



The Lion

A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's Church, Basford

www.stmarksbasford.co.uk

May 2019



The Bishop's Pastoral Letter for April 2019

As I write a few snow drops are starting to bloom in the garden and there is some watery sunshine making a valiant effort to pierce the rather dull and gloomy skies of late winter. With Ash Wednesday still three weeks away, the glorious Festival of Easter that brings such promise as it welcomes spring and a sense of new beginnings seems a distant hope.

When the majority voted to change our present relationship with the rest of Europe the reality also seemed a long way off. Now it is still to take effect. We need to remember that we are a democratic nation and I would like to offer a few reflections to help us as we approach the local elections in May and just in case we are going to have another General Election sooner than anticipated.

Firstly – elections are really important. As Christians we have a duty to pray for those elected to serve us but it is also a key part of our Faith to actively seek the welfare and well-being of those in our communities. We have an obligation to vote in elections. To vote for those whom we think are best placed to improve that general welfare and especially care for those who do not have a vote.

Secondly – we need to encourage those who are going to stand in elections to listen to the real needs of their constituents *before* formulating their policies and making promises that sound good but are unrealistic or which will not tackle the issue. Many feel that people in Westminster do not always understand what is happening in the regions especially if they do not listen to our excellent local MPs. Policies shaped by the experience of those who have to live them out on a daily basis are much more effective.

Thirdly – we need to hold those who are elected (both nationally and locally) to account. The United Nations Special Rapporteur who produced such a sombre but candid Report on the state of poverty within the United Kingdom last year was clear that making the right decisions would see an improvement in living standards for the 14million people (one fifth of the population) living in poverty in the UK take effect quite quickly but governments of all political parties have failed to take

such decisions in recent years and the resulting poverty is unacceptable in a nation that has the world's fifth largest economy with many areas of immense wealth.

Finally – we need to pray for those who wish to stand for election and those elected; for those who formulate policies and those who implement them; for those whose lives improve and for those who continue to suffer as a result of these policies. As Christians we need to work actively for reconciliation not just between people of differing views but also between those who take decisions that affect the lives of others and those whose lives are affected.

I long to celebrate the joy of Easter as the Resurrection transforms the cross into a symbol of hope and new life. I long to celebrate the joy of Creation as the warmth of the spring weather transforms our countryside into a symbol of hope and new life. I long to celebrate the joy of God's Kingdom as its values and teaching transforms our communities into places of hope and new life.

+Geoff
Bishop of Stafford

An Easter Reflection

God never tries to overpower us or push us in a direction that we would rather not go; he always respects our freedom. The Easter story is very good example of this simple truth. The gospels insist that after the resurrection, his tomb was empty. Those who encountered Jesus after the resurrection could see him, hear him, and touch him. His friends shared food with him. Interestingly enough, however, it doesn't seem to have been big news at the time, nor did it result in a huge following of Jesus or a universal change of heart of the masses. Jesus was seen by some and not by others. There were those who embraced the message and their lives were changed and others who remained indifferent or disbelieving.

How could this be? How could some embrace this mystery and others be left, at best, indifferent? It's been suggested that a clue lies in a saying of an 11th century German theologian... "Love is the eye". Life teaches us that when we look at anything through the eyes of love,

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we see, understand and appreciate more fully. The reverse, however, is also true. When we look at anything through the eyes of jealousy or anger, our vision and understanding are both diminished.

In John's account of the Easter story we are told that Mary of Magdala, out of love for her master, goes out in search for him to anoint his dead body according to custom. The others remain where they are and as they are. When she arrives, she finds an empty tomb. She runs back to Peter and the beloved disciple to tell them that the tomb is empty. The two disciples set out towards the tomb together. John tells us that the younger of the two arrives first but waits for the other. It is Peter who enters the tomb first and sees the linen cloths that had covered the body of Jesus. There is no mention of what he understands concerning what he sees. In contrast, John tells us that the beloved disciple "saw and he believed". John's account of the Easter story, might well suggest that it is, in fact, love that lets us see and understand the resurrection.

Love is the reason why some saw Jesus after the resurrection and some did not. Love is the reason why some understood the resurrection and some did not.

The Lord is risen indeed! Let's pray that "love is the eye" that enables many to see and rejoice in the reality of this mystery over these coming weeks and we are enabled to present the truth clearly enough so that the eye can perceive.

Happy Easter! *Terry*

Worship Services during May

1 st	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
2 nd	Thursday	19.30pm	Confirmation
5 th	Third of Easter	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	'First Sunday' with HC
8 th	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
12 th	Fourth of Easter	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
15 th	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
19 th	Fifth of Easter	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Family Worship with Baptism
22 nd	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
25 th	Saturday	16.00pm	Wedding
26 th	Sixth of Easter	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
29 th	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)

Confirmation Service

Our confirmation service will take place at St Mark's church, Basford on 2nd May at 7.30pm and will be led by Bishop Geoff. This will then be followed by a 'bring and share buffet'.

Reading Circle

The reading circle, led by Janet, will resume in the choir vestry on Wednesday 1st May.

Diary Dates for May

1 st	Wednesday	19.30pm	Reading Circle resumes
2 nd	Thursday	19.30pm	Confirmation Service
7 th	Tuesday	19.30pm	Deanery sub meeting
9 th	Thursday	19.30pm	Archdeacons Visitation
13 th	Monday	19.30pm	Deanery synod at Bradwell
16 th	Thursday	19.00pm	Fashion Show
18 th	Saturday	19.30pm	String Trio Concert
22 nd	Wednesday	19.30pm	Baptism preparation

Early June Dates

5 th	Wednesday	19.30pm	Reading Circle
8 th	Saturday		St Chad's Pilgrim Walk
8 th	Saturday	19.00pm	Pie and Pea Supper with quiz
20 th	Thursday	19.30pm	Contemplative prayer
22 nd	Saturday		Llandudno Trip
24 th	Monday	19.30pm	Deanery Synod
26 th	Saturday	19.30pm	Baptism Prep

Gardening Team

Once again it's that time of the year when the Gardening Team request donations for the purchase of Summer Bedding plants to enhance the Church garden. Each year they rely on your kind donations and it is really appreciated by all the team.

Janet's Summer Evening of Music

This lovely evening of music with cheeses and wine will take place on 18th May at 7.30pm in the church. Tickets priced at £6 each.



Alzheimer's research UK

A new fundraising group is been set up in Newcastle and they are currently looking for volunteers to join them. "The group is friendly and relaxed and puts the fun into Fundraising". Zoe Baggot will be sharing more about their work during our Sunday service on the 7th July.

Llandudno Trip

A coach trip to Llandudno has been arranged for 22nd June, £15 each. If you are interested there is a sign up sheet at the back of church.

Fashion show

The church queen is holding a fashion show in church on 16th May at 7pm for 7.30pm start. Tickets priced at £5 per ticket, with refreshments on sale throughout the evening.

St Chad's Pilgrim Walk

A note for your diary. Come and join us for prayer and fellowship as we walk in the path of St Chad. The walk will take place on Pentecost Saturday (8th June) from Repton to Lichfield. It is a 19 mile walk however it is possible to do all or part of the walk as it will be split into three sections.

1. Repton to Burton-upon-Trent (5 miles).
2. Burton to Alrewas (8 miles)
3. Alrewas to Lichfield (6 miles)

For more information go to www.staffordshirechurches.org or see Terry or Julie.