

# The Bridgnorth & Morville Parishes Team Ministry

Bridgnorth, Astley Abbots, Tasley, Oldbury, Quatford, Morville, Aston Eyre,  
Acton Round, Monkhopton

## Benefice Weekly Circular and Order of Service

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

### Rector's Greeting

Every blessing to you in these strange times when we are separated from each other by distance. But that should not separate us in prayer and in our fellowship together. We hope you can join us from home in this service together, which we will be saying at 10.30am in St. Mary's church, but at anytime during the coming week.

You are not alone, and we hope you can keep in touch by phone and whatever other means are at your disposal.

Simon



### A Service for Mothering Sunday

Greeting

'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**All And also with you.**

Praise God who loves us.

**All Praise God who cares.**

*Rector's Address*

*Praising and Thanking God*

So this morning we pray and place before God the life of our world and we light this candle to remind us that the love of God is like a light in our darkness.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

On this mothering Sunday, when many are far from family, friends or loved ones, we light this candle for all those we cannot be physically present with.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

We light this candle for all who are sick, all who are in hospital, all who struggle with pain, fear and sadness, and all who are grieving this day.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

We light this candle for all who are isolated, lonely and worried at this time.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

We light this candle for all those who care for others, whether as family or friends, or as doctors, nurses, carers and all the health professionals we are so deeply thankful for.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

And on this Mothering Sunday, we light this candle for all mothers who have loved and laughed and laboured as they cared for their children.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

We light this candle for all mothers who have wept in sorrow and joy for their children.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

We light this candle for Jesus, born of a woman and nurtured in her love, and for Mary, a reminder of your patient, waiting love.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

### *Confession*

This morning we come before God and in a moment of quiet bring before God the brokenness of the world and of our lives.

So let us call to mind our sin, our failure to value the love of others and our failure to love as Christ loved us.

### *Silence for reflection*

Your love gives us life from the moment of conception.

We fail to live as your children.

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

You call us to do good. We seek our own good.

Christ, have mercy.

**All Christ have mercy.**

You hear us when we cry for help.

We ignore the cries of others.

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

*Absolution*

May the Father of all mercies cleanse you from *your* sins, and restore *you* in his image to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

*The Collect*

Praise God who loves us.

**All Praise God who cares.**

God of love, passionate and strong, tender and careful: watch over us and hold us all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

*Readings*

*A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter one, verses three to seven.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

*2 Corinthians 1.3-7* This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

*A reading from the Gospel according to John, Chapter 19, verses twenty-five to twenty-seven.*

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother,

‘Woman, here is your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

*John 19.25-27* This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

*Sermon: Rev'd Clive Munday*

*22/03/20 Streamed – 2 Corinthians 1:3-7*

We live in extraordinary times. The threat of Covid-19 has drastically changed our way of life, as we can see from the fact that most of you are watching this service on-line because you've been asked to stay away from here for fear of infection. Schools are now closed. There's lots of anxiety. If there's any time that people need consolation, it must be now. And the fact that today is Mothering Sunday may leave some of us in need of consolation, perhaps because our mothers are no longer with us, or because of some problem with our relationship with our mothers.

And St Paul starts our first reading by blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation. God is our consolation, the Father of all mercies, and God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And to that we can add God the Holy Spirit: the word Paul uses for “consolation”, *paraclesis*, is associated with the word *paracletos*, advocate, comforter, encourager, consoler used in John's Gospel to refer to the Holy Spirit. Our consoler, our encourager, is God the Holy Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit. When we're afflicted, when we suffer, when we need consolation or encouragement, we can turn to God. Perhaps the reason why this passage was chosen as a reading for Mothering Sunday is that a mother's care for her children gives us a picture of God's care for His children. A sick, injured or upset child is comforted by the knowledge that Mummy is there, she's there to bring love and consolation, and will do anything she can to make it better.

But of course any mother knows that she can't protect her children from all dangers, and sometimes she can't make it better, as Mary experienced when she saw her Son on the cross. A mother is only human. But God's consolation is infinite. God's consolation is consolation in Christ, who shared fully in human suffering when sin, death and hell threw all they had against Him, and He triumphed over it all in His death and resurrection. God's consolation is something that not even death can overcome. However powerful the affliction we face, God's consolation is more powerful still.

But God's consolation is no guarantee that we won't face affliction. We serve a suffering Saviour, and Paul knows only too well from personal experience that those who follow a suffering Saviour must experience suffering themselves. No, God consoles us in all our affliction. He comforts us and encourages us in our affliction, and can use the affliction for His glory. That

was Paul's experience – Christ suffered for us, and Paul as Christ's follower also experienced suffering, but alongside the suffering comes the consolation to meet it: "Just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ." Christ suffered so that Paul might be consoled, and the chain goes on: Paul's suffering in his labour for the Gospel brings consolation to the Corinthian believers, who in turn endure the same afflictions that Paul endures. But in each case, in Paul's case, in the Corinthians' case, in our case, the consolation is always sufficient to meet the affliction. The two always seem to go together; the affliction and the consolation that enables us to bear it, because Christ has borne the suffering before us and has overcome it.

It a case of keeping the right perspective. In the face of Covid-19, in the face of so much disruption to our normal lives, we can focus on the problems and we can panic or despair, we can give up, we can buy toilet rolls until there's nowhere else in the house to store them, or we can focus on God, who is our consolation, who is bigger than all the affliction. The worst our sufferings can do is kill us, and even if we survive the current threat, we will die of something else eventually, but Christ has conquered death, and even death cannot separate us from His love.

So let us commit ourselves and all our loved ones to the care of the One who is our consolation and has overcome all that can possibly do us eternal harm, and let's do our best to pass that consolation on to others.

### *Apostle's Creed*

Since the very beginning of the church there have been times where Christians cannot meet together for all kinds of reasons and yet they can still share faith and prayers together and one of the ways in which we do that is through the words of the creeds.

The Creeds remind us of the faith of the church universal, beyond borders and beyond time – Saying the creed reminds us that even when we are separated and dispersed, we share our faith and our prayers with Christians throughout the world and throughout the centuries. And so let us say the Apostles creed.

Praise God who loves us.

**All Praise God who cares.**

Let us declare our faith in God.

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**Amen.**

### *Prayers*

Let us pray.

As children of a loving God who always listens to our cries, let us pray to our Father in heaven. God of love and kindness, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you.

In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love;

God of love,

**All hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; God of love,

**All hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, we entrust to your tender care those who are ill or in pain, knowing that whenever danger threatens your everlasting arms are there to hold them. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. God of love,

**All hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are facing war, conflict and displacements, as well as the challenges of Covid-19, and we place all your precious children into your hands. God of love,

**All hear our prayer.**

## *The Lord's Prayer*

As God's children, and heirs with Christ we cry in the Spirit, 'Abba',  
Father.

**All Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

Loving God, accept the cries of our heart as we offer you prayers;  
through them transform us and all creation until you are in all and  
through all.

We ask these and all our prayers in the name of Jesus.

**All Amen.**

## *The Blessing*

Praise God who loves us.

**All Praise God who cares.**

May God, who gave birth to all creation, bless you:  
may God, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless you:  
may God, who broods as a mother over her children, bless you. May  
almighty God bless you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for  
ever.

**All Amen.**

## *The Dismissal*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Thank you for joining us today. The Church of England will be  
providing a range of digital and print resources to enable people to  
continue to walk with God at this difficult time in the life of the  
nation and of the world. Visit [churchofengland.org](http://churchofengland.org) to keep up to date  
and to explore the materials available.

Just a reminder that on this day, Mothering Sunday, in this country the Church of England has called for a day of prayer and loving action. Prayer for deliverance from illness and from the virus. Loving action to serve those afflicted. And we have also suggested that you put a light in your window at 7pm in your own time zone and you pause for a moment, look at the other lights if you can see them and pray, committing yourselves afresh into the hands of God, and praying for those who are suffering.

Thank you. May God keep you and may we each love and serve and pray for one another.

#### **Acknowledgements**

Material from Common Worship and New Patterns for Worship reproduced here with permission is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000, 2004 and published by Church House Publishing.

#### **Notices**

Currently following services are available on Internet and Facebook.

Sunday services 10:30a.m. and 6p.m.

Morning Prayer Livestream (Mon-Thursday from 8:30a.m., Saturday at 9a.m.)

Lent Service Livestream (Wednesday at 7:30p.m.)

[www.bridgnorthteamministry.org.uk](http://www.bridgnorthteamministry.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/ChurchesInBridgnorth](https://www.facebook.com/ChurchesInBridgnorth)

Any queries please contact **Church Office**

01746 76714 or send Email to

Bridgnorthteamministry@yahoo.co.uk

*with many thanks and have a nice week!*