



St. Peter's Parkstone

Focused on God : Speaking of Jesus : Caring about people

Newsletter 17th May 2020

Thoughts on Ascension Day

This coming Thursday, 21st May, will be Ascension Day, when we recall how Jesus was taken up into the life of God. Do take a look at Fr Robin's reflections on this, which give us an insight into what he got up to in Geography lessons, as well as giving us insights into the meaning of the Ascension for us today. His piece can be found in the 'Sermons' tab on the St Peter's webpage.

The reading for Ascension Day is taken from Luke's gospel, chapter 24:

44 Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 46 and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

The Ascension of Jesus

50 Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. 51 While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; 53 and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

It is puzzling to imagine this scene from the perspective of the disciples. They were bereft at the crucifixion of Jesus; they were amazed at his resurrection reappearances; they were overjoyed that he was alive again. And then he leaves them – but we don't see them crushed in this leaving as they were at his death; this time they went home with great joy. There was something remarkable about the blessing that he gave that enabled them to return to their homes and to wait.

Each day of the period between Ascension Day and Pentecost is filled with the blessing that enables waiting. This is because the blessing is filled with Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit, who is the presence of God with us – joining us to the Trinity and thereby joining us to one another, making us all of one piece. As we wait in our own way through this Lockdown period, may we also hold to the promise filled blessing of Jesus. We might make our own 'Novena' – that nine day period of devotional prayer that spans the period between Ascension Day and Pentecost. As we enter that period of prayer, let us remember that we are connected in a special and profound way through the Holy Spirit, even though we are not able to connect with one another in our usual ways.

Revd Sally

Interviews for a new Rector

We had anticipated that because of Covid-19 we would not be able to interview for our new Rector until September but we are hoping to bring it forward to 8th July. Obviously this will depend on the progress of getting the 'R' value down but let's hope and pray this will be possible. We will let you know of any further developments.

Anthony (Tony) Brian Gatward. 28th September, 1931 - 8th April, 2020



We were all saddened to learn of the death of Tony last month and his loss will be felt keenly by many, including his family, friends, musical associates and members of St Peter's, especially those of us in the choir.

Tony was born in Luton, where he attended the local grammar school. In 1938 he joined Christ Church choir as a probationer and so began his long career of singing. It was also through church that he met Eileen, whom he married in 1953 and they went on to enjoy sixty-seven very happy years during which time they were joined by three children, seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

His employment with Barclays Bank took him to Bristol and finally in 1977 to Poole where he and Eileen attended St Peter's. He was quickly appointed church treasurer, a role he fulfilled for sixteen years. Although at first he didn't join the choir - his daughter Carol was already a member and he didn't want to cramp her style - in 1982 she persuaded him to swell the ranks of male voices, and with his fine bass

tones he was a huge asset and served faithfully in the "back row" for nearly forty years.

Even when infirmity was taking over, he made every effort to be in choir on a Sunday morning and was still singing solos until quite recently. His vast knowledge, experience and repertoire made it a privilege to sing with him and he was a link to those days when church choirs would be required at two or even three sung services on a Sunday, discipline was much stricter and, of course, no females allowed!

Apart from church music, Tony was a regular attender at music festivals and had won numerous cups, medals and certificates for singing, as well as encouraging us as a choir, and individually, to enter competitions. A member of Barclays House Choir, he was also an enthusiastic supporter of, and occasional participant in, the summer season of Friday lunchtime concerts at St Peter's. He also organised his own concerts, usually around the time of his birthday and always to raise money for the church. Amazingly, in his younger years, he also found time to referee football on a Sunday morning before church!

Behind this wealth of energy and activity was his wife Eileen, who loyally supported and encouraged him in all he did, and it is to her that we now send our deepest sympathy and condolences, remembering with gratitude all that Tony contributed to so many of us, throughout the years.

Ann Tyson (member of St Peter's choir)

For your prayers

The theme for May is Christian Aid. Please pray for the work of Christian Aid in Bangladesh where they are helping Rohingya refugees living in overcrowded camps.

Please pray for the residents and staff of Ashley Court, Alexandra House, Hillsdon Nursing Home, Homelake House and Regency Manor during this extraordinarily difficult situation for them.

Please pray for the family of Cynthia Harvell whose funeral will take place on Tuesday at Harbour View.

Please pray for all key workers including NHS staff, those who work in care homes, and paid carers who are caring for people in their own homes.

For all businesses in our area, especially those who are fearful for the future.

For individuals who are normally fairly isolated and for whom this lockdown situation is proving especially trying. Among these we remember those who usually attend Lunch Club, Circle Dancing, Mothers' Union and Choir.

For those with young children who are trying to share their time between working at home and childcare; for those with financial anxieties; and for the children who find it hard to understand why they can't see friends or use their usual playgrounds.

Baden Powell and St Peter's Church of England Junior School.

There are usually 10 members of staff on site at any one time, with between 40 and 50 children present. Please pray for all staff, children and parents at this time; especially for those who need to make decisions for the future in these times of uncertainty.

Resources

During this time when our churches, including St Peter's, are closed for all worship, there are many other resources available to help you join in prayer and worship from your own home.

St Peter's Church streams a service on Facebook each Sunday morning.

"A Meditation - Meeting Jesus on The Beach" by Michael Beesley is on St Peter's website.

"Lucy Holt was live" - Our Rural Dean, the Revd Lucy Holt, is posting on Facebook at 2p.m. each day.

The Bishop of Sherborne, Karen Gorman, posts regular messages on Facebook, at the end of which she invites people to join her in saying the Renewing Hope Prayer.

Sacred Space: your daily prayer online: www.sacredspace.ie

Sermons and reflections will be posted at least weekly on this website, plus we'll try to keep up to date with this weekly newssheet for information and encouragement.

Please send your contributions to office@stpetersparkstone.org.uk

The UK Blessing: Churches around the UK have come together to sing a blessing over the nation during the current situation. Find it on You Tube at "The UK Blessing".

Daily Hope, a free phone line, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind. If you know anyone who would benefit from this service, please pass these details on.

During the period between Ascension and Pentecost we are all encouraged to link into the national Thy Kingdom Come initiative <http://www.thykingdomcome.global>

In the current crisis a 24/7 prayer site has been set up. To make use of the 24-7 resources go to <https://www.24-7prayer.com>

BBC TV

Sunday Worship is on BBC1 at 10.45am.

Songs of Praise is on BBC1 usually at 1.15p.m. on Sundays.

In addition the **Church of England website** has a vast amount of resources, including a weekly streamed act of worship at 9a.m. on Sundays: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

BBC Radio

Radio 4 has Prayer for the Day at 5.43a.m. Monday to Saturday. Thought for the Day at around 7.45a.m. Monday to Saturday. The Daily Service at 9.45a.m. Monday to Friday on Long Wave only. On Sundays there is an archive edition of *Something Understood* at 6.05a.m. and Sunday Worship at 8.10a.m.

Radio 3 has Choral Evensong 3.30p.m. Wednesday, repeated 3p.m. Sunday.

Radio 2 has Pause for Thought at around 5.45a.m. and 9.20a.m.

Radio Solent has a show presented by the Revd Tim Daykin, Sunday 6a.m.-9a.m.