

St Arvans Church On line Community Bulletin Wednesday 22nd April 2020

Please send any contributions to this bulletin to starvanschurchnews@btinternet.com

The Sunday readings and meditation will be circulated separately.

Please share it with others whom you think will be interested, and invite them to contact us if they want to go on the mailing list at: starvanschurchnews@btinternet.com

Father Michael invites anyone who needs assistance or wants a chat to call him on 622064 or 07867 803479

St Arvans ONLINE ! TONIGHT AT 8PM – Evening prayer

Sunday Morning Eucharist will be broadcast live at 10am

Wednesday evening: Night Prayer will be broadcast live at 8 pm (see below for today's Gospel)

On Facebook : St Arvan's Parish group – please like us and become a follower

Or use the link:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/vicaragecello1/videos/?ref=page_internal

On Instagram: [starvanschurch](https://www.instagram.com/starvanschurch)

On Twitter: St Arvans Church [@Arvanschurch](https://twitter.com/Arvanschurch)

Tuesday 21st April is the Queen's Birthday! She is 94!

Thursday this week is also St. George's Day. Alongside the NHS applause, let's sing the (British!) National Anthem. God save the Queen.

From Bishop Cherry's enrolment sermon

The end of John's gospel gives us an important glimpse into those early days just after the resurrection. According to John, Jesus had already appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden on that first Easter morning and had appeared twice to the disciples in the upper room; first when they'd gathered behind locked doors for fear of what the Jewish leaders would do to them, and second, a week later, when Thomas who'd first doubted the resurrection was able to declare, 'My Lord and my God'.

And yet it seems that the disciples struggled to know what to do with this 'good news' that Jesus was alive again. Far from going around the towns and villages of Judea proclaiming his resurrection, Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John and Peter go back to what they were familiar with – fishing. And when Jesus appears on the beach, although they know it's him, none of them dare say anything. There's a reticence, perhaps even an uncertainty, as to know how to respond, what to say, what to do with this extra-ordinary fact that Jesus, once dead and buried, was now sitting with them having breakfast.

Then there's Peter, who'd been so adamant that even if he had to die with Jesus, he would not deny him, now being gently confronted with the question, 'Do you love me?' Do you really love me?

So, an all too human crew that Jesus had called to be his closest disciples, as all the gospels record: weak and cowardly, fragile and vulnerable, getting things wrong and being so slow to understand...and yet - and yet, invited nevertheless to follow Jesus. And when they got things wrong, as Peter did spectacularly (and more than once), Jesus continued to love them, to forgive them, strengthen them, and to reiterate the call, 'Follow me'.

That should give us enormous hope and encouragement!

(you can find the whole text on the diocesan

website: <https://monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk/discover/bishop-elect-cherry-vann/>)

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Prayer

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come and see what the LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Today's Gospel: St John 3: 16-21

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

Music

There is a very poignant and inspiring story behind this hymn, written by American Horatio Spafford in 1873. His wife and 4 daughters were crossing the Atlantic, he was delayed and planned to follow later. In mid Atlantic, their ship was in a collision with another vessel and sank within minutes. Only Anna, Spafford's wife was saved. She later sent a telegram to her husband, saying "Saved alone." While crossing the Atlantic himself, to join his wife, Spafford wrote this beautiful hymn, after sailing past the spot where his daughters had drowned. His faith remained strong to the end of his life, and he and Anna eventually settled in Jerusalem, where they served the poor and cared for the sick and homeless.

"*It is Well with my Soul*" is sung here by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eg5O2y1UXw4>

As it is still the Easter season, here is another Alleluia – this time, the less often performed, but beautiful work by Randall Thompson. This version is performed by the National Taiwan University Chorus (well, they only had to learn one word!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJmHtQ3DqCQ>

NHS Support

Aneurin Bevan Scrubbers was set up in response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak in March 2020 and aims to provide scrubs and other medical coveralls to NHS services, social services and other providers who require additional cloth uniform items in the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board area. If you can help, there is a website to coordinate the contributions. You could sew, donate materials, or coordinate collection and delivery of materials to and from volunteers. Full details are on their website: <https://www.abscrubbers.co.uk/>

A vicar from Wrexham and her family are coordinating a Coronavirus PPE hub producing hundreds of face shields for the NHS, care homes, GPs and community nurses. The idea came from her husband, Graham, a lecturer in Engineering at Wolverhampton University who challenged their two sons, Joseph aged 13 and Isaac aged 11 to set up a 3D printer and make a face visor. The boys found a plan online and started production. Now the family has created a pool of 30 printers based at Ysgol Clywedog in Wrexham to produce the shields around the clock. For more on this inspiring story, see below.

<https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/news-and-events/vicar-co-ordinates-hub-make-face-shields/>

Finance

A note from Treasurer Mike Taylor:

Following my note that went in the newsletter earlier in the month, we have had a good response and would like to say thank you to all those who have either increased their giving or have set up a standing order to make payments going forward. The response has been most encouraging and we are really indebted to everyone who has taken this action. Thank you.

On the lighter side

A couple of weeks ago, I commented on how St Paul loved to write in very long and convoluted sentences, which are very hard for the reader.

St Peter was at it as well! Here is another gem, from 2 Peter 2: 4-10

For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgment; and if he did not spare the ancient world, even though he saved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood on a world of the ungodly; and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example of what is coming to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), then the Lord knows

how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment — especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority.

Many years ago, my Great Aunt Nellie, taught in a Christian primary school. She was a great story teller, and used to entertain the class with tales from the Bible. One day just before Holy Week, she was explaining to the children how Jesus was nailed to the cross and left to die. The class were completely wrapped up in the tale. Nellie said, “And after a while, Jesus was very thirsty, and asked for a drink. And what do you think they gave him?” After a dramatic pause, she said “Vinegar!” To which one little boy in the front responded vehemently, “*The buggers!*”