

Marriage and children taught, and continue to teach, me much about all aspects of forgiveness. It has not always been easy. Forgiveness happens by the grace of God, and sometimes very, very, very slowly and painfully. However, the rewards of the journey are worth it, at least when they come! And the journey continues, until the greatest forgiveness when we meet God face to face, at the end of our journey.

In 2009, we moved to Chippenham where Andrew is Vicar of St. Peter's. As my children grew up, I got more involved in church life. In conversation with God and others, I began my journey back to formal ministry.

For the last year, I have been an Associate Minister in the Bybrook Benefice.

I was licensed by Bishop Viv (by Zoom) on 1 September as a Self-Supporting part time Team Vicar in the Greater Corsham and Lacock Team. I made declarations and I remembered the vows I made when I was ordained Deacon and Priest.

Over the years, I have continued to seek and receive God's forgiveness where I have failed to live up to them. I have needed to seek and receive other people's forgiveness. I have needed to learn to offer my personal forgiveness to other people, as well as assuring people of God's abundant forgiveness. This will all continue to happen as our journeys overlap in the time ahead.

I trust we will always remember, as we travel together, God, who In Jesus made possible the multi-faceted gift of forgiveness, travels with us. God who is always ready to help us both to receive, and to give, the gift of forgiveness to each other, to all whom we meet and to ourselves.

*With love in Christ,
Mary*

Ministers' day off: as from Monday 7th September, Revd Andrew's day moved from Friday to Monday. Revd Mary's day off is Friday.

Electoral Roll revision: Subject to any further changes in regulations, it is planned to hold our annual parochial church meetings (APCMs) in October. 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 or 01249 716112

Gastard – Ivis Thompson at ivis@talktalk.net or 01249 712347

Neston - Wendy Bailey at wendy.bailey50@hotmail.co.uk

Lacock w Bowden Hill – Fiona Draper at 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.

Please remember in your prayers: Revd Mary Gubbins and Revd Adam Beaumont in their new ministries in our Team and at Gauzebrook respectively; Fred and Caro married today at Lacock; family and friends of Nigel Sage, especially for his sons Paul and Luke.

More news, resources and contact details on our website www.corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk



The Greater Corsham and Lacock Team

The Church of England in
Corsham | Gastard | Neston
& **Lacock with Bowden Hill**
corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk

TEAM NEWS 46 - September 12th/13th 2020

The SSM Team Vicar writes...

Hello. Some of you have already met me or we have spoken on the phone. Others have yet to meet me. I look forward to this happening. I want to get to know people and to be known. This can still happen safely in many ways. Weather permitting, there is outdoors. Modern technology offers us emails, texts in various forms and video messaging. There is the phone and even letter writing. Praying for each other can strengthen our bonds as God's children.

This Sunday's Gospel passage speaks of the multi-faceted gift of forgiveness, including God's forgiveness of us, our forgiveness of other people, our receiving of forgiveness from other people, and our forgiveness of ourselves.

You may have learnt a bit about me from the Team website and from other sources. I offer some more details. I was born in Malawi to Irish parents. I did my primary education there and my secondary education in N. Ireland. I was born into a practising Roman Catholic family. My relationship with Jesus grew as I grew, including beginning to learn about the gift of forgiveness.

When I was eighteen my Dad died of lung cancer and a brain tumour. I began to learn about forgiving myself about bits of my relationship with someone after they die, bound up with needing God's forgiveness. I began to learn that not all my regrets after someone dies require forgiveness but rather a clearer understanding of what was going on. I began to learn about the strange 'forgiveness' of someone when they die, and the maybe even stranger 'forgiveness' of God.

I returned to Leeds University to resume my first year, having changed course from Chemical Engineering to Chemistry. During this time, God continued to lead me further along God's path for my life. I was received into the Church of England (God made it clear this was no comment at all on the Anglican or Roman Catholic denominations but about my walk with God) and began my journey to ordination.

After University, I spent a year in Harrogate as a part time Pastoral Assistant, alongside part time care work and then shop work. Then came three years at theological college in St. John's, Nottingham. I was ordained Deacon in Ripon Cathedral in 1994 and began a curacy in an inner city parish in south Leeds. I was ordained Priest in 1995. In 1996, I move to a curacy in Harrogate and married Andrew, who had been ordained Deacon that year. In 1999 our first son, David, was born. I stepped back from formal ministry but retained Permission to Officiate from the Bishop so I could help in parishes. In 2000, we moved to inner city central Leeds where Andrew was a Vicar. Our daughter and second son were born. *Continued on p.4*

Collect for the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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.

or

Merciful God, your Son came to save us and bore our sins on the cross: may we trust in your mercy and know your love, rejoicing in the righteousness that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 50.15–21 (NRSVA) Joseph reassures his brothers

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, 'What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.' Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, 'We are here as your slaves.' ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.' In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

New Testament Reading: Romans 14.1–12 (NRSVA) The weak and the strong

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷ We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' ¹² So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Colossians Conversations Online Bible Study: The last two sessions of this course will take place on **Wednesdays 23 September** and **14 October** at 11.00am, led by Revd Andrew. Each session lasts no more than an hour and is complete in itself, so if you have not attended before please contact Revd Andrew at rector@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk for an invitation.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18.21–35 (NRSVA) The parable of the unmerciful servant

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' ²² Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³ For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." ²⁹ Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

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 13th September:

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

Sunday 20th September

10.00am Zoom Online Service; 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion at Lacock

Sunday 27th September

10.00am Morning Worship at Gastard; Holy Communion at Corsham (to be confirmed) and Neston

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

Corsham: for 13th Sept, Mike and Chris Alexander on 01249 716676.

Gastard: Sandy Fletcher at sfletcher13@aol.com or 01249 715006

Neston: Margaret Astell at margaretastell@hotmail.co.uk or 01225 810586

Lacock: Fiona Draper at office@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk or 01249 712935