

SERVICE SHEET
4th October - Trinity 17

Canticle - A Song of God's Greatness

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!

**You are clothed with majesty and honour,
wrapped in light as in a garment.**

**The sun knows the time for its setting
You make darkness that it may be night.**

**O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.**

**When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.**

**May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works;**

**I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will make music to my God while I have my being.**

Psalm 104.1,2,21b,22a,26,32,33,35

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Collect

Almighty God,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:
pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,
and so bring us at last to your heavenly city
where we shall see you face to face;
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

New Testament.

Philippians 3.4b-14

⁴If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, ⁹not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on

faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 19.7-14

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure
and gives wisdom to the simple.

**8 The statutes of the Lord are right and rejoice the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure
and gives light to the eyes.**

9 The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever; *
the judgements of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether

**10 More to be desired are they than gold,
more than much fine gold,
sweeter also than honey,
dripping from the honeycomb.**

11 By them also is your servant taught
and in keeping them there is great reward.

**12 Who can tell how often they offend?
O cleanse me from my secret faults!**

13 Keep your servant also from presumptuous sins
lest they get dominion over me; *
so shall I be undefiled,
and innocent of great offence.

**14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.**

**Christ our sun,
rise in our hearts this day,
enfold us in the brightness of your love
and bear us at the last to heaven's horizon.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 21.33-end

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: ³³Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son." ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance." ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to

those tenants?' ⁴¹They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.' ⁴²Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures:

"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes"?

⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.'

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

SERMON Creationtide

These particular weeks in the church's year are set aside as Creationtide – a particular focus if we choose to take it, and this week I do.

We believe the world, the universe, was created by God, though we don't define how that happened. God's big book, creation, where we can meet with God and learn about God. Columbanus, a 6th century monk, says in one of his sermons, "Understand the creation if you would wish to know the Creator. For those who wish to know the great deep must first review the natural world." We still have 9 of his sermons from so very long ago, and he reflects the Celtic Christian belief that the existence of God is confirmed through contemplation of the natural world.

So in these strange times particularly, it is well worth just being outside and staring around you, noticing the little things that escape our attention when we are busy. It's also worth recalling what you find most beautiful and inspiring in creation; for me this would be the moment when on an outing from the East End of London we got out of the coach at a bluebell wood and all I could see stretching into the distance was the blue waving flowers. The sea in all its different moods is not far behind though.

John and I are very lucky, we have a small holding really, about 1.5 acres, where we have made the garden pilgrimage following the Christian spiritual journey with each area linked to an environmental issue. We are glad to share this with those who come to spend reflective time here. It is a very beautiful piece of land, where we also choose to grow the majority of our own fruit and veg, so this time of year is greatly taken up with harvest, storage and seed collection.

However, the large front area we have treated as meadow. We have no cows or sheep to eat the grass, and we don't use fertilisers or weed killer here at all. Instead we have encouraged three different types of meadow area. Short grass, that has filled with a wide variety of short wild plants and flowers, two sections where we cut the area from about mid July onwards, one that has many cow-slips, and the other has snowdrops followed by bluebells. The third area is cut just once a year in August, and has a wide variety of different wild flowers and plants, and is a space much visited by insects and small mammals.

The gospel parable that Jesus tells in today's reading is about a beautiful piece of land, a vineyard. What happens in the story is basically a land grab, as the tenants beat-up or kill those sent by the land-owner in the desire to own the land themselves. The same thing is still happening in Israel, as the Israeli government aids illegal settlers on Palestinian owned farms, particularly in the West bank and Jordan Valley.

The use of land and who owns it is a huge issue. The human tendency to fight for this or that piece of land to expand their power or perceived safety has caused too many wars. Russia recently took over the Crimea, and has tried to annex some of the Ukraine, or as Britain did

when you could colour the map with connected bits of pink so the sun did not set on the British Empire at one point in our history.

What we have learned recently is that humans as a species, have taken over so much land for their own use that wild life, plant bird and animal, are under serious threat, to say nothing of the seas, where we have dumped so much plastic. We know now that the planet is suffering from the consequences of human activity. We cannot be blamed for what we did in ignorance, but we do now need to own and confess the sins we commit against God's big book. This whole ghastly pandemic started with bad animal care, and its not the first warning we have had about the consequences of poor care. Add to that the sin of waste, just one fact though there's plenty, 86,000,000 chickens are thrown away every year, just in the UK. That is not just the waste of each chicken, but the grain that was grown for them to eat, the processing and packaging, and all the delivery miles. Our grandparents would be horrified, it is a sin to treat the gift of creation in this way. It is also a sin to assume that humans can take up all the space and resources of the world. We are part of a greater whole with all of life, and inextricably interconnected with it.

I was encouraged to hear that following David Attenborough's plea the government is suggesting we let a fifth of all the land we have go wild, from the smallest garden to the largest owned area. A farmer who had poorer land than we have round here, has turned his whole farm over to a wilding way of farming cattle and pigs, and has been amazed at the positive wildlife changes in the land and water, that all play their part in the richness of life. You can read their story in the book called Wilding, its well worth a read.

This fallow covid year has raised people's awareness of the changes in our surroundings as we have travelled about less. Nature has brought its own comfort, and people in cities have heard the birds sing, breathed cleaner air, noticed some good changes in things like bee behaviour. This great gift of life is for all that lives, God didn't just create us but found all of it good, we are to care for it, not abuse or destroy it.

The beauty of this great faith of ours is that when we own our wrong doing, repent, that is turn round, change your direction, God forgives us, and is with us as we work to turn the consequences the transformation of life that echoes through resurrection.

Understand the creation if you would wish to know the Creator. For those who wish to know the great deep must first review the natural world. Love creation, as you love God.

Revd. Christine Polhill

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

ST MICHAEL

Those newly in need of prayer

Chris Dickerson, Elizabeth Chapman, Nick Rutter, John and Sonia Doidge, Matthew and Emmeline and their parents, Ruth and Andrew Martel

Those in continuing special need of prayer:

Anthony Staples aged 6, Audrey Egleston, Colin Eastwood, Yvonne Harper, Judith Watson, Alison Cox-Toplis, Julian & Wendy, Jamie, Gary and Denise, Sam Bassett, Mark Berry, Dorothy Clayton, Jo Cobb, Dottie Collins, Robert Harris, Bill Hill, James Knight, Marielouise Oliver, Arthur Palin, John Tipper, Sheila Vaughan, Renee Wellings, Felicity Woodfield

Those who have died

Joyce McCormick, Ian Watson, Michael Plimmer

ST JOHN

Those who are ill and their carers:

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

Those who have died

Adrian Phillips

NEW WARNING!!!

If you receive an email from: **Revd Preb Simon Baker** and the email address is either:

onlinechurch954@gmail.com churchvicar8@gmail.com

Please do not reply or open any attachments. I never use that title in any emails I send and these are not my email addresses.

If you receive any email that asks you to spend any personal money on my behalf please delete it at once.

Simon

PLEASE REMEMBER TO...

- **Keep in a group of no more than six people outside. Do not move from group to group.**
- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth before you enter church
- **Sanitise your hands on the way in – sanitisers are available**
- Sit only in seats as indicated
- **Keep a proper distance at all times**
- Children are welcome but there will be no toys or activities provided
- **Take with you the Sunday service sheet when you go**
- Be aware of others at all times

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Our Harvest Festival Sunday will be Sunday 11th October and we will celebrate this at both St Michael's and St John's

We will have a collection of tinned food for the **Food Bank** at each service and the special collection at St Michael's will be for **Water Aid** Please use the designated envelopes marked WaterAid for your donations. If you can giftaid please fill in the front of the envelope, and make all cheques out to 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary Lichfield'.

We are not able to have Family Praise in the usual way at the moment so the service at St Michael's will be Holy Communion with a Harvest theme.

HARVEST DONATIONS The Foodbank is always happy to receive gifts of

- Tinned meat and fish
- Tinned fruit and vegetables, soup and beans
- Rice pudding and custard
- Instant coffee, tea, sugar, long life milk and fruit juice
- Packets of cereals, biscuits and snacks
- Pasta, rice and pasta sauce

Items should be **at least 3 months in date** or the Foodbank is not allowed to issue them.

If anyone wishes to donate but is unable to shop for Foodbank, we shop most weeks and would be able to buy items for them. Just let us know 01543 255308

Maggie and David

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The 10.00am service at St Michael's on **Sunday 8th November** will be a shortened service of Holy Communion with an Act of Remembrance outside around the war memorial starting at 10.50 and including the silence at 11.00am

WORSHIP BY ZOOM will be on the first and third Sundays of each month. The next services are on.

Sunday 4th October 6.00pm

This service will have a Harvest theme and will include some traditional harvest hymns

Sunday 18th October 6.00pm

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 40mins.

If you have not had a link by Friday at 11am please contact the office office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

BIBLE STUDY The Book of Acts Wednesday 7th October Between now and the beginning of Advent we will be looking at the Book of Acts. The book tells the story of the early church and spread of the gospel. It raises all kinds of themes worth thinking about and discussing. If you would like to join in our Bible Study please contact Angie in the office for the zoom link. Anyone is welcome and we already have a variety of people who attend, including those who simply enjoy listening to what is going on!

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH ROOF APPEAL. We urgently need money to repair the roof on the southside of the church. If you can donate please use the blue envelopes, fill in the front if you can gift aid and make all cheques payable to the 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary, Lichfield'. Please mark the envelope 'Church Roof'. This will really help the count team Many thanks *Brenda Liptrot*

LICHFIELD FOOD BANK. Thank you for your continuing support for Lichfield Foodbank. The latest needs are

- Custard
- Jam
- Tinned fruit
- Rice pudding
- Instant coffee

We will be having a **tinned food collection** for the Foodbank at both churches' forthcoming **harvest service on Sunday 11th October.**

ST JAM JARS. Thanks to all for the wonderful response. I have enough for now and still plenty for Crab Apple Jelly if the harvest is fruitful. I've made several jars of chutney, put away to mature so in 3 months I'll bring some to church – in plenty of time for Christmas! *Maggie*

ST MICHAEL'S APCM 2020 We are intending to hold the APCM on **Sunday 18th October 2020** immediately after the 10am service at St Michael's, at approximately 10:45. Straight after the APCM the new PCC will meet to appoint Officers for 2020/21. Plans may have to change should the current guidelines change. Nomination forms are now available on the Parish Web Site for the positions of Churchwarden, Deanery Synod Representative and Lay Member of the PCC. These forms are in Microsoft Word Format so that they can be completed electronically and sent to me by email. If a form cannot be completed in this way then please telephone the nomination to me. **Nominations should be with me by Wednesday 14th October.** Many thanks - Phil Clayton Honorary Secretary to the PCC. phil@phil-clayton.uk 01543 682141

MACMILLAN CAKE SALE Thank you to all who supported ST Michael's Cake Sale. **We raised £377.30 + giftaid** for Macmillan

MICHAEL LOWE FUEL GRANT for over 70s. Application forms available from Mrs Bethell on 01543 267982 or email jbethell@ansonsolicitors.com. Please do not visit the office this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. Closing date, 31st October.

CHURCHES TOGETHER have sent 2 new messages which are on our website at <https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/churches-together.html>

PARISH DIARY

Sunday 4th October

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St John
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John
6:00pm	Sunday Evening Worship	Zoom

Monday 5th October

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Tuesday 6th October

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Wednesday 7th October

All day	Private Prayer	St John
8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
10.30am	Bible Study	Zoom
6:30pm	Choir Rehearsal	St Michael's

Thursday 8th October

OFFICE CLOSED

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Friday 9th October

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Saturday 10th October

Sunday 11th October

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Harvest Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Harvest Holy Communion	St John
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John