



ST PAUL'S CHURCH
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Dear Friends

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

We are now in the joyful Easter season, so while we often have in the back of our minds the current difficulties, we can be sure that God's love still holds for us. Let us pray together:

Risen Christ, you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope; strengthen us to proclaim your risen life and fill us with your peace, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

I hope you were all able to participate in one way or another in some of the services that were provided in visual or written form for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day. Many thanks for all who put so much time and thought into the broadcasting of the Good Friday and Easter Day services. It was so lovely to be able to mark these important days with people we know. If it was the first time you 'dipped into' the liturgy for any of these days, perhaps you can make a note for next year to come to the service in person! When we meet face to face in church, the impact of the services is even greater and there is nothing to compare with this way of following the life of Jesus in his final days, culminating in the celebration of the Resurrection.

I am sure you all appreciated being able to share 'remotely' in the beautiful Eucharist on Easter Day (with the prelude of the Exsultet). Fr Richard Lloyd Morgan shared some valuable and perceptive thoughts with us in his sermon, drawing parallels between our isolated and strange lives today and how the women who first saw the empty tomb, and the disciples who were distressed at his death, were also alone and afraid. In an extract, he says:

‘And yet, and yet, what is the very first thing that Jesus says to his disciples when he encounters them after the resurrection? ‘Do not be afraid.’ Here we all are, shut behind closed doors, though for different reasons than the disciples, in that we’re not dreading a knock on the door from the authorities, but we have all experienced varying levels of anxiety, of fear. But it is not too whimsical to believe that Jesus joins us in our homes, stands with us where we are, and says ‘Do not be afraid.’

So even in the midst of these extraordinary times, and who knows how long they will cloud our days, let us seek to find within ourselves a real sense of rejoicing, of clarity as to what the meaning of ‘resurrection’ really is; what it means to each one of us, how we understand this new life to relate to each one of us. We have journeyed through the days of Lent, learning to adapt to this unaccustomed existence, days in the wilderness, perhaps, and now that the wonder of the Resurrection has dawned let us welcome it into our hearts and allow it to flood our lives, letting go of fear and embracing the love of the risen Christ.’

Fr Richard refers in this to the well known passage from John (chapter 20, verses 19 – 31) which relates the appearance of Jesus to the disciples in the room in which they had gathered. This is the Gospel reading set for this coming Sunday. It concludes with the affirmation of Thomas and the statement of the evangelist that by believing in Jesus, we may have life in his name.

Fr Jonathan continues to focus on his recovery and was able as his contribution to celebrating Easter in the parish to bless and light the new Paschal Candle, which will be lit again in the future, including on occasions such as baptisms.

Those who are sick and those who have died As many of you know, Fr Jonathan’s mother died in the early hours of Maundy Thursday. He said: *Please pray for the repose of my mother, Yvonne Osborne Boardman’s soul who died at home peacefully and surrounded by loving supportshe had been ill for nearly five years and seemed simply ready now to go on her way. May she Rest In Peace and Rise in Glory. Yvonne Osborne Boardman. 17th April 1931 - 9th April 2020.*

I am sure Fr Jonathan would continue to welcome cards and messages.

We continue to pray for the sick; Claire, Fr Jonathan, Ron, Silvia, Samantha, Cynthia and Clifford and for Cynthia Mary McNish (Mother of Michael McNish) who also died recently. Please give Allison the names of anyone who is sick and people who

have died. We also remember the year's mind of Michael Whitehouse, Corinne Edwards, Catherine Tibbott and Pat Fairweather.

Here is a prayer for those who are ill:

Merciful God, we entrust to your tender care those who are ill or in pain, knowing that whenever danger threatens, your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Daily Services Many thanks to those who have recorded Morning, Evening and Night Prayer in recent weeks. It is great that common worship can continue in this way. Do offer to lead this if you can. All the technical support and information you need will be provided by Jonathan Biggs and Allison.

Helping others I am sure that when you are able, you are helping people you know in practical or other ways to enable them to get the supplies they need or avoid becoming lonely or cut off. If you are looking for further ideas, you may like to consider the new national organisation recently set up to list the existence of local self-help groups under the name Covidmutualaid.org. There is a Clapham Group with various posts covering family, practical, social, NHS and commercial support and involvement in various ways.

Of course, if you need help yourself, please let Allison know via admin@stpaulsclapham.org and she will follow this up so that someone can assist you.

With love and best wishes

Rosemary Palmer

Reader at St Paul's, Clapham

17 April 2020