



Newly-renovated War  
Memorial Cross at Fillongley  
Church 2019

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

*Anglicans and Methodists in Unity.*



Dear Friends

The work towards re-opening the churches for private prayer is going on behind the scenes. We have been wading through the guidance and working out a thorough risk assessment for each of our beautiful buildings. The risk assessments need to be discussed by the individual Church Councils and then hopefully we will be able to offer some time each week when you can come into the buildings to pray. We are also working very closely with the Diocese in trying to plan for opening again for worship. According to the Government's Coronavirus roadmap, we may be able to start to have small gatherings in church sometime in July, although social distancing will still be in place and there will be limitations around what we are able to offer. It will be lovely to be a gathered worshipping community rather than our current diaspora.

This Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, is Father's Day. It is a day of remembering and honouring fathers and the influence of fathers in our communities and on our lives. Father's Day (or should it be Fathers' Day?) is a relatively new cultural phenomenon celebrated on the third Sunday of June since 1910, firstly in America then adopted by many other countries – according to Wikipedia it is celebrated on this day in over 80 countries worldwide.

Father's Day isn't a festival in the church year, although March 19<sup>th</sup> is remembered as St Joseph's Day, honouring the role that Joseph played as Jesus' earthly father. Like all celebrations of family, Father's Day can be a bittersweet. If we haven't had a good relationship with our own father, or if our father has died then this public remembrance and celebration can be painful. But even if our own experience is difficult, it can also a day to remember all those people who have played a 'fatherly' role in our lives. That person may have been part of our extended family, an uncle or older brother perhaps. Or maybe it was an inspirational teacher or someone that we worked with; someone at church or in the wider community. Whoever it might be, recognising the input of that father-figure and being thankful for their involvement in our lives, their love, care and encouragement, their protection and guidance, the joy that we have or had in their company can make this day special and worth celebrating.

So why don't we celebrate Father's Day in the church year? Well, it might sound a little trite, but every day is Father's Day in the church. Every day we remember our heavenly Father in our thoughts, prayers and worship. We give thanks for the love, care and protection of God and the gift of God's Son, Jesus Christ. However imperfect the relationship we might have had with our earthly father, there is through Jesus, the offer of a perfect relationship with God the Father, and that is definitely something worth celebrating.

So whatever your plans for marking this day, whether it is just another Sunday, or an opportunity to gather with your family whilst maintaining social distance, my prayer for all of us is that we all come to know, and trust in, the enormity of the love that our heavenly Father has for each and every one of us.

As always, if you would like to, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me, Revd Jane or any of the rest of the team who would be glad to listen and help in any way we can.

Love and prayers Ali

## **LECTIONARY Readings and Prayers for Sunday 21st June 2020** **Trinity 2**

### **Collects**

Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth:  
send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love,  
the true bond of peace and of all virtues,  
without which whoever lives is counted dead before you.  
Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Faithful Creator, whose mercy never fails: deepen our faithfulness to you  
and to your living Word, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### **Readings**

**Genesis 21: vs 8-21   Psalm 86   Romans 6: vs 1b-11   Matthew 10: vs 24-39**

### **A Reflection for the Second Sunday after Trinity ~ from Revd Ali Massey**

I don't know about you, but over the last few months there have been times when I have been afraid. We are all living through unprecedented times. The Coronavirus pandemic has been so outside our corporate and personal experience that sometimes fear has raised its ugly head. There has been a lot to be afraid of:- fears for our personal and family's health, fears about the impact of the lockdown and fears about the long-lasting effects that the pandemic may have. Then there are our personal fears, fear of loss, fear of ill health, fear of persons unknown or even fear of those close to us. Jesus knew that fear can be paralyzing, and he also recognized that fear can stifle our lives and our discipleship.

In today's Gospel reading (Matthew 10: 24 – 39), we are at the point where Jesus' disciples had ignored their fear and left the security of home and family to follow him. They had left everything that they had known and understood to be with and learn from Jesus, to proclaim with Jesus that

the kingdom of heaven had come near. Last week we heard how Jesus was sending them out to cure the sick, to raise the dead and to set the prisoner free. To proclaim the good news to all they met, but Jesus also knew that doing that sending out his disciples would put them on a collision course with worldly powers, so as he prepares them for their mission, he warns them of the threats they will face. Jesus also takes time to explain why they should not let their fear control them or stop them in their mission to proclaim the good news.

On one hand Jesus grants the disciples the power to heal, cleanse and even raise the dead but he asks them to go without any money, a change of clothes or even sandals. They are to set out on this incredible adventure completely vulnerable, putting all their trust, being totally dependent on God, for their safety, their comfort and their strength, despite any opposition they may experience.

The disciples might have already been feeling pretty daunted, but then Jesus describes in detail the difficulties they will probably face. Jesus outlines the worst-case scenarios, but he does so with equal statements of reassurance and repeated calls to resist fear.

Fear is an emotion that loves the dark, it is an emotion that thrives in secrecy. Jesus is bringing all those hidden fears in the disciple's hearts into the light and in doing so he is stripping them of their power. It is a cliché, but clichés often have truth within them, that a problem shared is a problem halved, and I think that this works with fear too – fear shrivels when it is exposed to light, it diminishes when it is acknowledged and then strategies are put in place to deal with it. Sometimes just talking about our fears, especially with God, is enough to banish them.

Jesus brings all the possible problems out of the shadows and names them but more importantly he reminds the disciples of their relationship with God through him. Jesus reminds them that they are not alone, that the power of God will be there not only to enable them but to protect them too.

Do not fear is Jesus' recurrent message. The power of the Gospel will disclose what is covered up. The disciples in their simple, vulnerable, dependence on God will demonstrate the reality of God's presence, the truth of God's character in the face of worldly claims of power. Jesus knows that by their mission the disciples will be exposed to danger, but they are still to proclaim the good news, spreading light in the darkness and shouting it from the rooftops. The truth of the Gospel will be their greatest weapon against the powers of the world.

For some of us the threat of death may be the thing we fear most. The horrific toll that Coronavirus had wreaked upon the earth may have caused us to address our own mortality. Jesus addresses this fear in the disciples directly. Jesus admits that the powers that be, whether human or virus, may kill the body, but they cannot ever destroy the soul. God's power surpasses that of human authorities. No-one can ever kill the God-given bit of us that makes us the unique beloved child of God that each of us are. Jesus reminds the disciples that God cares even for the sparrows that are sold two for a penny and God knows and loves us even down to each and every hair on our head. The threat of violence should no longer be the determining force in the disciples' lives because the one who has ultimate power over us body and soul, exercises that power with love and care.

Jesus encourages his friends to remain firm in their commitment to him and to their mission to spread the good news, despite the possibility of generating conflict; that conflict might even be within their own families. The disciples are called to be peacemakers, but not without first having the courage to challenge the powers of the world, to speak truth to power and to empower others to do the same. This is the sword that Jesus is talking about, his ministry generating violence to the powers of the world to bring healing and reconciliation to the earth. Jesus' conquest of death the ultimate demonstration of the power of God in the face of human assertions of power and authority.

Jesus reminds the disciples and us that following him makes every other claim on our lives secondary. Our identity is in Christ alone, our power is in Christ's name, our comfort and security is only in him.

This is Jesus' great challenge to us all. To acknowledge the fear that the pandemic and other forces arouse in us and to examine that fear in the clear light of the Gospel. God will be with us. God is our strength and our salvation and God has promised through the power of the Holy Spirit to be with us always. God who is clothed in mercy, compassion and love for all his children.

Do not be afraid is written 365 times in the Bible, once for every day of the year. What could we do for God if we weren't afraid and if we knew we couldn't fail because we were convinced that God has plans to prosper and not harm us?

A prayer for us all. God of courage and light, take away our fear and fill us with your love so we can respond to the call that you have on our lives, to live out your Gospel and to help bring about the kingdom of God in this place and time.

**Amen**

## **HYMNS & WORSHIP SONGS**

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

All I once held dear, built my life upon (StF 489)

Only by grace can we enter (StF 565) – a gentle worship song with special words, to sing along with this week

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F21gQwATaac>

Lord, we have come at your own invitation (StF 595)

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? (StF 673)

## 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.*

*This coming Sunday our prayers will be focussed on the **younger members of our society** who are affected by the pandemic – those affected by economic hardship, by disruption of their education, the loss of entry-level jobs and rising unemployment. We pray that they will all receive the help that they need, be it access to mental health support, vaccinations, special therapies, free school meals, encouragement to take part in physical activity or early years services so that they get the best start in life.*

### ***A Kitchen Prayer***

Bless my kitchen, Lord, I love it's every nook

And bless me as I do my work, wash pots and pans and cook.

May the meals that I prepare be seasoned from above

With thy blessing and thy grace but most of all, thy love.

As we partake of earthly food, the table thou hast spread,

We'll not forget to thank thee, Lord, for all our daily bread

So bless my kitchen, Lord and those who enter in.

May they find naught but joy and peace and happiness therein. **Amen**

*An anonymous prayer, chosen by Cookery writer and TV personality, Mary Berry, for inclusion in a book of Favourite Prayers edited by Deborah Cassidi.*

### ***Keep me in thy love***

*As Thou wouldst that all should be kept in mine.*

*May everything in this my being be directed to Thy glory*

*And may I never despair*

*For I am under Thy hand*

*And in Thee is all power and goodness.*

***Dag Hammarskjöld (1905-61) Former Secretary General to the United Nations***

Many of you will already be familiar with the moving poem, *FOOTPRINTS* which expresses God's unfailing love for us, and has inspired countless people across the world. It is always worth revisiting it from time to time, and perhaps at this unique time in our history, it's words are even more appropriate and encouraging?



## FOOTPRINTS

One night I dreamed a dream.  
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.  
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.  
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,  
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,  
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.  
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,  
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,  
there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.  
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,  
You'd walk with me all the way.  
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,  
there was only one set of footprints.  
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you  
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.  
When you saw only one set of footprints,  
It was then that I carried you."

*When solid ground seems to be cut from beneath you, remember God's promise of eagles' wings.*

*"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall walk and not faint." Isaiah 40: vs 31.*

## RESOURCES

The re-opening of Church House Bookshop this week was honoured with the latest bit of Dave Walker's humour, usually featuring separately in the Church Times.

**Some suggestions to add to your reading list ~**

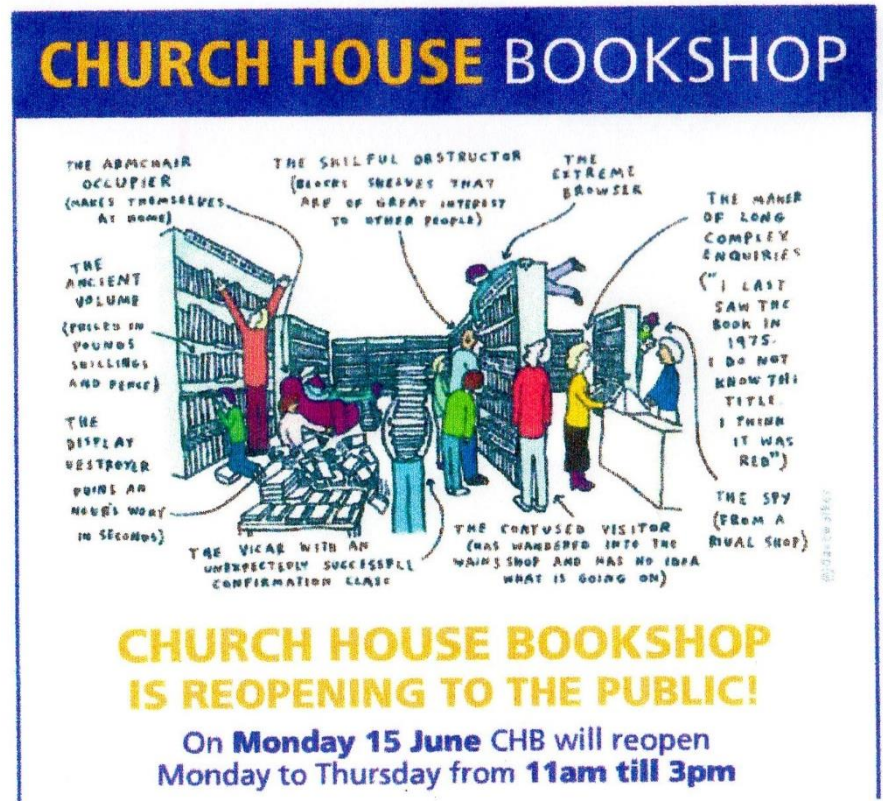
**Favourite Prayers** compiled by Deborah Cassidi Continuum 1998.

**Who Cares?** Thought and prayers for those who care and for those who need care. Edited and compiled by Mary Oakley Tim Tyley Ltd 1994

**Journey to Contentment:** Pilgrimage principles for everyday life Sally Welsh BRF 2020

Attached to this Bulletin are these three items:-

- ✚ Lift up your hearts *Church Times* 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020
- ✚ A Reflection from the Revd Andrew Haines for Trinity 2
- ✚ A Reflection from Revd Canon Jim Canning for Trinity 2



## 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. <sup>i</sup>

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