



Please share this bulletin as far and wide as you can – thank you

23rd August 2020 – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity



View from a Vicarage

A warm welcome to this latest edition of the Bredon Hill Group Bulletin, as we move through the month of August. It is good to be back in the Vicarage following my two-week break, and my thanks go to all who have contributed in leading worship and producing articles for the Bulletin whilst I have been away.

The summer is always a strange time of people being on the move – many of us going on holiday or visiting friends and family who live a distance away, or merely doing things we normally do not have the time to do; And indeed my time off has enabled my family to spend some enjoyable days in Cornwall, to catch up with other family members and friends in Wales and to embark on a new hobby, that of sailing, as in the last week we have purchased a small and quite old river boat, but which will hopefully give us many happy hours of sailing up and down the river.

We are beginners to the world of boating, but we are quickly learning that sailing, even simply up and down a river, going through the locks and mooring the boat, is most definitely not as easy as it looks!! The skills needed to do this, are things which can be read up on in books; However, perhaps the most helpful way of learning is through listening to the stories of other, more experienced, boat people, who have gone through the steep learning curve which we are now going through, and who can share their wisdom and advice, on what works well and helps you travel safely, but what you most definitely shouldn't do, and which at best, means you crash into lock walls/gates or even other boats, or most worryingly, ends up with someone getting very wet!! (Thankfully none of us have fallen in yet, although I'm afraid we have bumped into several lock walls).

As Christians, we are given the most wonderful collection of stories and words of wisdom, in how to live our lives, through the stories contained within the Bible, and most especially through the stories told by Jesus Himself. His stories or parables give us clear messages of what we need to do to make sure that our lives are built on models of good practice. Of course, most of the earliest disciples struggled initially to understand their messages; And yet over time, strengthened through the empowering influence of the Holy Spirit, they were able to interpret these stories and words of wisdom, making them understandable, so that countless generations later, we are able to benefit from their learning, and able to grow in faith and confidence of the knowledge and love of Jesus and God Himself.

Stories about water are used frequently within the New Testament, varying from the earliest example of Jesus turning water into wine; Not just as an act of kindness to help friends out of an embarrassing situation at a wedding, but as a prelude to the start of His earthly ministry, and an early indication of His being the embodiment of the New Covenant he would create between God and his people, through his death and Resurrection; Then there is the story of His mastery over creation as He calmed the stormy waters of Lake Galilee, when the disciples were fishing on the lake and a heavy wind arose making them fearful that their boat would sink; And there are of course references, made by Jesus Himself, that He came to earth as the “living water”, offering people who believed in Him, the opportunity of eternal life with God.

This is why we need to continually remind ourselves of the importance of reading Scripture, and using it as the compass and navigational support, which helps us travel safely through life’s waters, which as we know can become quite stormy, at times. And it is why, as I reflect on our first boat trips, I am reminded that however useful stories are from other people to help us learn from their knowledge or experiences, the most important and only true test of embedded learning is by going and using that knowledge. And this is true of our faith. We learn best when we go out and share our faith with others, when we live out practical demonstrations of care and compassion to our families, friends and neighbours, when we offer our time and resources to those who need our help and support, whether this be locally or further afield and when we seek that still small haven of peace and stillness to be able to meet with God through prayer.

Therefore, I am sure Bob and I will increasingly grow in confidence in learning how to sail our boat, and we will go forward in the hope, the more we practice we have in taking the boat out on trips, the better we will become at it. We will learn “on the job” as it were, gaining experience through our successes and failures, and hopefully without too many calamities!!

Consequently as we all journey through this summer, may we seek to give thanks for Christ, our Living Water, who sustains, refreshes, and guides us through life: and may we all then know that joy and peace of knowing we are beloved and safe in the hands of the eternal Captain, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

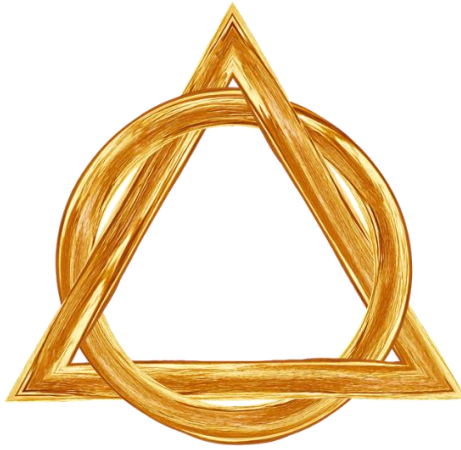
With blessing and warmest wishes to you all,

Allison

Reverend Allison Davies

Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the churches of the Bredon Hill Group





**Principal service based on Holy Communion for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity
Sunday 23rd August 2020**

Collect

O God, you declare your almighty power
most chiefly in showing mercy and pity:
mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace,
that we, running the way of your commandments,
may receive your gracious promises,
and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Reading: Romans 12: 1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Reading: Matthew 16: 13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all mercy,

We your faithful people have celebrated that one
True sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings
Pardon and peace:

By our communion keep us firm on the foundation of
The gospel and preserve us from all sin;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen



Reflection for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity 2020 Sunday 23rd August by Canon Roger Spiller

What word is spelled incorrectly in every single dictionary? The answer is given away in the question! That's just what Matthew does when he asks his disciples, 'Who do you say that the Son of Man is?' In the gospels of Mark and Luke, the question is, 'Who do you say that I am', and this leads to a rebuke for Peter. But Matthew's Jesus is about to invest Peter with unique authority. Peter is to be the rock on which Jesus will build his church and is given the keys of the Kingdom and the authority to administer discipline by binding and loosing. Matthew is alone among the gospels to mention the Church. And he alone mentions Peter's primacy over the other disciples. No wonder, then, that the Roman Catholic Church favours St Matthew's Gospel and uses it to justify the whole superstructure of the papacy.

It's common to think of Peter as a cross between a bouncer and a jailer with his big keys at the Pearly Gates. One day a group of health care workers arrived at the gates. 'I worked in a care home', said one, and Peter said, 'Well done' and let her through. A second said. 'I worked on a coronavirus ward', and he too was welcomed in. 'I worked as a health service manager' said the third. Peter studied his charts and his laptop. After lengthy thought, he said to the manager 'Good news. I think I can get you in, but only for five days'! In reality Peter's role has been misunderstood; it's not to keep people out of heaven, but rather to open up God's storehouses so as to make provisions for people struggling on earth.

But mention of binding and loosing sounds suspiciously like a bondage exercise. What's going on here? Peter would later be the one, along with Paul to decide between tight or relaxed discipline in the Church. That has always been one of the most divisive issues for the Anglican Church, with its broad, loosely defined character and dispersed authority. 'I like the Church of England', said one woman, 'because it leaves you alone'. 'It's a church with long arms and limp wrists', says another. Should it make more demands? Can we, for example, seriously be the Body of Christ if we only show up for worship when we feel like it? Do some of us come only because we enjoy singing or to catch up with our friends? If the Church transcends space and time, how can we act tribally and decline to worship in churches other than our own? Jesus says in our gospel that it is his church and not a club of our making. Should we not, therefore, be asking ourselves whether it is not a matter of consumer choice but our response to a gracious invitation from our loving Lord?

Christianity itself lives in the tension between binding and loosing, formation and freedom. I'm all for a Church with a low threshold and wide open doors, provided we are committed to a shared pilgrimage of exploring, celebrating and engaging with the compelling figure of Jesus of Nazareth.



Prayers for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity 2020 Sunday 23rd August by Canon Christopher Frith

Praise and Thanksgiving

Almighty and eternal Father. We praise you that you are the Creator and Sustainer of all, all powerful and all knowing. We praise you for your supreme love. You are love. full of compassion and forgiveness. You are LIGHT, pure, spotless. just; you are all-holy.

We thank you for your amazing generosity. ...for everything which you have given to us, so much more than we deserve. For our families and friends, all who are dear to us. Our homes. Our possessions and bank accounts Our villages which are so special to us. For....

Request

Children and Young People caught up in the confusion over A Levels and GCSEs.

Father, we ask you to be with all those who are anxious. Please give them your peace, especially any for whom the situation is unfair. We pray for the Minister of Education, under so much pressure. Please intervene in this matter.

Covid 19

We continue to bring this pestilence to you dear Father. It affects the entire human race and we pray that we will soon be delivered from it. We remember all the vast numbers who have been bereaved by it. God of all comfort, please make yourself known to them and may they feel your arms around them. May all governments be given wisdom to make wise decisions. Thank you for our NHS; may your inspiration come to all work in it. May a vaccine be discovered soon. We pray for our Government, especially the Chancellor, may they be guided through the economic challenges which seem so huge. We remember the many who have lost their jobs or who face major uncertainty about their futures.

Belarus

Father in Heaven, have mercy on this country. May their President. Alexander Lukashenko, step down as soon as possible. May a just solution be found. May any involvement of Russia, and the European Community be as limited, constructive and peaceful as possible. May Belarus be kept peaceful.

Refugees

Please be with the vast numbers desperate to cross the Channel, despite the danger. Please raise up leadership who will strive compassionately and justly to help refugees.

All these things we ask through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve,
To give and not to count the cost,
To fight and not to heed the wounds.
To toil and not to seek for rest,
To labour and not to ask for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do your will Amen

Amen



Please pray for the ill and isolated, hospital and medical research staff, all those working on the frontline and those who have died. We pray for all whose anniversary of death falls at this time and for all who have been bereaved.

Those on the frontline: Alison Herbert a nurse who has been working with the DART (Disaster and Relief Team) and the Mercy Ships in Italy

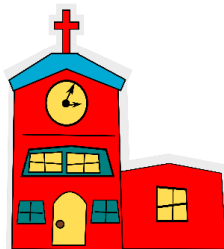
Those who are sick: Simon Collett

Those in residential care: Barbara Milton

Those who have died and their families: Jon Doney, Barbara Howell, John Bennett, Charles Bigland-Gibbons, John Bolton, Arthur Ore, Joan Green, Brian Druce, Pamela Law, Charles Brazier

Anniversary of a death: Please pray for the family of Deborah Chambers whose first anniversary is on the 14th August. We remember in our prayers her husband Adam, daughters Grace and Faith and her parents Angela and John Lancelot.

Please also pray for Gillian Martin who lost her partner Tony Manser on the 23rd August last year.



Church and Village News

United Benefice Service at St Giles', Bredon on 30th September

After many months, it will be good to come together for a United Service at St. Giles on 30 September. However, we will be limited in numbers because of reduced capacity due to social distancing measures, and therefore it will be necessary for anyone who wishes to attend this service to let Alison Khan, BHG Administrative Co-ordinator, know that they will be attending (acbhteam@gmail.com). Of course, we would not wish to refuse anyone entry, which is why we are asking people to book their seats so that we can manage numbers. This will possibly also need to happen at any other services in the near future where above normal congregations may be expected and whilst the social distancing measures are in place.

Reopening the Bredon Hill Group of Churches for Public Worship

Date	Church	Time	Minister
23 rd Aug	St Faith's, Overbury	9.00am	Reverend Allison Davies
	Holy Trinity, Eckington	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
30 th Aug	St Giles', Bredon (5 th Sunday)	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
6 th Sept	Chapel of Ease, Bredon's Norton (note change)	9.00am	Reverend Allison Davies
	St Mary's, Elmley Castle	10.30am	Canon Roger Spiller
13 th Sept	Holy Trinity, Eckington	9.00am	Reverend Allison Davies
	St Barbara's, Ashton Under Hill	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
20 th Sept	St Mary's, Elmley Castle	9.00am	Archdeacon Robert Jones
	St Giles', Bredon	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
27 th Sept	St Faith's, Overbury	9.00am	Reverend Catherine Lack
	Holy Trinity, Eckington	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies



[COVID-19 Advice on Face Coverings from the Church of England](#)

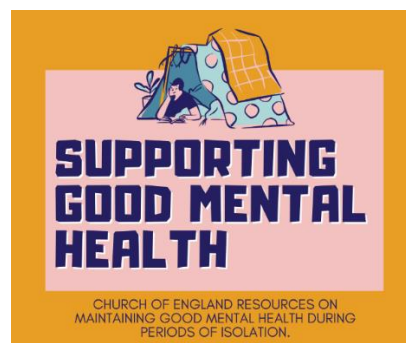
Q. Should I wear a face covering in a church building?

We strongly advise that face coverings should be worn by all those attending a place of worship, including ministers, worshippers, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors, where there may be other people present; remembering that they are mainly intended to protect other people, not the wearer, from coronavirus COVID-19 and that they are not a replacement for physical distancing and regular hand washing.

For more information go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

News from the Diocese

Prayers and diocesan news can be found at www.cofe-worcester.org.uk





Join the Diocese for More Open Conversations

Following on from the meetings held earlier in the year; the Diocese has announced that it will be holding further Open Conversation meetings in September to explore what a healthy and sustainable church might look like in the future. This time the meetings will be held via Zoom, although there will be an opportunity to participate for those unable to use Zoom. More details can be found at <http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/open-conversations>

Spot the differences



Peter's Confession of Christ

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Matthew 16:15 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 16:13-20 (NIV)



I W H Q O X N F C T Z V D L M
 P V V P O E U A Z F U I B O M
 E R Y G V M S T S P S Y D R N
 O X O A R J R H B M E G O O M
 P P E P G E D E L G N T S C S
 L H I I H E L R B I S P E K E
 E K F R S E Y I K A V U V R U
 U T E S W I T J J O P I M O W
 M H E Y O E Q S E A A T N P I
 T L C T S A J I Z R H J I G M
 B A H Y P R P J S I E K O S L
 X P R J N T F E J A D M A H T
 I L I B U H D J L A J P I X N
 J J S Y L A J G A T E S T A T
 G L T E H U I S A C H U R C H

CHRIST	EARTH	SON	PROPHETS	PEOPLE
BLESSED	KINGDOM	CHURCH	GATES	BAPTIST
LIVING	ROCK	FATHER	HADES	ELIJAH
JOHN	HEAVEN	PETER	KEYS	JEREMIAH

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