

PARTNERS

weekly newsletter



21st February 2021
Lent 1

OLD NEWS CAN BE GOOD NEWS!

Have you noticed how very similar good news stories come round every so often? One of the themes is letters which get delivered decades late. I can't remember how many times I've heard similar stories over the years. This week it was headlined, 'Sailor's WWII card delivered after 78 years'. A lovely story of how a postcard arrived at an address in Liverpool, sent by an 18-year-old RN sailor in 1943 to his uncle Fred, who has now died, but a relative still lives in the house, and was able to pass the card on to Fred's daughter, who was thrilled to receive it. A lovely story. Old news can bring great joy.

I wonder whether sometimes the Scripture passages we hear in Church, or even the seasons of the Church's Year itself, can seem a bit like 'old news' – with a bit of a 'Here we go again' feel to them.

But old news can be good news. As we hear the Year B Bible Readings each week, as we think about how we might keep Lent this year, perhaps as we attend the Lent Groups based on 'The Greatest Showman' and reflect on some quite familiar Biblical material during those, we can look afresh at the old news, and see what fresh, Spirit-filled, Jesus-led, God-inspired good news, they might have for us.

Old news can still be Good News.

Blessings for this Lenten Season.

Gary.

St Mary's
Fordingbridge
SP6 1BB

St Mary's
Breamore
SP6 2DF

Holy Ascension
Hyde
SP6 2QJ

St Giles
Godshill
SP6 2JJ

St Boniface
Woodgreen
SP6 2AJ

St Mary's
Hale
SP6 2RF

Sandleheath
Uniting Church
SP6 1PT

Readings for this week

21st February 2021

Lent 1

COLLECT:

Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer
that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

PSALM 25:1-9 *(For Morning Prayer)*

1. To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; O my God, in you I trust;
Let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies triumph over me.
2. Let none who look to you be put to shame,
But let the treacherous be shamed and frustrated.
3. Make me to know your ways, O Lord,
And teach me your paths.
4. Lead me in your truth and teach me,
For you are the God of my salvation; for you have I hoped all the day
long.
5. Remember, Lord, your compassion and love,
For they are from everlasting.
6. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions,
But think on me in your goodness, O Lord, according to your steadfast
love.
7. Gracious and upright is the Lord;
Therefore shall he teach sinners in the way.

8. He will guide the humble in doing right
And teach his way to the lowly.
9. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth
To those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

Genesis 9:8-17

When the flood is over, God gives the rainbow as a sign of his promise never to destroy the earth again.

⁸ God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ ‘As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ ¹² God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ ¹⁷ God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.’

At the end, the Reader says:

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL READING

Please stand and turn to face the Gospel Reader

When the Gospel is announced, the Reader says:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *Mark*

Glory to you, O Lord.

(Glory be to thee, O Lord.)

Jesus is affirmed at his baptism by the words of God the Father, and the gift of the Spirit, and after a period of preparation goes public with his proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' ¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

At the end, the Reader says:
This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

(At the end, the Reader says:
This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.)

(c) New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

Lord God,
you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;
by it you nourish our faith,
increase our hope,
and strengthen our love:
teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread,
and enable us to live by every word
that proceeds from out of your mouth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
AMEN.

EMERGENCY PRAYER CHAIN

Please send all requests for prayer to prayer@avonvalleychurches.org.uk. If you feel able to commit to regular prayer for those on the list and wish to become a prayer partner, please make contact via the above e-mail address.



IN & ABOUT: Much of the next couple of weeks will be occupied with the Parochial Reorganisation I mentioned last week. The Revd Ian Whitham has offered his resignation in the Ringwood/St Leonard's and St Ive's Benefice, and will not be replaced; and the Priest-in-Charge of Mudeford, the Revd Andrew Jablonski (along with his wife, Anne, the Associate Priest) is to retire at the end of May. The proposal is for Mudeford and Burton Parish to form a new Benefice with one Incumbent; and for Sopley, Burley (where the House-for-Duty priest, the Revd Angie Gammon is retiring next month), Bransgore and Hinton Admiral to form a new Benefice with an Incumbent and House-for-Duty post. Please continue to pray for all the People and Parishes involved. There is a series of meetings with each of the individual PCCs planned over the next fortnight.

Monday, Gary is leading the Lent Group in the Morning, and hosting the Deanery 'Pop-Up Evening' with Andy Saunders for all those involved in Youth and Children's Work in the Deanery (all welcome - if you want to come, ask Gary or the Office for the link). **Tuesday**, Lent Group in the evening. **Wednesday**, Benefice of the Future Meeting in the morning, Lent Group in the afternoon, and meeting with Mudeford PCC in the evening. **Thursday**, Staff Communion and Meeting in the morning, on-line school assembly in the afternoon, and Staff Meeting in the evening. **Friday**, preparation for Sunday, giving blood, and visiting all of the Churches in the afternoon.

LENT GROUPS : this year, will be on-line, weekly, on **Monday mornings**, 10.30-12.00, **Tuesday evenings**, 7.00-8.30, and **Wednesday afternoons**, 2.00-3.30 all from the week of February 22nd, to March 24th (one exception Tuesday, March 23rd is PCC, so will meet on March 30th). We are be looking at a course called '**From Now On – Hope & Redemption**', by Rachel Mann, based on the film, 'The Greatest Showman' – we wanted something enjoyable and uplifting for this year.

The Zoom details for all the Lent Groups - Monday Mornings (10.30), Tuesday Evenings (7.00), Wednesday Afternoons (2.00) – from Feb 22nd
Meeting ID: 838 2153 3016 and Passcode: 877953 (direct link in Partners email).

COMPLINE IN LENT : During Lent, the Royal School of Church Music will be holding Night Prayer (Compline) Services every Wednesday at 8.00pm and they'd love anyone to join in, either to listen to or sing along. The liturgy will come from the RSCM's Night Prayer or Compline (Traditional language) Common Worship publications, and will be on the screen as we go through the service. Every service will be broadcast live on the RSCM Facebook page and the RSCM Centre YouTube channel. One of our Co-Directors of Music at Fordingbridge, Tim Ruffer, is organising the series, and Gary will be appearing, too. (If you'd like to be able to sing along, the music and rehearsal tracks are available from the RSCM Shop on-line – search for 'Come and Sing Compline in Lent').

KINKIIZI LENT APPEAL - 40p for 40days : This year's Deanery appeal aims to raise money for the Nyakatare Health Centre, Kinkiizi. Christchurch Deanery began funding of this project in 2016 and they just need £3000 to complete the final unit. More information is available from the poster on the AVC website or from Kinkiizi Action Group Chair Gill Tybjerg gillytybjerg@btinternet.com 07745 049824. Save just 40p per day for 40 days (starting from 17 February) and this will help attract staff to the centre and thereby improve health facilities in this rural area.

KINKIIZI UPDATE : If you missed yesterday's 'Saturday Conversation' with Bishop Dan of Kinkiizi, do catch up with it on Facebook, YouTube or via our website. It was wonderful and encouraging to hear news from there, and how they appreciate our support. Links on the Partners page of the website.

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY & SATURDAY CONVERSATIONS: Each weekday at 10.00 there is a *Thought for the Day*, always on Facebook (also available through the Avon Valley Churches website) and usually on YouTube. We have a group of around 20 people, lay and ordained, who lead these, and it's a wonderful pause in the day – you can listen at whatever times suit you. We're always looking for more people to offer Thoughts, so do speak to Gary if you might be interested in contributing – either occasionally or regularly. The *Saturday Conversation* is a highlight of the weekend for me! Do join at 10.00, or catch up any time after that. Gary.

CHURCHES OPEN/CLOSED : We are awaiting the next announcement from the Government, which should come on Monday, before deciding when we can safely and reasonably return to our worship in Church – something we're very much looking forward to. We will update you when we have more news but in the meantime our on-line services will continue.

At present our churches are open/closed as follows:

Fordingbridge	will be open for prayer from 10-4
Sandleheath and Godshill	will be closed
Hale and Woodgreen	will remain open for prayer each day
Hyde and Breamore	will be closed until 21st February

During the Lockdown: There will be **Services** on-line each Sunday at 10.00, and some 8.15s and 6.00 Sanctus/Evening Prayers as well. *Thought for the Day* every weekday and the *Saturday Conversation* at 10.00.

COFFEE AFTER SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE : We will be having on-line coffee after the morning service each week. Everyone is welcome to join us. Meeting ID 646 331 066 Password 123654. The direct link which will also let you in, will be in the Partner's email.

MORNING PRAYER : On Mondays and Wednesdays at 9am, Morning Prayer is said together on Zoom, and anyone is welcome to join in. Log-in details are *Meeting ID: 157 284 292 and Password: 764200*

ACCESS TO ON-LINE WORSHIP : Whilst our services will continue to be streamed live on-line either via Facebook, Zoom or our website (and available afterwards on YouTube); all services are also available on our new **telephone line**, 01425 543305, charged at your normal local rate. If you want to listen to live or recorded worship (and to hear Gary's cheerful greeting!), it's usually easier to put your phone onto speakerphone, so you can sit back and enjoy.

PASTORAL CARE IN THE AVC and OF OUR ON-LINE CONGREGATIONS : The Pastoral Visitors support parishioners by visiting, phoning, praying with them, and in other ways. If you or anyone you know needs our support, please contact pastoralcareleaders@avonvalleychurches.org.uk or phone the Church Office.

BISHOPS PERMISSION TO PREACH : The Diocese will soon be opening for applications for the Bishop's Permission to Preach (BPP) programme for 2021-2022, which starts in September 2021. If this is something you are interested in, full details are on the Avon Valley Churches website in the "News" section.

HALE and WOODGREEN COMMUNITY COOKBOOK : The new cookbook is arriving soon, ten years on from the first edition. This one contains over 80 new recipes, the majority of which have been sent in by people in and around our parish and has been put together during lockdown. Launch date 1st March 2021 in time for perfect Mother's Day present. To pre-order and get a special signed copy call 07799 542707 or email Lynda.warne@hotmail.co.uk.

REFLECTION : What a fantastic idea it was to offer every child/young person in Fordingbridge a special AVC cupcake from the Cottage Loaf during half term. A generous act and positive outreach to our community during these difficult times. Also good to support a local business and back the Fordingbridge **"Keep the heart beating"** campaign. More than ever those shops that are open need our support as will others when they eventually re-open. During Lent, a time for reflection, we traditionally look to give something up. Another option, or in addition, is to do something new whether that be volunteering, donating to a good cause or carrying out a simple act of kindness. I found out from our son's school that last week was Random Acts of Kindness week. What could be more Christian than to show an act of kindness to a neighbour, friend or even complete stranger. It is a win/win result for the giver and the receiver and now, more than ever, will help us all.



Stephen Darke

This Week

21st February 2021

Lent 1

**Online/live streamed services via Facebook, Website or
Faith Online and available afterwards on YouTube**
“Avon Valley Churches”

Sunday 21 Feb	8.15am	Holy Communion	On-line
	10.00am	Morning Service	On-line

Mon to Fri	10.00am	Thought for the Day
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Mon 22	9.00am	Morning Prayer (Meeting ID: 157 284 292, Password: 764200)	On-line (Zoom)
	10.30	Lent Group	On-line (Zoom)
Tue 23	11.00am	<i>Funeral of the late Peter Arnold</i>	<i>Woodgreen</i>
	7.00pm	Lent Group	On-line (Zoom)
Wed 24	9.00am	Morning Prayer (details as Monday)	On-line (Zoom)
	2.00pm	Lent Group	On-line (Zoom)
Sat 27	10.00am	The Saturday Conversation	On-line

Sunday 28 Feb	10.00am	Holy Communion	On-line
	6.00pm	Evensong	On-line

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED TO VISITORS

Contact : Gail Newell or Jackie Rowe, Parish Administrators
Email : office@avonvalleychurches.org.uk or call 01425 653163
Website : www.AvonValleyChurches.org.uk