

Stour Vale Letter No. 36

In our Churches:



We continue in this second lockdown, hopefully only until Wednesday 2nd December. The government instruction for places of worship is that they should close for this period except for funerals and private prayer. Those churches amongst our parishes that open for private prayer will continue to do so. (see the list below)

Online Services continue

Yes, for the lockdown duration we will be live streaming a service of Morning Worship on Sunday mornings at 11.00am. These will be on:

Sunday 15th November

Sunday 22nd November

Sunday 29th November

Join us live on: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Anglican-Church/Stour-Vale-CofE-107130680934164/> or watch the video afterwards. Remember, you do not have to have a Facebook account to join us. If you see a box asking you to do so, just click "Not Now" and watch as a visitor.



Readings and Collect for 8th November

Zephaniah 1.7, 12-18 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11 Matthew 25. 14-30

Psalms 90. 1-8, 12



Collect:

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Church of England's Month of Prayer



The Archbishop of Canterbury and York have invited us all to make November a month of prayer, asking us to pray at 6pm each day. Of course, do be flexible with the time and do whatever suits you but the thought behind the request is that we are in the faithful hands of the risen Christ who knows our weaknesses, tiredness and struggles and whose steadfast love endures forever. There is a web link to some resources at [https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation)

[centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation) In addition, please find here a direct link to a simple printable prayer booklet which is intended to be shared with all members of your congregation - Prayer Booklet.

Saint of the Week



Having spent several family holidays in and around North Yorkshire, there was a running joke in the Padjasek household that “Hilda is very big in Whitby.” But it’s not a joke – she is! In 657 she became the abbess of Whitby Abbey and its prestige is reflected in the fact that King Oswiu of Northumberland chose Hilda's monastery as the venue for the Synod of Whitby, the first synod of the Church in his kingdom. Most of those present, including Hilda, accepted the King's decision to adopt the method of calculating Easter used in Rome, establishing Roman practice as the norm in Northumbria.

The Venerable Bede describes Hilda as a woman of great energy, a skilled administrator and teacher. As a landowner she had many in her employ to care for sheep and cattle, farming, and woodcutting. She gained such a reputation for wisdom that kings and princes sought her advice. So quite a woman for her times!

Prayer

A Celtic prayer – a style that Hilda may have been familiar with...

Circle us, Lord
Keep strife without, keep peace within
Keep fear without, keep hope within
Keep pride without, keep trust within
Keep evil out, keep good within
May we walk in the hope of your kingdom
Fill us with your light and love
Be with us all through this day
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Amen.



Quote of the Week



“It is better to walk through darkness, the Lord guiding you, than to sit enthroned in light that radiates from yourself.”

Cardinal Basil Hume

Poem

It has been a lovely time for walks in the woods with all the beautiful autumn colours. Here are some words from poet, Mary Oliver:



How I go to the woods

Ordinarily, I go to the woods alone, with not a single friend, for they are all smilers and talkers and therefore unsuitable. I don't really want to be witnessed talking to the catbirds or hugging the old black oak tree. I have my way of praying, as you no doubt have yours.

Besides, when I am alone I can become invisible. I can sit on the top of a dune as motionless as an uprise of weeds, until the foxes run by unconcerned.

I can hear the almost unheard sound of the roses singing.

If you have ever gone to the woods with me, I must love you very much.

Pause for Thought

Another offering from Rev Preb Mike Vockins:

Thoughts on Noah and his Ark



1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Try to remember we're all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead - it wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit and aware – when you're 600 years old you might be asked to take on a really big challenge.
5. Don't be put off by those who criticize; if you're convinced it's right, get on with it.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. Enjoy the benefits of travelling in pairs – for two heads are better than one, and it's always good to have a friend.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage: the snails were able to come on board as well as the cheetahs.
9. Remember: the Ark was built by keen amateurs (and the Titanic was built by professionals!).
10. Trust in God; there'll be a rainbow at the end of the storm.

For your Prayers

We pray for all who are struggling in these challenging times. We remember the ill and the anxious, the lonely and afraid, the forgotten and the unloved, the isolated and the those who are unable to meet with loved ones, those who find the world a confusing place, those who have lost their way, and those who feel alone, even when they are not.



We pray for those waiting for medical procedures and those whose treatment has been delayed. We pray for those suffering from Covid-19 and those with other medical conditions. And we pray for all who help those in need: our medical professions, our carers and health visitors, our counsellors and those who operate helplines, and all in our communities who simply keep a kindly eye on their neighbours. May everyone know God's comforting arms around them and feel his love as a cloak of protection and strength.

And we pray for our church communities as our church buildings are shut once again. May they support each other and prove to the communities that surround them that the church is not confined within Sunday walls but showing God's glory out and about, each and every day.

Private Prayer

Our churches are allowed to remain open for private prayer or just to sit for a while in the peace and quiet of our ancient buildings. Please do take advantage of this.

Buckhorn Weston	Thursdays	10am - 12 noon
East Stour	Thursdays	10am – 12 noon
Kington Magna	Tuesdays	10am – 12 noon
West Stour	Wednesdays	10am – 12 noon

Todber is currently closed due to ceiling damage.

Fifehead Magdalen and Stour Provost are not able to open their churches during the week. But please do remember all these three communities in your prayers.

This Newsletter



If you know of anyone who doesn't yet receive the newsletter but would like to, let them know about it and tell them to send their email address to richard@allegro.co.uk with the subject "Newsletter Mailing List" But, if you do not wish to continue receiving them, please email him at with "Unsubscribe" in the subject field.

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