

REFLECTIONS

More about jigsaw puzzles, I'm afraid! Each year we have a walking holiday with old friends where we take a 1,000-piece puzzle for the evenings and odd moments. Between the four of us, we have always just managed to complete it in a week. When you first open the box and look at the myriad of pieces, of subtly different shades, displaying bewildering detail, it can seem a hopeless task to fit them together properly. The only way of doing it, of course, is to study the picture on the box – that is the key - then by careful sifting of the pieces, you begin to make sense of the various parts. Paul writes that Christ is the image of the invisible God, in him all things hold together. In other words, it is by looking at Jesus Christ that everything else begins to make sense.

Going deeper...

Better than any picture is the flesh and blood reality. The pre-existent Word of God has taken on flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. He has pitched his tent in our neighbourhood, and we have seen his glory: 'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.' Jesus tells Philip. (John 14.9). And, in his first letter, John tells us his first-hand experience of 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched.' (1John 1.1). It is on such Apostolic testimonies, that witness to flesh and blood historical figures and events, that our faith in Christ is built.

I wonder...

If someone were to say about my faith, 'That may be true for you, but it's not true for me', how would I respond? And as Lent approaches, how do I plan to use the time to deepen my faith and become a better disciple of Jesus Christ?

Andy Colebrooke

THIS WEEK'S SERVICES ONLINE

Services in church remain suspended until further notice. The following services are available across the team - full details on the website and the email bulletin. They will all take place on Zoom unless otherwise indicated.

SUNDAY

St Mary's Saffron Walden

8.00am Holy Communion 1662 President: Alex Jeewan
on YouTube
6.30pm H2H Youth Led Service Leader: Eleanor Game
on Zoom

St Botolph's Hadstock

9.30am Family Service Leader: Paula Griffiths

All Saints Ashdon

9.30am Holy Communion President: Caroline Curren

All Saints Wimbish

9.15am Sunday Praise Leader: John Saxon
Preacher: Brian Kerrison

Cam Villages

10.00am Family Service Leader: Home Team

TUESDAY

5.00pm Evening Prayer (Zoom) Leader: Rufus Barnes

WEDNESDAY

9.30am Holy Communion (Zoom) President: Caroline Curren

FEBRUARY'S PARISH NEWS is available on the website at <http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/parishnews>



See St Mary's Church, SW, website at www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org to find out more.



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The Grapevine

COVERING THE PARISHES OF SAFFRON WALDEN,
WIMBISH, DEBDEN, ASHDON AND HADSTOCK.

Welcome to our services today
Second Sunday before Lent
7th February 2021

Collect

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever.

First Reading: *Colossians 1.15-20*

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Gospel: *John 1.1-14*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Post Communion

God our creator, by your gift the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise, and the bread of life at the heart of your Church: may we who have been nourished at your table on earth be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross and enjoy the delights of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

In February please pray for: **Our Lady of Compassion Roman Catholic Church, St Thomas More School**
The family and friends of those who have died recently:
John Bullen, Joyce McGeehan

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

I am sure, like me, you have been shocked by the latest spate of racist abuse that footballers have suffered on social media. For all the benefits that social networking offers it does provide an arena for hateful and discriminatory opinions - statements which, if uttered in the street, could result in arrest. We can only hope and pray that the media owners and our regulatory authorities take swift action to prevent this disgraceful behaviour from continuing. There is no place for it in a civilised society.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, loved the world over for his infectious laugh and twinkling eyes, has fought all his life against oppression and prejudice. Brought up in the black slum of Sophiatown in Johannesburg, Tutu remembers a significant moment in his childhood: 'One day I was standing in the street with my mother when a white man in a priest's clothing walked past. As he passed us he took off his hat to my mother. I couldn't believe my eyes - a white man who greeted a black working class woman!' That priest was Trevor Huddleston, later to be the Bishop of Stepney and Anglican Archbishop in Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles, the man of whom Nelson Mandela said, 'No white person has done more for South Africa than Trevor Huddleston'.

Huddleston's simple act of respect made a profound impression on the young Tutu and helped to set the course of the rest of his life (he named his son Trevor). Tutu writes, 'If we really believed that each human being without exception is created in the image of God, and so is a God-carrier - then we would be appalled at any ill-treatment of another human being, because it is not simply unjust but also, shockingly, blasphemous. It really is like spitting in the face of God.'

Whenever we recall Jesus' words, 'When you did it to the least of these, you did it to me', we are challenged to truly acknowledge God's presence in others, and to be open and hospitable to them, perhaps especially those at the margins, those different from ourselves, even those who hate us. And when we remember Trevor Huddleston's simple gesture, we are encouraged to see that even the smallest act of kindness can have the profoundest meaning to others.

With love and prayers,
Andy Colebrooke

PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

God of love and grace
In whose image we are made
Put us to good use.
Amen.

BIBLE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Mon 8th	Morning Psalm 30 & John 19:1-16 Evening Psalm 28
Tue 9th	Morning Psalm 36 & John 19:17-30 Evening Psalm 33 & 2 Timothy 4:9-end
Wed 10th	Morning Psalm 34 & John 19:31-end Evening Psalm 119:33-56
Thurs 11th	Morning Psalm 37 & John 20:1-10 Evening Psalm 40
Fri 12th	Morning Psalm 31 & John 20:11-18 Evening Psalm 35
Sat 13th	Morning Psalm 42 & John 20:19-end Evening Psalm 46

NEWS

ONLINE SERVICES are listed on the back page. Full joining details are available on the weekly email bulletin and on the website. Please email Dawn if you would like to be added to the bulletin distribution list.

PRIVATE PRAYER St Mary's, Saffron Walden is closed during the current lockdown. All Saints, Ashdon, remains open every day. St Botolph's, Hadstock will be open by appointment only.

LENT MODULES A series of courses offered across the Diocese in Lent, most on Zoom, costing from £15 -£25 per course. This includes **The Big Screen and the Bible**, based on issues raised in the film, The Man who knew Infinity, which will be led by our own Andy Colebrooke and Angela Want. Contact the Parish Office for more information and a booking form.

Caroline Curren will be leading a series of **WEEKLY ZOOLED MEETINGS DURING LENT** focussing on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 'Living his Story'. She is calling this an 'accompanied journey' during which we will share our responses to the book, which has discussion questions at the end of each chapter. There will be an evening meeting on Thursdays, but if there is sufficient interest, an afternoon group may also be possible. For more details and to register your interest, contact Caroline on c.curren@btinternet.com as soon as possible, but by 10th February at the latest.

We are having an **ONLINE COMPLINE SERVICE** on **Sunday 21st February** led by Marisa Baltrock. There will be a workshop/practice at 5.30pm with the service beginning at 6.30pm. Anyone wishing to have a singing part should contact Bron Ferland by Monday 8th February. Details of how to join the service will be available nearer the time. Email: bronferland@yahoo.co.uk

CAM VILLAGES LENT COURSE – What on Earth is the Church for? A reminder and a challenge as we remember God's purposes for His church. Open to everyone – weekly meetings in Lent on Zoom on Wednesdays from 7.30-8.30pm starting on **24th February**. Please register your interest with Alex Jeewan vicar.camvillages@gmail.com

QUINQUA QUIZ IN AID OF THE BISHOP'S LENT APPEAL will be held on Zoom on **Saturday 27th February** at 7.30pm. More information on p 19 of the Parish News. Contact Chris Bishop 01799 523722 to register.

DATE FOR DIARY: Saturday 13th March A LENT ZOOM QUIET MORNING from 10am (Zoom opens from 9:50) to noon led by the Rev Hilary Davey. **LOVE IN THE TIME OF COVID:** finding God's Hope in difficult times. This will be an opportunity to reflect on our personal experiences, good and bad, of this last year; ponder what we have learnt and want to retain and find hope for a still uncertain future. All are welcome. *Sue Walker*

TRANSITION PROJECT Assisting the presently unemployed find work. The Project, which for 10 years or more has been a stand-alone outreach arm of this Church, is now able to offer its consultant's services on the less restricted basis, being between Mondays and Fridays between 10am and 4pm each week. The contact telephone number is 07901 173763 and please leave a message if a call is not answered. Outreach will be assisted further by the local Foodbank which will insert the Project's flyer in every food parcel, presently numbering around 40 each week.
Anthony Armon-Jones

MINISTRY TEAM

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Revd Alex Jeewan	01799 531153
Revd John Saxon	01799 541619
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