



## The Greater Corsham and Lacock Team

The Church of England in  
Corsham | Gastard | Neston  
& Lacock with Bowden Hill  
[corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](http://corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk)

### TEAM NEWS - 21 March 2020

Dear Brother and Sisters in Christ,

We are family. Tomorrow is Mothering Sunday which brings this even more sharply into focus, and the irony is not lost on me when I consider that the first Sunday where we are unable to meet together is the one where folk in times past traditionally returned to their mother church. Being part of this family, being part of the body of Christ, is going to look different for a while. Some things will change as Andrew detailed in the first edition of this newsletter, not least the way we worship and pray. In this, though we will be in different locations, we will still be together through our spiritual communion. Many churches across the world will still be celebrating the Eucharist and we still partake in that as members of the body of Christ, even if we don't receive physical bread and wine ourselves. We join in through our own prayers and the work of the Holy Spirit who enables it. Indeed the Archbishop of Canterbury will be leading an act of worship from the Chapel at Lambeth Palace which will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4 at 8.15am, and will be online from 9am (<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/online-church>). The order of service can also be downloaded from the same link so that you can join in. This is a part of the Archbishops' call to us for a day of prayer and action this Sunday, one in which we are asked to remember especially those who are sick and anxious, and those who work in the health service, and which will culminate with each participant lighting a candle and placing it in a window at 7pm. I have attached a resource to this email to help us to pray together hourly throughout the day please consider setting aside a few minutes each hour to join me in this.

Amongst all the uncertainty, there are some things that are unchangeable. As parts of the body of Christ we still have gifts to offer others alongside prayer, and as Christians we aim to be people of a Christ-like character:

We are a people who hold a treasury of wisdom, and also a people who submit to authority in all things lawful. We must follow the advice we are given, particularly (and I cannot say this strongly enough) that **we must now stay at home** unless there is absolutely no other alternative. We must keep ourselves and others safe as this gets worse before it gets better.

We are a people of compassion. We look out for one another and our neighbours - a phone call is enough to see how friends are getting on and may be

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more valuable to the recipient than you can imagine. Practical help when we know it is needed can be coordinated by those who are able to go out (under 70s). Perhaps you could also get in touch with someone you know who is a key worker and ask them how you can pray for them. I have a friend who is a senior ITU nurse and is already run ragged, and in the last week I have seen first-hand how our educational professionals have been pulling out all the stops to care for our children.

Most of all we are a people of love. St Paul, in this week's reading from the letter to the Colossians, reminds us, "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful." We treat others kindly, we don't judge them for their choices in all this, instead we examine our ourselves first. We show God's loving nature through our obedience to authority and compassion for others.

We are family. And the unchanging Christ is the head of that family. The Christ who, as the Gospel reading reminds us was a child and part of a family too. That family was no different in that it would see much suffering, Mary was told by Simeon that, "a sword will pierce your own soul too." That suffering, the passion of Jesus on the first Good Friday, is what that brought us into true relationship with God, is what opened the door to the rich inheritance that you and I have as sons and daughters of the one who conquered death, let along coronavirus.

Keep safe, with love, your brother Adam.

#### News from the Corsham Food Bank

We're still open for business and are still getting donations from both the Co-op in Corsham and from Sainsbury's. Our other donation points are also still open (in most of our churches). We're changing our operation a little to try and distance clients from our volunteers by making use of extra rooms at St Aldhelm's. The main problem we may have is that quite a number of our volunteers, particularly on Tuesdays are in the "over 70" group. **We would welcome fit younger people coming forward to help.**

Over the last couple of days we have had a lot of contact from families who are self-isolating. Our stance is that if the family meets the criteria for obtaining food from us we will continue to help but ask the family to arrange for a friend or relation to come and collect for them. Self-isolation on its own isn't a reason to get help from the food bank, though we will always listen to the circumstances. As far as food supplies are concerned, the things that we need are: **cereals, jam, long life juice and bottles of squash, individual puddings, tinned fish, tinned potatoes, tinned spaghetti egg hoops or similar, tea and coffee.**

***If you could volunteer for the foodbank please get in touch with the church office (see below) and we'll pass your details on. Thank you.***

## **Readings for Sunday 22 March 2020 – Mothering Sunday**

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; 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

### **Old Testament Reading – 1 Samuel 1:20-end**

### **New Testament Reading – Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSVA)**

<sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **Gospel Reading – Luke 2:33-35 (NRSVA)**

<sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

Whilst the Coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions are in place this newsletter replaces the St Bart's Weekly Information Sheet, Lacock Pew News and Church News. It will be initially sent twice-weekly to keep you all updated, by email to those people who have signed up to receive our current newsletters. Very limited printed copies will be made available in our church buildings so please pass or forward the email to anyone you know who would normally pick up a printed copy when attending church. If they would like to receive this update directly please ask them to email [office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk) and we will add them to the list. If they are not on email please let us know so we can arrange for a printed copy to be delivered. If you have internet access please keep checking the website for any updates and useful links at:

<https://corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk/news/newsletters/team-news/>

Enquires or information to either: [Office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:Office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk) or [admin@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:admin@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk)

**Family prayers for Mothering Sunday**—This resource is taken from [rootson-theweb.com](http://rootson-theweb.com) and is copyright © ROOTS for Churches Ltd. Reproduced with permission.

The following prayer is based around moments from the life of Mary:

Lord God, you chose Mary to be mother to your Son and she trusted in you. We pray for mothers and those who care like mothers that they will trust in the power the Most High and discover the miracle of new life from within.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Lord God, you declared through Elizabeth that Mary was blessed among women because she believed the promise you made to her. We pray for mothers and those who care like mothers, that they will hold onto your promises and pass those promises on to their children.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Lord God, you inspired Mary to sing of the great things that you had done for her because you lifted her up from nothing. We pray for mothers and those who care like mothers, especially when they feel they cannot cope or are near to giving up. Bless them with inspiration and strength to fulfil the high calling of caring for children.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Lord God, You warned Mary through Simeon of the pain of being a mother and how hard it would be to let go and share in his sorrow. We pray for mothers and those who care like mothers, especially those who face the sadness of seeing their children hurt or in danger. Give them grace to bear the sword that pierces through their soul.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Lord God, you were with Mary as she saw your Son grow up and he began to welcome others as mother, sister and brother. Increasingly she let go of Jesus to fulfil the hour that was to come. Help all those who are mothers and those who care like mothers to let go of their children and trust them to the embrace and care of others and, most of all, to your eternal purposes.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Lord God, your Son remembered Mary even as he was dying on a cross and he trusted her to John's care and protection. Help all mothers and those who care like mothers to face bereavement and deep sadness. May they know your words of comfort and the help of friends.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Lord God, your Son was held in death by Mary, who never stopped loving him. But her sorrow was turned to joy once again when he rose from the dead. Help all mothers and those who care like mothers to put their trust in the power of the resurrection and the hope of eternal life.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**

Thank you, Lord, that Mary's life shows what it means to be blessed as a mother. It was not a life free from sorrow but a life held safe in the palm of your hand. Help all those who are mothers and those who care like mothers to trust that whatever happens you hold beneath them arms that will catch them if they fall, and keep them safe.

Loving God, **for a mother's love and her costly care, we thank you.**