

Benefice of Goring & Streatley with South Stoke



Sunday 18th October

Trinity 19

Welcome to Church

This weekend: Services at Home.

Please see below or:

**9.30am Good News service
at St Thomas'**

**11:15am Holy Communion (CW)
at St Mary's**

**11:15am Good News service at St Andrew's
(not mattins as previously advertised)**



The 9:30am service from St Thomas' will be streamed on Zoom.

The link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82661277602?pwd=cHZiK2hNdFJsani2WW5POUEyWUs4UT09>

If you enter Zoom not following the above link: **Meeting ID: 826 6127 7602**
and you will need **Passcode: 038739**.

Please don't feel under pressure to come. You at home are a vital part of the church and Jesus' Body. But you will be most welcome if you do.

PLEASE OBSERVE SOCIAL DISTANCING AS WE DELIGHT BE TOGETHER!

Please be particularly careful as we leave, to maintain distance. Please do stop to talk but outside, whilst leaving room for others to pass by.

For those who are not yet able to join us in person or by Zoom on Sunday morning it is our hope that you will be able to take time to

stop, find a special place, switch off all distractions, light a candle perhaps, and join in spirit, and by God's Spirit worship and be built up together.

Suggested wording for you to say:

This is the day which the Lord has made.... We will rejoice and be glad in it.

The Lord is here, His Spirit is with us.

Lord Jesus, lead us as we come before you now.

The Collect

*O God, forasmuch as without you
we are not able to please you;
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
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.*

Psalm 96: 1-9

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord and bless his name;
tell out his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
he is more to be feared than all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the nations are but idols;
it is the Lord who made the heavens.
- 6 Honour and majesty are before him;
power and splendour are in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples;
ascribe to the Lord honour and strength.

- 8 Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name;
bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him.

Readings

Our readings today are 1 Thess. 1: 1-10, Psalm 96, 1-9 and Matt 22: 15-22.

Judith Aguda has written a reflection on the reading from Thessalonians:

The apostle Paul had only spent about three weeks in Thessalonica, preaching the gospel to both Jews and Greeks, when he was forced to leave because of threats from certain of the Jews who objected to his teaching. However, his teaching had been very successful and many had responded and been filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul must have been aware that, if there was a strong Christian presence in Thessalonica, the gospel could spread east to Asia and west as far as Rome, because the city was on the trade route which linked Rome with the East, and trade poured into it from East and West. It was therefore vital that the fledgling Thessalonian church Paul had left behind should grow in strength and so Paul was very anxious to have news of its progress. So much so that, when Timothy joined him in Athens, he had sent him back to Thessalonica to find out how the Christians there were getting on. Timothy returned with the good news that they were remaining strong in their faith and had great affection for Paul. There were also some causes for concern but when Paul writes to them, he wisely starts his letter with praise for their achievements before going on to deal with the problems. Chapter one, therefore, is very upbeat and actually gives us a picture of what a church should be like. It will be a useful exercise to examine these verses and think about how we as churches match up to this description.

First of all, Paul addresses his letter to the church of the Thessalonians *which is in God and the Lord Jesus Christ*. What does he mean by this? William Barclay explains it like this:

God was the very atmosphere in which the church lived and moved and had its being. Just as the air is in us and we are in the air and cannot live without it, so the true Church is in God and God is in the true Church and there is no true life for the Church without God. Further, the God in whom the Church lives is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and, therefore, the Church does not shiver in the icy fear of a God who is a tyrant but basks in the sunshine of a God who is love.

When the sun shines, it improves our mood. We find people more ready to smile when we meet them, even complete strangers. Do we behave like people basking in the sunshine of a God who is love? Do we smile even when the weather is dreary? Are we full of hope because we know we are loved by God? Do our churches radiate joy? More than ever, in these difficult and uncertain times, our churches need to be beacons of hope in our communities.

In verse 3, Paul goes on to commend the Thessalonian church for its *work inspired by faith*. In other words, whatever they did, they did it not because of fear of punishment, not for hope of gain or with gritted teeth as a duty, but because they believed each task was given by God and they were working ultimately not for men but for God. Moreover, their labour was *prompted by love*, love of God and love of people.

Being a Christian in Thessalonica was not easy. There was opposition on all sides but the church members were able to endure severe suffering because they were *inspired by hope in the Lord Jesus*. The gospel had come to them *with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction*.

In verse 8, Paul says that *the Lord's message rang out* from them, so much so that their faith in God was known everywhere. In spite of persecution, they were never ashamed to speak of their faith. And in verses 9 and 10, we are told that they had *turned away from their idols to serve the true and living God and to wait for his Son from heaven*.

So, let's take an honest look at our churches and ask ourselves:

Do we radiate joy or are we generally gloomy?

Are we people of hope or are we prophets of doom?

Are we working for God or for our own glory?

Is everything we do prompted by love of God and for people?

Does our message of salvation RING OUT to the world or are we shy about it?

Are we conscious of the power of the Holy Spirit working through us?

Do we see ourselves as people working for God and waiting for Jesus to come again?

Plenty of food for thought!

May God bless us all and give us insight as we think about these things.

Hymn

You can listen to or sing along to the hymn 'Christ, be our light' here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g0c4YeABTs>

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Christ, be our light!...

3. Longing for food, many are hungry
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

Christ, be our light!...

Thank you to John Rogers for this week's prayers.

Prayers for this week

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith.

Almighty and Everlasting God, who has revealed Thy glory to all nations on Earth, look favourably upon the whole Church, making it the instrument of Thy saving purpose for the World, and that redeemed in Christ, humanity may be renewed through the preaching of the everlasting Gospel.

Grant all Church leaders, whether national, or international, the gift of perception and foresight to lead us at a time of division, despair and great need.

Inspire all Christians with the strength to persevere through Faith, in dark places, and dark times, whether through persecution, as in so many countries of the World, or through the derision, scorn and cynicism of those who shut out the light of the Holy Spirit, particularly in our own country.

Give us the strength and courage to hold our beliefs high, even when it is difficult at an everyday social level.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we ask for your endowment of all the leaders of humanity at local, national and international level, with wisdom, strength and courage to do what is right, and beneficial in the long-term, even if fraught with difficulties and controversy in the short-term.

We pray that all of us, as citizens of the World, make decisions based on what is right and just, rather than for expedient or self-seeking reasons.

Grant us the total insight and urgency to realize our responsibilities to the wise stewardship of our planet that You gave us as our home, before we have destroyed our earthly paradise, and all of your creation, through greed and selfishness. Enable us to value those who truly care, and act to conserve our Earth, and to shun the false gods of materialism.

Lord in you mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious God, as the pandemic engulfs the whole world, already suffering from many other diseases, grant to all those who suffer, who are in pain, who are desperate, and without hope, Your spirit of peace and hope, of courage, and fortitude.

Draw near to all health professionals, and family members, as they struggle to care for the many sick people; give them skill and wisdom, gentleness and strength to endure over the many difficult days ahead.

In our own communities, we ask You to remember all those known to us who suffer, whether in mind, body or spirit.

Cast out from them the spirit of anxiety and fear; grant them perfect confidence and trust in You.

At a time of great uncertainty, and isolation, uplift all who are cast down or seriously depressed, and by Thy Heavenly Grace preserve all those from falling into deep despair.

In a few moments of silence, let us bring to mind those we know who need our prayers today, and also to remember those who suffer, known only to God.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Father in Heaven, we give you thanks and praise for the many generations of the faithful, who have served you through selfless dedication to their communities, in good times, and through times of extreme hardship, and great need.

May they inspire us today with a power of greater zeal and determination which will not rest until the coming of your Kingdom on Earth.

We remember those recently departed, and those whose anniversaries fall at this time.

Grant them eternal rest and peace in thy heavenly Kingdom.

Keep alive in us the memory of those dear to ourselves, and grant that every remembrance which turns our hearts from things seen to things unseen may always lead us upwards to You.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Diocesan "Church at Home" service will take place this Sunday at 10am. Details will be posted on Saturday at the usual link:
<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/livestream/>.

Thanks and giving

Following on from harvest we continue to give thanks for blessings of life and love around us and God's generosity. We are not able to have a collection plate for our offerings in church at the moment so, please if you have not already done so, we would be so grateful for you to give by the Parish Giving Scheme, which confidentially does all the paperwork for us, or by Standing Order. Our treasurers, Judith Hogg, Andrew Taylor or Don Shrimpton, or our clergy will happily give you forms. (Sadly our costs do not go away.)

Thank you so much to all who give so generously in so many ways to keep us going. God bless you.

Guidelines for church

Amid the gloom and despondency about rising numbers of cases of covid-19 we are thankful that at present we can still hold church services. However we do want to keep everyone safe so please

- Stay at home if you are not feeling well
- Wear a face covering unless you are leading part of a service
- Sanitise your hands when you enter and leave the church
- Maintain suitable distance from others, both during and after a service

We recommend you bring your own sanitiser to put on your hands before receiving Holy Communion.

In addition to keeping a register of those attending services we will have posters with a QR code for those of you using the NHS test and trace app.

Zoom lecture

Linda Parker, who lives locally, will be giving a talk on "Tubby Clayton, Talbot House and Toc H" on Tuesday 20th October at 7.30pm.

For joining link please e-mail tochwessex2016@gmail.com

For more information on the Christian organisation, Toc H, please see <https://www.toch-uk.org.uk>

Diary for this week:

Wednesday 21st October

10:30am Zoom service, this week from St Thomas'

Link for Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89470491237?pwd=aG5SVUxPUG85dnYvQUZRUmNtdGNwUT09>

Meeting ID: 894 7049 1237 Passcode: 385710

The readings will be Eph. 3. 2-12, Ps. 98 and Luke 12. 39-48

Sunday 25th October

8:00am BCP Holy Communion at St Thomas'

9:30am Holy Communion service at St Thomas'

11:15am Mattins at St Mary's

11:15am Holy Communion (CW) service at St Andrew's

Daily readings for the coming week

Monday am:	Ps 98	2 Kings 17. 24-end	Phil. 1. 1-11	pm: Ps 105	John 13. 1-11
Tuesday am:	Ps 106	2 Kings 18. 1-12	Phil. 1. 12- end	pm: Ps 107	John 13. 12- 20
Wednesday am:	Ps 111	2 Kings 18. 13-end	Phil. 2. 1-13	pm: Ps 119. 129-152	John 13. 21- 30
Thursday am:	Ps 115	2 Kings 19. 1-19	Phil. 2. 14- end	pm: Ps 116	John 13. 31- end
Friday am:	Ps 139	2 Kings 19. 20-36	Phil. 3.1- 4.1	pm: Ps 130	John 14. 1-14
Saturday am:	Ps 121	2 Kings ch. 20	Phil. 4. 2- end	pm: Ps 118	John 14. 15- end

We are asked to pray this week for Roy Denison, John Miskin, Jo Harvey, Mary Bulmer and Rosalia Goldthorp.

RIP We lift to God the recently departed including Donovan, Judith Aguda's son-in-law and Murial Farmborough, and pray for their family and friends.

For further information please check www.thomandmary.org.uk