



OLD HILLS MALVERN HEADLINES

Keeping You in touch with Your Churches during the Coronavirus

Thy Kingdom Come Special

'Prayer is not the beginning of the work...Prayer is the work' Oswald Chambers

Hello - The short season, from Ascension (Thursday) through to the Pentecost (a week on Sunday) is known as a time of devotion and prayer. In this edition of Headlines, I provide you with some resources for this season, including links (if you are looking at this on line) to daily reflections produced by ministers across Malvern. In addition, there is a beautiful reflection on the Ascension from Julia Davis and an update on the work of the Worcestershire Animal Rescue Sanctuary at Deblins Green, WARS. A few bits n bobs of update too. I do hope that you will use this short season to deepen your prayer, and join in with others so to do. Plus- the return of the Quiz. Every blessing - Rev Gary

Edition 9 Easter 7 for Sunday 24th May 2020

CHURCH STATUS All Churches **CLOSED** for all Public Worship except Graveside Funerals

SUNDAY WORSHIP Zoom Service - see email from me (not Zoom) for link and password.

A Service of Holy Communion for Ascension-tide by ZOOM at 10.30am Sunday 24th May 2020

A Service of **Spiritual Communion is available on line** if you cannot access the Zoom Service. Intercessions for the week, based on the Lectionary readings for Easter 7 are on line and attached to the covering email you used to access this newsletter.

Common Worship Lectionary Readings Acts 1.1-11, Luke 24.44-end (additionally - Daniel 7.9-14 and Ephesians 1.15-end)

THURSDAY NIGHT PRAYER VIA ZOOM – 8.30pm-9.00pm - Contact rev Gary for Zoom access link/codes (normally on the weekly covering email for the *Headlines* circulation)

Our Prayers this week should remember: the Headteachers and Governors as they contemplate responding to the Government's call to reopen the schools to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils, where they can. We hold Mrs Stevens, Mrs Greenwood and Mrs Wilkinson particularly in our prayers. We pray for the communities in which we live and serve - all that are unwell, in body, mind or spirit. Those anxious or unwell due to COVID19. We pray for the families of James Booth and Felicity Pollard – their funerals are in the coming week or have just taken place. May their loved one's rest in peace and rise in Glory. Amen.

Theological Reflection - **Biblically reflecting on the easing of lockdown** – I didn't get any feedback on my first reflection on the *Frozen Sword* motif of 2 Samuel 23.9-10. Never mind, I will persevere. With talk about the pros/cons of wearing face masks, how are we masking our faith? Do we wear different masks in our lives – covering who we truly are? Perhaps, we should remove our masks, in faith terms, and show who we truly are? Thoughts?



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A reflection on The Ascension by Julia Davis, Reader/Licensed Lay Minister

Be prepared for whatever happens is a good motto. In the three years that the disciples followed Jesus, all they witnessed and what Jesus taught them was like their apprenticeship, getting them ready to take up his challenge.

When Jesus died, in their grief they had forgotten what he had told them, that he would rise on the third day. So his first task was to convince them that he had risen and was alive.

During the following forty days he met with them, ate with them, but most importantly tried to prepare them for the final stage of their apprenticeship, the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

When they first followed Jesus, it is doubtful they could have realised the impact it would have on their lives. That he had been preparing them for a mission to be his witnesses and spread the good news, not only in that region, but around the world.

They witnessed him being taken up in a cloud to heaven. Two angels appeared and told them he would return in the same way. The disciples probably thought it would be in their lifetime, but actually they had not given a time scale, so we are still waiting.

According to Jesus' promise, all who follow him and trust in God will also rise to eternal life.

So, is our time here on earth our apprenticeship, a time to learn and grow and draw nearer to God, a time of preparation ready to meet him face to face?

Does this alter our way of thinking, especially now in this time of separation and loss, to realise that this life is only a pathway onto the next, that separation may only be for a while?

We live in that hope and expectation and continue our apprenticeship.

Thy Kingdom Come

Many of you will be familiar with this global prayer initiative which encourages us, the church, to focus our prayers between Ascension and Pentecost specifically on praying that more people would come to know Jesus. More details can be seen on line - <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/> Across Malvern, *Churches Together in Malvern* have come up with some resources that we can all use, together, even in lockdown. So how might we get involved? Here are my suggestions:

Daily Prayer Reflection – please find below 5 daily reflections on prayer from different Malvern Ministers which we offer and hope you will feel able to make them available to your church family.

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| Monday | Prayer Changes Us (Rev'd Peter Myres - Curate of The Chase Team, Malvern)
https://youtu.be/6tE0jpAIE0k |
| Tuesday | Unanswered Prayer (Rev'd Gary Crellin – I think you know who this bloke is)
https://youtu.be/tGGqd79IVB0 |
| Wednesday | Breathe (Rev'd Nigel Coke-Woods - Methodist Minister, Lansdown Methodist Church)
https://youtu.be/yORf9SuB7lw |
| Thursday | Watching at the Gates (Rev'd Dave Clark , Pastor – Malvern Baptists)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGIQLCATEzg |



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Friday

The Importance of Timing (Rev'd Rod Corke - Rural Dean and Vicar of Malvern Priory)

<https://youtu.be/aw8yhOcNPUA>

Practical Prayer Ideas

Pray for 5 – think of 5 people , especially those still to find Jesus, and pray for them each day.

Prayer Walk – walk and pray around your streets, on the hills, or around a specific area of your community or across Malvern where it's safe to do so - declare God's blessing on our communities. May be use the **Rogation service** as a guide – it can be downloaded via www.oldhillsmalvern.co.uk and look through the online resources.

Families – resources and ideas to help families get involved can be found on the TKC website

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/category-families-and-young-people>

A prayer resource for the benefice is in development. If you have any favourite prayers or suggestions to deepen prayer and prayerful living, please let me know.

Church News

The Church and Community at Guarlford- The community response to the Pandemic has really been inspiring, with so many people helping their neighbours across the communities. Errands have been run, listening ears have been offered, some certain crises have been averted. Out at Guarlford, errands have certainly been run, listening ears have been offered, some certain health crises have been detected or averted. The telephone box has come into its own as a place of exchange and information (The Grapevine , books etc.) the Church and Community has been supported by a developing link with the Upton upon Severn Baptist Church. To support a number of families couples and singletons in need in the village, we have been receiving food deliveries which Barbara has coordinated onward delivery. This small act of kindness from our friends in Upton has helped enormously. The village marked VE day in a simple dignified manner – with the union flag at the church, a bugler etc. They also gathered, respectfully to support the family and to say a village farewell for Edwin Lane from Woodfield Farm but we should note that other bereavements might have quietly just happened. The community still remembers and gives thanks for their lives. All in all, the small community at Guarlford seems to be coping well.

News on lockdown easing - nothing to report as yet. Lots of rumours but nothing consistent nor agreed.

PCC and Church Governance – I have written out to PCC Members across both parishes with a suggested way of ensuring that we remain “governant” during the pandemic. Although there is talk of lockdown easing, Church guidance is still indicating that meetings should not happen, unless they can be done on line or via correspondence. So that is whats being proposed. The congregations do, though, need to consider whether they can suggest candidates for the PCC and Deanery Synod. Perhaps you have been thinking, during the 9 weeks out, how you can serve with your church?



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Alms Charities - The Vicar is an *ex officio* trustee of a small number of “alms charities” that are available to those in extreme financial hardship across the parishes. The sums available are not great but just might help. I am in discussion with fellow trustees on how we can possibly use such funds, if applications are made to me. If you know of a genuine case of financial hardship, I can help though sign posting to Malvern CAP (see report next week) and the Malvern Foodbank is open for direct contact (see last week’s Headlines and possibly, and without commitment at this juncture, make a case to my fellow trustees to see if these ancient funds can be put to such use. If you know of anyone that could benefit, please ask them to contact me directly and in confidence by phone (01905 830270) or email (revgarycrellin@gmail.com) or post - The Vicarage, 31 The Greenway, Colletts Green , Powick, Worcs WR2 4RZ

Hold the front page! *The Grapevine* will be published for GMN online use and community reading via the Telephone boxes . Watch this space.....

Lockdown Lives

Worcestershire Animal Rescue Shelter

Nestling in the beautiful countryside between Bastonford and Callow End , on the back road to Madresfield, is the Worcestershire Animal Rescue Sanctuary. I have been there a good few times over the past two years and have blessed countless dog, cats and chickens at our Pet Services held each September and an animal memorial service too to remember pets long departed. Having got to know Jan and Phil well, I was wondering how they and the sanctuary, and charity, is fairing in these lockdown times. Here’s a contribution from Jan, the Chair of WARS:

Following Government Guidelines WARS is on lockdown at Hawthorn Lane with only two or three staff members working each day on a rota basis so that the 2m distancing is maintained. A couple of our staff voluntarily went into isolation due to them being in contact with family who had suspected Covid 19 symptoms. Thankfully, all are fine and now back to work. Sadly, our most valued volunteer force is not able to attend, and their presence is very much missed by both staff and animals alike. Both are looking forward to when restrictions are lifted so what they can resume normal work. It also has been necessary to cancel all our fundraising events which has placed enormous pressure on our finances; we have been extremely lucky with some truly kind volunteers donating monies to help us through this difficult time.

We feel extremely grateful that we have not had a massive influx of animals left on our doorstep which enables the staff members to manage the animals we currently have in our care; sadly though, trying to explain to the animals that they are not able to go to their forever homes is extremely upsetting for our staff, however homes are lined up for the majority of our animals, with families at the ready to come and meet them once we can reopen our gates. The staff continue to offer the best care possible, with the animals enjoying grooming sessions, mental and physical stimulation, training sessions and even free running around the site for some of the dogs.

For future updates, opening, fundraising events etc., please keep an eye on our website www.wars.org.uk

Kind regards to everyone and keep safe.

Jan Arpad - Chair



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BANK HOLIDAY ASCENSION DAY QUIZ SUPPLEMENT

1. In how many and which of the historic creeds of the Church is the Ascension affirmed?

- a. Two: the Nicene and Athanasian
- b. Two: the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds
- c. Three: the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds
- d. None: the Creeds were concerned with theological, not historical, matters

2. What is the liturgical colour most often associated with Ascension Day in the Western Church?

- a. Green
- b. Purple
- c. Red
- d. White ?

3. Is the Feast of the Ascension always and everywhere observed on the 40th day after Easter?

- a. No, sometimes it is celebrated on June 15.
- b. No, sometimes it is kept on the 7th Sunday of Easter.
- c. Yes, as this is the historically accurate date.
- d. No, sometimes it is kept on the 49th day after Easter.

4. How did Ascension Island, located in the middle of the South Atlantic Ocean, get its name?

- a. It was named by botanists after the fern *Pteris adscensionis* which grows there.
- b. NASA named it because of the powerful radar array located there to track the ascent of rockets launched from the United States.
- c. It was named after Mount Ascension, the volcanic peak responsible for its existence.
- d. It was discovered in 1503 by Alphonse d'Albuquerque on Ascension Day.

5. What Religious Holy and feast Day ends Ascension tide in 10 days time:

- a. Pentecost
- b. Rogation
- c. Trinity Sunday
- d. Palm Sunday

6. The Gospel according to Saint Luke says the Ascension occurred in the vicinity of Bethany (Luke 24:50-51). Where does the Acts of the Apostles say it happened?

- a. Mount Sinai
- b. Galilee
- c. The Mount of Olives
- d. Mount Zion



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7. In which of Shakespeare's plays does a character speak the following lines? "*Is this Ascension-day? Did not the prophet say that before Ascension-day at noon my crown I should give off? Even so I have: I did suppose it should be on constraint: But, heaven be thank'd, it is but voluntary.*"

- a. Henry V b. Richard II c. King John d. Richard III

8. There is a long-standing custom in England of "*beating the bounds*" on (or near) Ascension Day. What is involved?

- a. Processing around the parochial boundaries, pausing for prayer at particular landmarks.
b. Threshing stalks of wheat (and other grains) which have been bound together into bunches for drying in the fields.
c. Insulting everyone with the misfortune to have the surname of Bounds.
d. Marking the limits of the field where cricket matches will be played during the summer.

9. Salvador Dali painted a painting called "*The Ascension of Christ.*" What feature of Christ's body is most prominent in this painting?

- a. His wounded side b. His Head c. His Feet d. His Smile

10. Which of these Ascension Day food custom(s) is/are factual?

- a. Italians brought beans and grapes to the church to be blessed by the priest.
b. Armenians made dolmas -- stuffed grape leaves.
c. Amish in the United States went fishing.
d. All of these are actual Ascension Day customs.

Answers on the parish website on Sunday 24th May 2020

Not the *The End Times*.....

From Milton Jones' *10 second Sermons*.....My faith is like a joke – some people get it and some people don't and some people pretend they get it and some people pretend they don't.

As we contemplate resuming aspects of church life, especially PCC meetings - I hope this is NOT you: *Visitors to a church often find themselves thinking: what am I doing here? Sometimes, so do the congregation.*

Have a great week

Rev Gary



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