



The United Benefice of
St Michael on Greenhill, Lichfield
with St John, Wall

COLLECT AND READINGS
28th June
3rd Sunday after Trinity

Collect

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God;
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 Reading Romans 6.12-23

12 Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. 13 No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, 18 and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

20 When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Reading Matthew 10.40-42

40 'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41 Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; 42 and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.'

Sunday Sermon

The link for the Sunday sermon is

<https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/sunday-sermons.html>

For those who receive this by post the text is printed below.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

ST MICHAEL

Those newly in need of prayer

Nick Rutter, John and Sonia Doidge

Those in continuing special need of prayer:

Anthony Staples aged 6, Audrey Egleston, Colin Eastwood, Yvonne Harper, Ian and 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

Caroline Green, Rosemary Hunt

ST JOHN

Those who are ill and their carers:

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

Prayer Requests

You can text prayer requests to 07388 529020

Rosemary Hunt died on 12th June. Sadly, we cannot hold a funeral for her at St Michael's as she has requested. There will be a family funeral at the crematorium. At a later date we will arrange a memorial service in church for Rosemary and invite all who knew and loved her to attend.

The Rector, Simon Baker

01543 253010

CHURCH NOTICES

CHURCHES OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

Our churches are now open for private prayer only.

St Michael's Lichfield is open between 2.00pm and 4.00pm and will be open at this time every day. The church will be staffed during opening hours.

St John's at Wall is open on Wednesdays and Sundays from 10.00am to 4.00pm. The church will not be staffed during opening hours.

In both churches provision will be made for hand sanitization, cleaning and social distancing. We are delighted to be able to open our churches, but we also want to make sure that everyone is safe.

OPENING OUR CHURCHES FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP

The government has announced that places of worship may hold services from 4th July. At the moment, the detailed regulations for this have not been published. We will need to consider them carefully before we start Sunday services in any form. We need to make sure that everyone is safe. We also need to make sure that what we do in church works alongside what we offer on-line and in print. These go out to many more people than our congregations.

What might worship look like?

The service would be Holy Communion but is likely to be restricted to receiving the bread only. There would be limited numbers in church (probably no more than 30). We would have to turn away any more than the regulation number. The service would be said and there would be no singing. There could be no refreshments or social time after the service. Seating would need to allow for social distancing. There might need to be controls for entering and leaving.

It would be really helpful to the churchwardens and myself if we had some idea of whether people would feel comfortable attending an act of worship in church which is limited in ways like this. Your response should also take into account how much you feel at risk and any health issues you have.

Please send an email to Angie in the office stmichaellichfield@gmail.com simply saying

Yes, I would feel able to attend or **No, I would not attend at the moment**

I am sure people will have questions and may want to make various points, but a simple response will help us collate the information quickly. We cannot guarantee to respond to each email.

Rector and Churchwardens

BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY 1st JULY

On Wednesdays at 10.30 June we continue our study of Paul's letter to the Philippians.

We will be using "Zoom". This is quite simple to use and doesn't require you to download any software. All you need is a laptop or other device that has a camera. If you took part in last week's Bible Study, you will automatically receive a code to join the discussion. If you would like to take part starting this week, please email Chris Baker on 📧 c.j.baker@bham.ac.uk and he will send you a web link to join the study and some simple instructions.

NEW WEBSITE PAGE The text and questions to think about can now be found at. <https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/bible-study.html>

WORSHIP BY ZOOM

We will be holding live worship by Zoom on the first and third Sundays of each month.

Sunday 7th July at 6.00pm.

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 30mins. There will be readings, prayers, a short address and hymns.

If you would like to join in please email Simon on simonbaker57@outlook.com and you will be sent a direct link. You do not need to have Zoom downloaded on your PC or other device. If you have already joined a Zoom service, you should receive the link a few days before. If you have not had a link by Sunday morning, please email.

VOLUNTEERING AND CHARITIES

LICHFIELD FOODBANK is continuing to function and is dealing with increased numbers of clients. Donations of items can still be made at the collection boxes in our local Co-op, Tesco and Waitrose supermarkets. The particular items needed are – **snacks (breakfast bars, crackers), custard and tinned meat.** If you can, please do support this appeal. You can access more information about the Foodbank on our website. There is information for those who would like to make a financial donation and a gift aid form.

The drop off point in church is now available when the church is open for private prayer.

GIVING

GIVING TO ST MICHAEL'S

In order to make one off or regular donations easier we now have a **JUST GIVING** page for St Michael's. please visit:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stmichaellichfield>

STAYING IN TOUCH

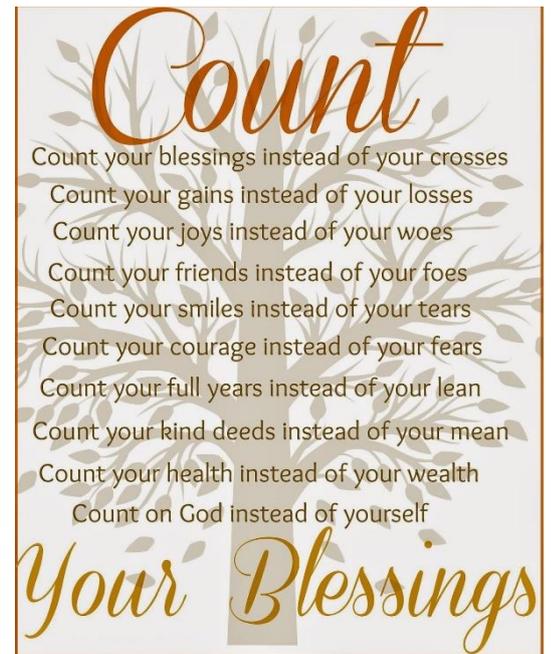
The office Phone is not currently being regularly monitored. The ministry team and others are continuing a ministry by telephone to keep in touch. Rector, Simon Baker (📞 01543 253010)

ITEMS FROM OUR MAGAZINE

Our Bible Study on Wednesday 17th June focused on Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 1.

As part of the discussion we talked about counting our blessings and it brought to mind this poem (author unknown) that I remembered reading.

Angie King



AUGUST MAGAZINE

We are thinking about putting together a magazine for August which might include some or all of the items already published in the newsletter plus some new material. We would therefore be grateful for any articles that you would like to have included. The deadline for articles would be Monday 13th July and the magazines would be ready for distribution on 22nd or 23rd July. Many thanks, *Angie and Simon*

POLITICS AND LOCAL HISTORY

Within the last week there has been some discussion amongst politicians as to whether or not it might be possible to vary the lockdown arrangements from area to area. This cause some discussion at 36 Heritage Court as to how this could be regulated, given that there is something finite about boundaries which, in turn, makes them quite arbitrary.

Historically the boundary between Warwickshire and Staffordshire passed through the centre of Tamworth, with the Castle being in Warwickshire and the Parish Church in Staffordshire. This was fortunately was remedied in the past so the centre of Tamworth would not now present a challenge in terms of boundaries for shoppers. However the historic boundary between Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire at No Man's Heath still remains to give us pause for thought. Within a few strides one can move between the four counties, with the two being defined by the Government as being in the East Midlands and the other two as West Midlands.

The naming of No Man's Heath is because in Saxon England it was just shared grazing land, literally shared by itinerant farmers from these four counties. It was not productive in an arable sense but its vegetation was entirely suitable, in due season, for grazing animals. The 19th Century parish boundaries map even show a detached portion of the Lichfield St Michael-on-Greenhill parish at this location, about eight miles from its church, which revealed its farmers' share of the acreage at No Man's Heath when boundaries were regularised in medieval times.

Another example of where four counties met was the location known as Four Shires Stone at which Warwickshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire met. This was reduced to a three-way meeting in 1931 when the boundary of Worcestershire was modified away from this precise location. If you Google 'Four Shires Stone' you should be able to find a photograph of the monument that was erected to celebrate this historic location.

TJ

THEOLOGY IN MIDST OF COVID-19 ONLINE INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGY CONFERENCE

Last week I gave a paper at an online theology conference, so I thought I'd just share a few insights from the conference with you all.

It was a really fascinating conference with people giving papers and participating from all over the world. Once again, I was thankful for modern technology (and specifically Zoom) in making this possible! Some might say it's too early to be theologising about the Covid-19 pandemic, but one of the conference organisers made the point that it's important to capture what we are all thinking and feeling in the midst of this, and I agree with him.

I gave a paper entitled 'The role of faith in narratives of suffering, loss and trauma after the English Civil Wars'. By offering an historical perspective I tried to offer new insights on how the church might shape its pastoral and theological response to Covid-19, particularly as people move from the time of trauma to forming narratives which help them heal and recover. I received a good response to my paper and lots of questions, which was really helpful.

One element which came up in my paper, and in quite a few others (always interesting to see if common themes come up between people from all over the world) was the need to make space for lament in churches as we begin to think about and share our experiences of Covid-19, whatever they may be (and they will be very varied). Lament is an important part of our liturgy and prayer, and of our scriptures such as in the Psalms, but many argued we need to make more space for it in church, particularly now as society begins to reflect on this crisis. Another common theme which I hope to think about further was the role of virtual online worship during lockdown and how that has shaped church, worship and community – there was much discussion of its strengths and weaknesses. All in all, it was a great experience and I hope to be giving more papers and attending more conferences in the future. I look forward to talking to you more about it when we meet again.

Rev Mel