

Stour Vale Letter No. 58

Our Church Services – 2nd May

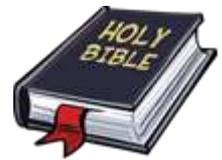
You are very welcome to any of our services. The usual safety procedures of sanitizing on entry and exit and the wearing of a face covering will be in place, and please do maintain a social distance from others at all times. This week we have:

9.15am	Todber	Parish Communion (CW)
10.30am	West Stour	Morning Worship (CW)
11.00am	East Stour	Parish Communion (CW)

(CW = Common Worship BCP = Book of Common Prayer)

Collect & Readings for 2nd May

Acts 8. 26-end 1 John 4. 7-end John 15. 1-8
Psalm 22. 25-end



Collect

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 forever.

Praying for our communities



In the Stour Vale this week we pray for God's blessing on the community in Todber: the congregation of St Andrew's church and all who live and work in the village and its surrounding area. Please find a few moments in the week to hold them in your prayers.

The photo shows Easter flower arrangements from 2019, highlighted by some lovely Todber sunshine!

Quote of the week

"For though my faith is not yours and your faith is not mine, if we each are free to light our own flame, together we can banish some of the darkness of the world"

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Events in the Stour Vale!

Yes, it's been a long time since we were able to say that isn't it?! But, as Boris' roadmap out of lockdown continues, we have some church and village events planned for you to look forward to:



May 1st – 9th : West Stour Plant Sale

Plants will be available for sale from the bottom of certain driveways in West Stour. Half of the proceeds will go to St Mary's Church and the remainder will be divided between Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance and the Salisbury Hospital Stars Appeal. This new format worked well last year and more plants are available this time so don't delay! The plants will be available from 1st – 9th May in order to avoid crowds and the attendant risks of Covid-19.

May 22nd : Fifehead Magdalen Plant Sale

More plants will be for sale from Saturday 22nd May at 10am on the drive of Three Farthings and will continue beyond this date so do take a look if you are passing.

May 15th – 27th: Fifehead Kitchens

The Fifehead kitchens will be open for orders during this period and a list of available items will be posted outside Three Farthings. Just put your order and money through the letterbox, together with the date required. Friday Night Takeaways are also being planned – more details from rosemaryredwood@hotmail.com

More dates for your summer diary –

July 4th : Open Gardens in Kington Magna

July 10th : Buckhorn Weston Summer Fete

Saint of the Week: Julian of Norwich



On Saturday 8th May we celebrate Mother Julian of Norwich, the famous anchoress who lived much of her life in a small room attached to St Julian's church in that Norfolk city. Julian had a number of visions of the risen Jesus and, unusually for the time, she wrote them down in a book we now know as "*Revelations of Divine Love*". They all point us towards one thing: we are loved, and many of her sayings are greatly treasured to this day. For example, what's not to like about this assurance:

"What, do you wish to know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well, love was his meaning. Who reveals it to you? Love. What did he reveal to you? Love. Why does he reveal it to you? For love. Remain in this, and you will know more of the same."

Poem

Another seasonal one from Gideon Heugh (yes, I'm hooked!)



Camellias

It was a dark spring, cold,
with the news hammering home
saying don't hold too close
to the hope you have known.

But the camellias didn't care.
they staged a coup in the night
and by morning had raised their flags
of bright pink hallelujahs.

Pause for Thought

Thank you to Tony Jones of East Stour for this week's thought...

Six little stories with lots of meanings:

- Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered but only one boy brought an umbrella. That is **faith**.
- When you throw babies in the air they laugh because they know you will catch them. That is **trust**.
- Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but we still set the alarms to wake up. That is **hope**.
- We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. That is **confidence**.
- We see the world suffering but still we get married and have children. That is **love**.
- On an old man's shirt was written the sentence: "I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years experience." That is **attitude**.



Prayer

A rather lovely prayer found in an anthology this week...

May we accept this day at your hand, O Lord,
as a gift to be treasured,
a life to be enjoyed,
a trust to be kept,
and a hope to be fulfilled;
and all for your glory,
Amen.



Stanley Pritchard

For your Prayers

We pray for the many businesses which can now to re-open in some form, especially those within our own Benefice. And we remember those who are nervous of venturing out into society again.



We continue to give thanks for the roll-out of vaccines and for those who are continuing to research new treatments. We pray for all in our medical professions, carers and health visitors, counsellors and those who operate helplines for those in need.

We pray for the many charities which have lost substantial funds during the pandemic, hindering the valuable work they do. We give thanks for all who volunteer to help them. And we pray for our churches who are now preparing fund-raising events once more.

We remember all who are struggling in any way; the anxious, the lonely and afraid, the forgotten and the unloved, and those who are low in spirits. We pray for those who have financial worries and those who may lose their jobs.

We pray for those who are ill, those awaiting delayed hospital procedures, and those who have lost loved ones during the past year. We commend all who have died to God's loving care and ask for comfort and strength for those who miss them

Private Prayer

From April, most of our churches will be open throughout the week for private prayer. Please do take advantage of this. While we move forward on the Government roadmap, there is still much that needs our prayers.

And if you visit our beautiful churches and feel you can make a donation to their life and upkeep, please do so. In these difficult times it would be very much appreciated.



This Newsletter



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