



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Trinity

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Well, what a strange and tumultuous time it continues to be in the world. Quite apart from the usual Covid-19 shenanigans (of which more in a moment) the last week or so has seen not only significant unrest in America, following the killing of George Floyd but, in our own country has seen a statue torn down in Bristol and violence in Whitehall around other statues. Whilst I absolutely and unreservedly agree that we need to eliminate racism from all areas of society (including within the church), and whilst we need to confront our own past and present complicity in that racism, it also feels like there are some collective marbles being lost, and I don't mean the plinths under statues. Like the iconoclasts and puritans of the past, who smashed icons and statues of saints, it feels like images (including TV shows from previous decades) are being targeted and eliminated in the hope that it will make the present a better place. But, of course, we only make the present a better place by changing ourselves. As I said in a Facebook post last week, if we cheer the destruction of past slavery whilst being silent in the face of modern slavery and living off the back of Third World exploitation, then we are no more than virtue-signalling hypocrites.

In Covid Land, there are some glimmers of hope. As some of the restrictions are lifted we took the children for a socially-distant barbecue with grandparents last weekend and took a single friend from Tonbridge out for a walk on Sunday afternoon. The children may even be having a limited return to school, just in time for the Summer holidays. The shops are gradually opening and, although there are more face masks in evidence, there is generally a feel that 'normality' is creeping back in. Sadly this does not apply to all individuals (plenty still need to be cautious because of underlying health concerns) and neither does it apply to the church.

The Government said that churches could reopen for private prayer (not collective worship) with effect from 13th June, but it only issued the detailed guidance on how this should be done on 12th June. The guidance contained many steps that churches need to take in order to open for private prayer and I am grateful to Barbara Smith for preparing a risk assessment on what we need to do. Barbara, Michael and I are currently working through this process and deciding how this will be implemented - however it is a tricky balance trying to keep the building 'Covid safe' but maintaining the look and feel of a place in which people may actually want to pray. Whilst that continues, and before the building is open again, if you ever want someone to talk to or to pray with then please do not hesitate to contact me.

In the meantime I hope that the (twice) daily Facebook live services are useful, it is great to pray with those who are there and I also hope that the Zoom services are working for you. I know that they are far from perfect on a technical level but we need to remind ourselves that we are currently the catacomb church, doing its best in trying circumstances. I suspect that this is going to be the 'new normal' until at least the Autumn. There is no one more dedicated than I to the sacred space of our church buildings, and it pains me not to be there, but I would rather worship well online rather than put you through some of the socially distant worship models I have seen. The good news is that the phone line into the church has now been repaired and I hope to upgrade our broadband, so it may become possible for me to stream some services from the church soon. The one thing that is guaranteed is that this situation will continue to change week by week. However, we journey through this together and we remember always that the church has suffered much worse than this in many places and at many times over the last 2000 years and has come through it, as shall we.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at our 10.00 am service on Zoom but, if worshipping online is not your thing (and I do understand that) please don't forget that I am still here, in reality, and happy to talk whenever suits.

God bless,

Paul

### *Parish News*

**June Services** A list of all livestreamed services for June is available on the website or [here](#).

**Sunday 10am Eucharist for the second Sunday of Trinity** In order to get the service started on time, do feel free to start joining from about 9.50am onwards. This will be conducted from the Vicarage. The order of service will appear on the screen as we go, and is also available on the church website or [here](#). If you have not received the invitation contained in an email from Paul, please let him have your email address.

**Zoom Coffee.** We are planning to have coffee 'virtually' between 11.00am and 12.00pm again this Sunday after the service, via Zoom. If you would like to join us, the link will be the same as for the 10am service.

**Financial giving.** Thank you to all who are continuing to give to St. Mary's at this time. Your contributions are vital to maintaining ministry and meeting ongoing costs. If you would like to give on a regular basis, a standing order with your bank would be much appreciated. Please contact me on [mhmassy@btinternet.com](mailto:mhmassy@btinternet.com) or 07725 603952 for further details, or if you would like to give by cheque or have your envelopes collected. Martin Massy – Treasurer

### **Collect for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Trinity**

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

### **Today's Readings**

Genesis 21. 8-21

Matthew 10. 24-39

### **Next Week's Readings (Trinity 3)**

Romans 6. 12-end

Matthew 10. 40-end

### **Prayers for the Week**

#### **We pray for all those living in:**

The Freehold and Mill View

#### **At the first anniversary of their wedding we pray for**

Mark Mumford and Sarah Scott

#### **From our Book of Remembrance we pray for:**

Laura Trayford (22<sup>nd</sup>)

Douglas Oswald Reeves (23<sup>rd</sup>)

John William Frost (24<sup>th</sup>)

Sue Livett (24<sup>th</sup>)

Freda Mabel Day (26<sup>th</sup>)

*If you would like a loved one added to the Book of Remembrance, please contact Janice on [office@stmaryshadow.org.uk](mailto:office@stmaryshadow.org.uk)*

