



## 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 45 - September 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> 2020

#### The Rector writes...

In our Gospel reading Jesus provides some very practical guidelines for dealing with conflict within the church before it becomes front page news.

You may feel this is an odd subject for me to be tackling, given that we have not been gathering in church for months. However, it may well be that during our absence from physical church services we have been able to reflect on the quality of our relationships with other church members, and the gradual return to physical gatherings provides a fresh opportunity to resolve any conflicts and move forward as a united body of Christ.

In our Gospel reading Jesus provides a three step approach to dealing with conflict:

- discuss the problem with the person who has offended you
- if that does not resolve the situation, take along one or two people so that they can hear the arguments
- take it to the church as a whole, and if that does not work, consider excluding the person from the church.

So let's have a look at each of these steps in turn and consider whether they are applicable in a modern context.

Tackling the person concerned face to face is much less easy than it sounds. But there are a few golden rules we can follow:

- Seek to negotiate rather than simply attack the person, surrender to them, or bargain with them
- Choose a good time to talk when you are not tired and when there is time to have a proper conversation
- Identify the issue which has led to you feeling upset or hurt
- Discuss the issue rather than attack each other
- Listen to the other person's point of view and be prepared to accept any responsibility you have for the situation

Try to reach a solution that allows you both to move forward with your relationship restored. In many cases such a conversation will resolve any tension that exists.

However, if this first step of talking one to one does not resolve the issue, and in fact the person concerned shows no sign that they recognise the wrong they have done, then step two comes into operation.

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In Old Testament law two or three people were needed to give evidence in a court case, hence the suggestion that one or two people should be taken along with you.

Of course this is a step that should only be taken after further thought and prayer, but if a wrong has been committed and is never dealt with, the whole church suffers. There are too many stories of churches where people in the same congregation have not spoken to each other in years because they have refused to get together to resolve their differences. This makes a mockery of the fact that we are all one body in Christ. It also affects our ability to attract new people to the church as they see the divisions that exist.

And unfortunately there are often cases of people who have been offended by the vicar who choose to leave the church rather than talk to him or her about it. Like most people I would rather avoid conflict if I can. However, there is nothing worse than discovering you have offended someone and they have been telling other people in the church about it without speaking to you face to face.

In exceptional circumstances step three comes into operation, where the wider church is told about a confrontation that remains unresolved. If the person will not listen to this wider group, they are to be treated like an outcast. This may seem harsh, but for the sake of the wider body of Christ it may become necessary. If there is real evil involved and a refusal to address it, there needs to be a break in contact with other Christians.

But the dramatic promise at the end of our gospel reading is that when just two or three do agree with each other we will experience Jesus' presence with us. And our prayers will be answered as we gather in his name and pray according to his will.

As we address the wrongs that have been done to us, may we find that we become more like the body of Christ, living in peace and harmony with each other, and attracting people to the Christian faith through the love we have for one another.

*With love in Christ, Andrew*

**Change to Rector's day off:** as from **Monday 7th September**, Revd Andrew's day off will be moving from Friday to **Monday**.

**Electoral Roll revision:** Subject to any further changes in Government or Church regulations, it is planned to hold our annual parochial church meetings (APCMs) in October. In order to be able to vote at the APCM, you need to be on your church's electoral roll. To ask for your name to be added to the Roll, or to update your details, please contact your church's Electoral Roll officer (below). **If you are already on the Roll and your details are unchanged, you do not need to take any action.**

Corsham – Sian Cooper at [sian.cooper@virgin.net](mailto:sian.cooper@virgin.net) or 01249 716112

Gastard – Ivis Thompson at [ivis@talktalk.net](mailto:ivis@talktalk.net) or 01249 712347

Neston - Wendy Bailey at [wendy.bailey50@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wendy.bailey50@hotmail.co.uk)

Lacock w Bowden Hill – Fiona Draper at [office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk) or 01249 712935

You may also pick up a form for any of the churches from, and return it via, Team Office

**Wiltshire Ride&Stride 12th Sept. Forms etc from Nigel Jackson or Team Office**

More news, resources and contact details on our website [www.corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](http://www.corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk)

## Collect for the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

or

Almighty God, you search us and know us: may we rely on you in strength and rest on you in weakness, now and in all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 33.7–11 (NRSVA) Ezekiel a Watchman

<sup>7</sup> So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup> If I say to the wicked, 'O wicked ones, you shall surely die', and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup> But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

<sup>10</sup> Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: 'Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?' <sup>11</sup> Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

### New Testament Reading: Romans 13.8–14 (NRSVA) Love, for the Day is near

<sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup> The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' <sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

<sup>11</sup> Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup> the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; <sup>13</sup> let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

**Online Bible study : Colossian Conversations Wednesday 9 September at 11.00am:** led by Revd Andrew. If you have not attended before please contact him for an invitation at [rector@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:rector@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk).

### Please remember in your prayers:

Revd Mary Gubbins and Revd Adam Beaumont as they start their new ministries in our Team and at Gauzebrook respectively; Fred and Caro as they prepare for their wedding at Lacock next week; family and friends of Nigel Sage (who died suddenly last week), especially for his sons Paul and Luke.

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 18.15–20 (NRSVA) A brother who sins against you

<sup>15</sup> Jesus said 'If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup> But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. <sup>18</sup> Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup> Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

### Services in September

**NHS Test and Trace:** at all services we will be asking for name and telephone numbers for Test and Trace purposes. Details will be kept securely and shredded after 21 days. For booked services you will be asked for this information when you book.

**Face coverings** are a legal requirement (unless an exemption applies) but may be removed temporarily for those leading the service (including readings and intercessions) and to receive Communion.

**Communion services:** Communion will be through wafers only

**To ensure social distancing can be maintained, booking is required for all services—see contact details below**

#### Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September

10.00am Zoom Online Service

10.00am Holy Communion at Corsham

10.30am Morning Worship at Lacock (no need to book for this service)

11.00am to 1.00pm Gastard and Neston churches will be open for individual private prayer

#### Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September:

10.00am Morning Worship at Corsham and Neston; Holy Communion at Gastard

#### Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September

10.00am Zoom Online Service

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion at Lacock

#### Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September

10.00am Morning Worship at Gastard; Holy Communion at Neston

**Zoom services:** if you have not attended before, please contact Revd Victor for an invitation at [associateminister@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:associateminister@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk)

**Corsham:** for 6<sup>th</sup> Sept, L'nora Olney on 01225 859202;  
for 13<sup>th</sup> Sept, Mike and Chris Alexander on 01249 716676.

**Gastard:** Sandy Fletcher at [sfletcher13@aol.com](mailto:sfletcher13@aol.com) or 01249 715006

**Neston:** Margaret Astell at [margaretastell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:margaretastell@hotmail.co.uk) or 01225 810586

**Lacock:** Fiona Draper at [office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk](mailto:office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk) or 01249 712935