

**Sunday 26th April 2020 Third Sunday of Easter**

Dear Friends

*Alleluia! Christ is Risen!*

As the season of Easter progresses, our Sunday readings focus on the disciples’ experiences of the resurrected Christ – nowhere more powerfully perhaps than in the intimate experience of Cleopas and his companion on the Emmaus Road. It’s a story that reaches deep into our hearts with joy, wonder, incomprehension and perhaps frustration too as we reflect on those times that we have failed to notice Christ in our midst. Those occasions are so much more frequent than we care to admit.

Encouragingly, during COVID-19 there are limitless examples of Christ-like action and sacrifice reported daily in the media and countless examples within our own lives too. Let’s be sure to acknowledge that the love of which these actions speak is the same love about which Jesus taught. Love is love and love speaks always of God and the creator’s love of us.

A few news items to mention to you today.

**Web site (****www.bromsgroveparish.org.uk****)**

Now that Holy Week has passed and the lockdown appears to be here to stay for a little longer yet, I have re-named the section of the web site previously called Online Worship to *Online Church*. There may be aspects of our life together that will continue online, including worship at times, so broadening the section to include wider church life seems to make sense.

**New Prayer Resources during COVID-19**

The prayer section this week has been expanded to include the prayer booklet recently launched by the national church. This may be downloaded at https://bromsgroveparish.org.uk/Groups/338589/Prayers.aspx. Let me know if you would like a printed copy and I will arrange for one to be made available to you. It is very good!

**Bible Study Coffee Morning – Thursdays at 11am**

Our first online bible study group met yesterday – but as I am writing this at the beginning of the week, I have no idea yet how it went! Please join us next Thursday. The joining instructions are:

Online: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85718608721

Telephone: 0203 481 5240 or 0131 460 1196.

Meeting ID: 865 1825 1669; no password needed.

**Intercessions Training – Tuesday 28th April at 11am**

This suggestion was well received earlier in the week and so an initial session is planned for 11am on Tuesday 28th at 11am. Anyone is welcome to join whether you already lead intercessions or not. I will cover a variety of topic areas including the differences between public and private prayer; resources; personal preparation; essential practicalities etc. All very informal and joining the group does not necessarily indicate a willingness on your part to lead prayers in worship. This is for absolute beginners and experienced leaders of prayer – we can all learn from one another. The joining instructions are:

Online: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2474115267

Telephone: 0203 481 5240 or 0131 460 1196.

Meeting ID: 247 411 5267; no password needed.

**Care Homes in Bromsgrove**

Many of you are aware of the huge effort locally and nationally to support our hospital and care home staff through the provision of hats, headbands, scrub bags etc. If you have contacts with a local care home – perhaps through home communion or leading worship or through having a personal connection through a resident – it would be wonderful if you could please find out whether there is a local need for this kind of support. Also, more broadly, if there is other support we can offer – especially, of course, through prayer or the practical support of isolated spouses of residents living at home in the community. Let me know the outcome of any enquiries you are able to make – thank you!

**Live Music**

Finally, I hope to see as many of you as possible on Sunday at our online service. This week we are experimenting with live music courtesy of Julian Manchee, All Saints’ organist. Sincere thanks to Julian for giving this a go!

10.30am - https://us02web.zoom.us/j/408915049?pwd=RGlSQWN6QU1JUnB1UE9vZHAxbVR2UT09

Meeting ID: 408 915 049; Password: 548411

With continuing love and prayers, David Ford, Rector

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