christ's Resurrection draws us to know that 'nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.'

What I aim to do each week is provide you with the Sunday Gospel Reading and Prayers, together with a short related devotion. Do let me know if I can improve it!

With my love and prayers for you all,

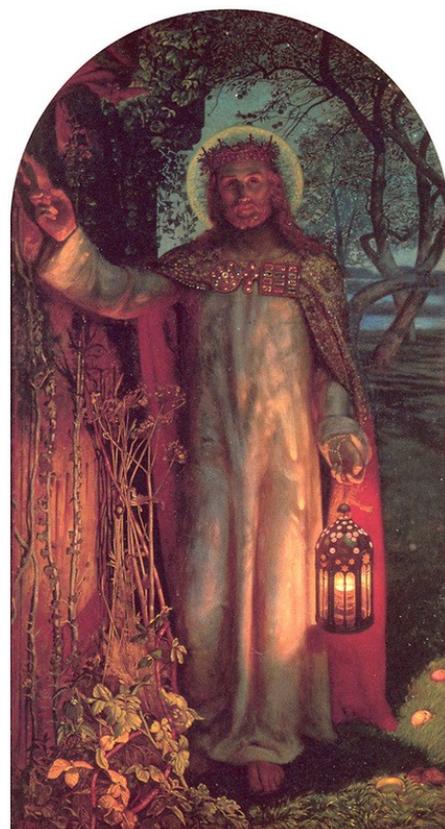
Michael (*Vicar*)

A Prayer for this time of pandemic:

O Great Love, we thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from the knowledge of our deep connection with you and all creation. Help us become a community that shares each other's burdens and reveals the wonder of your glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world knowing that you hear more clearly than we can speak; we offer this prayer through Jesus Christ, your Son, Our Lord. Amen.

The Collect for Mothering Sunday

God of Compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; 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. Amen.



John 9 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' ³ Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷ saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' ⁹ Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' ¹¹ He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.' ¹² They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.'

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.' ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?' And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, 'What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.' He said, 'He is a prophet.' [...]

³⁴ They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' ³⁶ He answered, 'And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' ³⁷ Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' ³⁸ He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.'

A thought

The reading is a long one today, and I have omitted the middle of it. Do read the whole of chapter 9 if you have a chance. We have heard Gospel readings from the first chapters of John for these past few weeks, and they all show an unveiling of what following Jesus means. We heard about Nicodemus the Pharisee, who came to see Jesus by night - his journey towards understanding discipleship was just beginning. Last week, the woman at the well of Samaria is told about 'the water of life, gushing up to eternal life.' Now Jesus used the dust of the earth to enable a blind man to receive sight—a link to the Creation of humanity in Genesis 1. In Christ we are all new creations! Alas, the Pharisees remain in spiritual darkness.

On this strange Mothering Sunday, when many are in isolation because of the pandemic, we remember our ultimate connectedness to God, to each other as the Body of Christ, and to the whole of creation. In faith terms, the church's imagery for this day is the intimacy of mother and child. Sometimes things go wrong with relationships, but the relationship we have with God is unshakeable as far as he is concerned. It is forged in the self-giving of Jesus Christ on the cross who draws us to know that we are all charged with revealing his light in whatever we do. ***Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.'***

**Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast
you feed us with the food and drink of eternal life:
help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace
within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Please remember those who have asked for our prayers:

Immediate Need: Archdeacon Fiona, Janet Card, Susan Amaouti, Ken Taylor, Robert Norris, Jocelyn Bentley, Rev. Sandra Hall, Mark Parker, David Davidson;

Long Term Need: Young Georgia, Young Joshua, Julia Settle, Young Reggie, Ros Ayling, Wendy, Ann Went, Vi Muddle, Jean Simmons, Dave Cox, Jenny, Julie Sadler, Becky Parker, George Snashall, Tony Burbidge, Christopher, Jenny, Jane Terry, Marjorie Chilton, Anne Norris, Alan Prebble, Stephanie Gilpin, Marilyn Archbold, Jill Rockey

Please remember the recently departed and their families: Alice Joan Gaston, William Christmas

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember:

22nd Elsie Hemstead, Alexander Glasgow, Elizabeth Cadman, 23rd Gordon Jones, 24th Nina Mackie, Valerie Bray, Michael Josling, 25th Michael Buck, Phyllis Green, Sheena Berkeley, 26th Russell Murphy, Joseph Heyman, 27 Joan Wampach, 28th Peggy Small, Ethel Riddle