

The Parish of Christchurch

The Priory Church of the Holy Trinity, Christchurch
St George, Jumpers • St John at Purewell



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Sunday 18th April 2021

Dear Friends

“When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” (John 20. 19.) Well I wonder what the true feelings of the disciples were really like both before and after that initial post resurrection encounter with Jesus. We know that they were locked away in hiding, after all, the authorities had just killed Jesus, they were likely to be next on the list. But then, perhaps at their lowest ebb, Jesus appeared to them with the words, “Peace be with you.” And with those simple and heart felt words, everything was to change. The impending danger and doom was surely replaced with joy and excitement and between that first visit and their Lord’s second appearance a week later, more and more questions must have emerged in their own thoughts and minds, some deserving further clarity from Jesus himself and others of a nature that they could simply discuss amongst themselves.

There must have been a hope and even perhaps an expectation in the minds of those disciples that the nightmare that they had just lived through during the past week was truly over and that the risen Jesus would be ever present with them in body, just as before. That of course was not to be the case, or not in the terms they might initially have imagined. For Jesus continues his words to them, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And having breathed upon them he concludes, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” Well perhaps the true significance of this was not to become a living reality until after the Ascension of Jesus, but this was the moment, this was to be the starting point, where the enormity of the calling and responsibility that Jesus was placing in their hands and feet took a hold in their entire lives. And as we know from the passages in the Acts of the Apostles that we are following in our Sunday Eucharist Services, they went on to achieve great things in their Lord’s loving service, as the power of the Holy Spirit took a hold in their own public ministry to others.

There is much that we can draw from the encounter that those first followers of Jesus had in the upper room with our own lives today. We have been locked away in the safety of our own homes. Questions have come thick and fast to our thoughts and minds, we too have had moments of doubt and despair and have at times failed to see any positive hope for the future. I hope that as the lockdown restrictions begin to ease that much of these quite natural concerns will start to diminish, but I also know that this will not be a quick process and that each one of us must find the right time for us to step outside again and perhaps to begin to search for the new normal within our own lives. This might be very different from pre-pandemic times and we will all need the love and support of others to recover our confidence. This is true of our lives of discipleship in just the same way as any other aspect of our lives. And here is the important point, there is no hurry. When you are ready to perhaps tentatively return to Church, the Church will be ready to welcome you. That after all is surely what the Church is for and what lies at the heart of its mission. That was at the heart of Jesus’ own ministry and likewise formed the heart of the commission to the first disciples as Jesus sent them out into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit. I

hope and pray that you will feel that inner love of Christ as and when you return to Church, I hope also that you will feel the words of Jesus speaking personally to you, "Peace be with you."

So when you are ready, here are some dates to put in your diary:

All of the below are of course subject to Government and Church regulations at the time.

Sunday 25th April. The Priory 8.00am BCP Service of Holy Communion will start again.

Visiting the Priory Church (apart from for Services and Private Prayer) will resume on May 17th. This is also the date that the café and shop will re-open.

It is hoped that our Priory choirs will resume singing in our Services on the Feast of Pentecost on Sunday 23rd May.

The Thursday Organ Recitals will resume on Thursday 10th June in their usual form at 12.30pm for 45 minutes. The series will run through until 29th July.

The Priory Summer Fete is taking place on Saturday 3rd July.

And already taking place:

Morning Prayer on Zoom Monday to Saturday at 8.30am. Please see the parish website for further details if you would like to join us.

Evening Prayer in the Great Quire, Monday to Saturday at 5pm.

Wednesday and Thursday Services of Holy Communion at 11.00am in the Priory and at 10.00am on Thursdays at St George's.

I am sure that the Vicar will add further details of other events in his next Pastoral letter.

As we start to meet up once again face to face may each one of us feel safe, confident and above all, that we are loved and cared for by one another in exactly the same way that Jesus himself loves and cares for us all and as He sends us out in his loving service to do his will.

With my love and prayers.

Richard.

Electoral Roll. Robert Phillipson, Parish of Christchurch Electoral Roll Officer, writes Notice is hereby given that the Ecclesiastical Parish of Christchurch Electoral Roll is being REVISED. Any person whose name is NOT ALREADY on the Electoral Roll needs to fill out a form,

- or if you have changed your address since this time last year,
- or if you know of anybody whose name is on the Roll but who has either died,
- or have moved during the year.

When filled out, please return the form to me either by email electoralroll@christchurchpriory.org , via the Priory Vestry, or directly by the 18th April 2021 at the latest. Failure to have your name on our Electoral Roll will mean you will be unable to vote at the Parish AGM, stand for a member of the PCC, Deanery Synod or Churchwarden. In line with the Diocese, you are being asked to provide telephone numbers and an email address (if you have one). This extra information will make it much easier for the clergy to make contact should the need arise, as they use the Electoral Roll as a means of identifying and communicating with members of their congregation. It is, therefore, essential that the Roll is kept up to date.