



**UNITED BENEFICE OF CORLEY
PARISH CHURCH & ST MARY & ALL
SAINTS CHURCH, FILLONGLEY WITH
FILLONGLEY METHODIST CHURCH**

Anglicans and Methodists in Unity.



Website: <https://fillongleyandcorleychurch.wordpress.com/>

Dear Friends,

As you look above these words you will see that we have some good news for you all this week – the Benefice has a Website ☺ We are so grateful to Katie and Matt Baker who have put this together in a very short time and given us another very important method of communication, not only during this lockdown period but also for the Church communities as we move forward.

Greetings from Revd Ali

Today, the 8th May 2020, as I am sure you are very well aware, marks the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. It is a bank holiday. A day that was meant to be marked with street parties and thanksgiving services across the United Kingdom. A day of celebration and remembrance shared with our friends, neighbours and bringing generations together to share memories and experiences. In this time of lockdown, parties are cancelled and churches are closed for worship, but there is still a need for marking anniversaries. To remember the sacrifices made for us all those years ago and to put in perspective some of the sacrifices that we are now having to make as the world battles Covid 19 and ensure that we don't repeat the same mistakes that led to such devastation.

I am sure that many people will still be celebrating by decorating their homes in red, white and blue and observing a 2 minute silence at 11am to remember all those, both civilian and military, killed in wars around the globe. Perhaps listening as the BBC broadcasts Churchill's famous VE Day speech or even having a front garden picnic with our neighbours, observing social distancing of course! Then at 9pm, after the Queen addresses the nation there is an opportunity to sing along with the Royal British Legion; We'll Meet Again. All good ways to remember and to mark this important anniversary.

But it was only the end of the war in Europe, the war in the Far East still raged on, claiming more lives until Japan agreed in principle to surrender on the 15th August 1945 and finally the Second World War was at last over on 2nd September 1945. A world that was profoundly changed forever.

I'm not equating the horrendous suffering that war brought to the world with the current pandemic. However, there are lessons to be learnt from how we as individuals, communities and nations have dealt with the pandemic. We need to remember the selfishness and panic that led to empty supermarket shelves and inflated prices for hand sanitiser and toilet paper. The indifference that some have shown to the most vulnerable in our society. The lack of care and preparation initially shown to front line workers. The disproportionate number of deaths in areas of social deprivation. Behaviours that diminish us all as human beings. But we also need to remember how communities have come together to help each other, street by street or area by area, Covid 19 support groups have sprung up to help those in need. The massive surge in support for the NHS and other key workers. The fundraising efforts for the most vulnerable. Everyday heroes from posties to shop workers to binmen. The innovation of scientists across the globe tackling the pandemic. The creativity of artists and performers bringing joy to many. All embodying the best of

humanity seeking to help others. These are the behaviours that embody Christ's exhortation to us all to love God and love one another, behaviours that need to be honoured and celebrated.

If the lockdown is going to be eased, perhaps we should remember another of Churchill's famous quotes 'Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning',* an opportunity for us to remember and reflect and decide what sort of beginning to get back to normal we want.

Can this pandemic encourage us to look at our world and the way we operate in it in another way? Creation has flourished during the global lockdown, are there lessons for us to consider in how we steward God's creation? Globalisation has meant that we have all felt the impact of the pandemic but is there something we can learn about our common humanity that is bigger than national boundaries? Is there something about the monetary value we put on different jobs that we need to review? All big questions that we need to think about individually and collectively. Perhaps, when we start to gather again as church we can look at some of these big questions together, to seek wisdom from scripture and to pray together so that our 'new normal' is one that more closely embodies Kingdom values rather than worldly values.

In all that you do for God and each other, thank you.

Love and prayers

Ali

**Speech at the Lord Mayor's Day Luncheon, 10 November 1942*

<https://www.churchillbookcollector.com/pages/winston-churchill/233/the-end-of-the-beginning>

Greetings from Revd Jane

Like many of you I have had my holiday cancelled. I was due to be going away with Andy on Sunday evening for two lovely long weeks - but no, sadly it is not to be! I will be taking odd days off however during this time so if you don't get any reply to emails or phone messages then I will get back to you as soon as I can.

One thing that I am hoping to do in my time off is to spend some time in the garden. I love being in the garden and I often find it is a good time to be with the Lord - He is after all a gardener himself. As the gardener who loves us, he sees our potential, sees all that we can be. He pays careful attention to detail, knowing the right season to do everything in. He clears the ground of stones - hard places in our lives. He uproots and tears down, digs up and prunes, getting the ground ready for all he wants to plant in our lives - because he wants us to flourish. My garden suffers with ground elder, and it is such a pain and so difficult to remove. I often have to dig down really deep to get the roots out and then I tend to sift the earth to make sure it is truly free of them - only then can I begin to plant.

So often our lives can get clogged up with weeds, some of which have long roots that go down deep into our lives causing bitterness and hurt. Our lives, just like the garden, can get overgrown, full of things that keep the light out and stop growth and fruit. I have discovered that when God starts working in my life - pruning and digging up, tearing down, cutting back and sifting, it isn't always comfortable - far from it in fact, but, God wants our lives to flourish, and he does it for our good.

Next time you stand in the garden, admiring the beauty of it, remember that is how God sees you. He is more committed to us blossoming and producing fruit than we are. He wants each one of us to be like a 'well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail (Isaiah 58: vs11). Whatever the harshness of our surroundings and situations, we can have an assurance that we can rest in his care today.

God bless you,

With love, Jane

LECTIONARY Readings and Prayers for Sunday 10th May 2020 – Easter 5

Collects

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the Father. Amen

Readings

Genesis 8: vs 1-19 Acts 7: vs 55-end Psalm 31 1 Peter 2: vs 2-10 John 14 vs 1-14

A Reflection on the Gospel Reading from the Revd Ali Massey

Our Gospel reading for this week is one that is frequently read at funerals. It is a profoundly comforting text containing promises that are reassuring to hear when we face the death of a loved one. The context for the reading is Jesus' farewell address to the disciples at the last supper. Jesus knows that he is facing his death and he is preparing the disciples, and us, for what is going to happen. His concern is not for himself, he is not asking his disciples for comfort, instead he is trying to give comfort to them. In Chapter 13, John tells us that Jesus has washed his disciples' feet, he has foretold his betrayal by Judas and then as Judas slips away from the table Jesus tells the disciples that he is only going to be with them for a very short time before he leaves them, and when he leaves them they cannot follow. He has also told them that Peter, the rock, will deny him, not once, but three times. They must have been confused and very much troubled.

So much to take in at once. Jesus their beloved friend and teacher is leaving them, one of their number is a traitor and Peter is going to deny Jesus – their anxiety levels must have soared. But then Jesus says "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me" (14:1). Jesus brings them back to the foundation of their relationship, a relationship built on trust. Jesus then assures them that he is not abandoning them, he is just returning to his heavenly Father, and that is good news for all of them. Because they too will one day be with the heavenly Father, as Jesus is going ahead of them to prepare a place for each and every one of them. There will be room for all, everyone will be able to dwell with him in the relationship that Jesus has with God the Father. And moreover, they already know the way to the place that Jesus is going.

Thomas, the one who asks the big questions, or maybe the questions that others are too afraid to ask, takes Jesus quite literally. Thomas wants to know the way, he wants a map to this new place, a GPS to get there. Jesus responds to Thomas, that he himself is the way.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me".

Jesus' statement is a promise, a comforting promise to his disciples and to us all. Jesus is telling them and us, that there is no need to panic, no need to desperately search for some secret way or a spiritual treasure map. They and we, already know the way. Jesus clarifies it for us by telling the disciples "If you know me,

you will know my Father also". So that there can be no misunderstanding, Jesus adds, "From now on, you do know him and have seen him" (14:7b).

Fortunately for Thomas, who will always be known by some as 'doubting Thomas', Philip jumps in – he isn't quite convinced by Jesus' answer so he asks Jesus "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied" (14:8). In Jesus' reply, perhaps we might hear a little bit of exasperation "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father". Philip and the other disciples have been with Jesus for the past 3 years, they have heard him teach, seen him perform miracles and being with him had changed their lives profoundly and permanently. Jesus in all his actions and words had been revealing exactly who God is. Jesus who had come from God, is now returning to God, having revealed the person and character of God. In his exasperation, Jesus is telling Philip and us that if we want to know God then we have to look no further than Jesus.

As Jesus was imminently returning to God, he entrusts his mission to the disciples when he says "Very truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it" (14:13-14). Jesus is entrusting the future of God's mission to the disciples. They are to carry on the work that he has modelled for them, to proclaim God's glory through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

So, what about us? Jesus is entrusting us with God's mission too. We may feel woefully ill-equipped, we might not think that we know the way like Thomas, or may feel that we haven't seen God like Philip, but Jesus promises to be with us through the power of the Spirit, to work in and through us to accomplish God's purposes in the world. We might not all be called to perform miracles or signs and wonders, but we are all called to serve the purposes of God, using the gifts that God has given us. Whether they are gifts of healing, reconciliation, teaching, kindness, gentleness, prayerfulness. Wherever there is life-giving work happening, this is the work of God. Whenever there is life in all its abundance, there is Jesus' presence. It is up to all of us to recognise and celebrate the work of God in our world and to share the truth of Jesus, the way, the truth and the life.

Then, when evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done, we too may rest safe in our heavenly Father's House in the place that Jesus has prepared for each of us. Amen.

HYMNS & WORSHIP SONGS

Here are the Hymns that we would have been singing in Church on Sunday ~

Let us build a house (StF 409)

What a friend we have in Jesus (StF 531)

Faithful One, so unchanging (StF 628) Here is the link for you to be able to sing along -

https://uk.video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avg-fh_lsonsw&hsimp=yhs-fh_lsonsw&hspart=avg&p=faithful+one%2C+so+unchanging#id=5&vid=03a3ea520cb01afb21496f59b824b8bf&action=click

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided (StF 470)
EDITION 8

Friday, 08 May 2020

PRAYERS



Sundays @ 7pm.

A reminder that we are lighting a Candle every Sunday at 7pm during this crisis and putting it in our windows to be a sign of our solidarity and hope in the light of Jesus Christ that can never be extinguished.

In our prayers this coming Sunday we pause ~

- + to express our sorrow for the atrocities of war;*
- + to forgive former enemies,*
- + to pray that we may be freed from feelings of fear, revenge, and xenophobia,*
- + to hope that we may be thankful for times of peace and find joy in the company of one another*

Tuesday 12th May 2020 is the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale.

This prayer was written by Deva-Marie Beck, PhD, RN © 1996

*“Today, our world needs healing and to be rekindled with Love.
Once, Florence Nightingale lit her beacon of lamplight to comfort the wounded.
Her light has blazed a path of service across a Century to us--
through her example and through the countless nurses and healers
who have followed in her footsteps.*

*“Today, we celebrate the flame of Florence Nightingale's legacy.
Let that same light be rekindled to burn brightly in our hearts.
Let us take up our own ‘lanterns of caring,’ each in our own ways--
to more brightly walk our own paths of service to the world--
to more clearly share our own ‘noble purpose’ with each other.*

*“May human caring become the lantern for the 21st century.
May we better learn to care for ourselves, for each other and for all Creation.*

*“Through our caring, may we be the keepers of that flame.
That our spirits may burn brightly to kindle the hearts
of our children and great-grandchildren—
as they, too, follow in these footsteps.”*



Reflection on The Lord's Prayer - Easter to Trinity

Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD

Life is fragile. Food shortages and hardship caused by panic buying remind us of the ugly dangers of human greed. We learn again the need to depend on God, the work of others and sometimes the kindness of strangers for all we need each day. Most of the world's Christians are likely to be deprived of Holy Communion in this Easter season because of the risks of infection. We remember that our spiritual food, too, comes from God who is able still to nourish us and care for us day by day. We value and appreciate still more deeply the gifts we have been given in the Eucharist and we long for them to be restored.

We are bombarded by advertising in every working hour, in every possible medium and in every single space. Advertising has a single goal: to make us unhappy with our lives so that we will buy more stuff. 'Give us today our daily bread' offers an antidote to greed. It is probably the most challenging line of the

prayer. It is a prayer to be content with just enough for today; a prayer to depend on God's grace each day for what we need and, beyond that, to focus on God's kingdom. The repetition of 'today' and 'daily' is also a clear indication that Jesus means his disciples to use this prayer every day of their lives. Unhappiness and greed steal away our joy, our peace and our contentment. For this reason, this line of the prayer is both deeply challenging and profound, good news. We are meant to be more than consumers.

READ Matthew 6: vs 25-34 Do not worry

'Give us this day our daily bread' draws on the Exodus story of the manna. Bread from heaven was given by God to sustain the Israelites in their long journey through the desert. Enough manna was given every day **for that day** (except on the eve of the Sabbath). It could not be stored or kept.

In that way, God taught the Israelites a daily dependence on God's grace and provision, and a way to be content with just enough. To say this prayer is to realize daily and ever more deeply that all we have comes from God. Our food may not land overnight like the dew, but it still comes to us as God's generous provision. The other side of asking God for enough for each day is the simple discipline of giving thanks: saying grace before meals on our own and in families helps us to see that all we have comes from God's goodness.

READ Exodus 16 vs 1-8 Manna from heaven

Many people think only about food and drink and money and material goods. They believe that having more and more stuff brings a rich and abundant life. Their lives are shaped by wanting more.

Jesus challenges this view. Like Moses, he provides bread in the desert for the people. But then he leads them deeper. There is so much more: 'Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life'. The people ask, 'What is this food?' Jesus replies, 'I am'. 'I am the bread of life': the one who brings joy and strength, and sustains and feeds all that we are created to be. Once again, the Lord's Prayer leads us back to the Lord. As we pray for daily bread, we are praying daily for a fresh encounter with Christ.

READ John 6: vs 25-40 Jesus the bread of life.

Christians gather for worship on Sunday because Sunday is the day of resurrection.

On the night before Jesus died, Jesus himself set this meal of bread and wine as the centre of Christian worship: a sign and sacrament of his love.

A sacrament is a pledge of God's love and a gift of God's life. God takes earthly things – water, bread and wine – and invests them with grace. A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. As we gather around the Lord's Table, we remember God's acts of love in creation and in the story of salvation. We meet with Jesus in bread and wine. By faith, we are strengthened for our journey through the desert. We look forward to the great banquet of heaven. All of this is reflected as we pray each day: 'Give us this day our daily bread.

READ Luke 22: vs 14-23 Do this in remembrance of me.

A single line of the Lord's Prayer is enough to shape a life. Our lives are overwhelmed with stuff. We think more stuff will make us happy. We are addicted to greed.

Jesus teaches us to pray: 'Give us this day our daily bread.' Give us this day just enough and help us to be content and to trust you for tomorrow. An antidote to consumption. Give us this day the living bread – Jesus. Food and drink and possessions do not, in the end, satisfy our deepest needs. Give us this day the bread of life: the signs of God's love which we can receive and touch and taste; and the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion. And give us thankful hearts to offer our lives in response to all of God's gifts to us. May we, too, recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

READ Luke 24: vs 28-35 In the breaking of the bread.

A prayer of thanksgiving and dedication from Common Worship

*Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.*

RESOURCES

Are you unable to connect to the internet?

Daily Hope is a new free phone line offering hymns, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England. It is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**. The line has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services in mind.



Attached to this Bulletin are four items ~

- ✚ A Worship Service for Sunday 10th May from Revd Jane
- ✚ An Alternative Flower Festival
- ✚ The latest musings from Revd Canon Jim Canning ☺
- ✚ A Reflection on the Acts Reading for May 10th from Revd Andrew Haines

AND FINALLY DON'T FORGET

If there is anything that you need or know of someone who would appreciate being contacted or added to the mailing list for this weekly e-bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact Revd Ali, Revd Jane or any of the Churchwardens and Church Stewards listed below. ⁱ

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