

ONE CAN TRUST

We are pleased to confirm that Caroline has reinstated the One Can donation box outside the Church so that we can resume making our gifts to this worthy cause. Caroline will continue to take what has been collected on our behalf and deliver it to the main collection centre. Thanks very much to everyone who continues to support this cause.

This Week you are Asked to Pray For:

- Those in the parish and further afield who are sick or in need that they receive peace and healing, including: Irene Foord, Mary Mines, Helena Oecken, Ian Wilson, Ron Goodearl, Ian Goodearl, Phillipa King, Jenny King, Beryl Palmer, Sally Zeybek and Genevieve Hurrell.
- The recently departed, may their souls rest in peace. And for their families at this difficult time.
- All parts of the world affected by the Coronavirus (Covid-19), those who are ill with the virus and those caring for them. For our own country where infection rates have been rapidly increasing in recent weeks and the health services as they work to cope with increasing numbers of hospital cases.
- For the country of South Africa, for the people of Cape Town and Diocese of Kimberly and Kuruman including our linked parish of St. Mary's Kuruman.

COLOURS OF THE SEASON

During the past week we have completed a short "Ordinary Time" transition when we had two weeks of green vestments, altar frontal and hangings between the white of Christmas and Epiphany and the purple of Lent. Purple is used during the Season of Lent and is associated with patience, humility and mourning. Our purple frontal has a white cross embroidered in the centre. The middle section of the purple background is overlain with different coloured meshes to provide a beautiful effect of illuminating the cross from above. Some churches use what is called "Lenten Array" formed from unbleached linen. We have an altar frontal which would fall into this category. We tend to use this during Holy Week, just before Easter, because it has various symbols relating to Jesus' journey to the Cross, below a quotation from the Book of Common Prayer. Can you guess what it is?

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PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, LACEY GREEN



Coming to Faith, Growing in Faith

Week Commencing
SUNDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2021
1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

FOCUS ON... JESUS IN THE WILDERNESS

In the first century the desert was an ever-present wilderness only a few steps from the relative safety of the city. Here, in the vast expanse of nothingness, the individual seemed insignificant. Gazing at the stars at night-time makes us all too aware of our lowly place in the universe. The desert has that effect too; and all the more so at night when the clear skies reveal the stars and planets in all their glory. In the Gospels, Jesus receives the baptism of John just as he is about to go into this desert and face temptation. Mark's Gospel tells us that the Spirit drove him there – the very same Spirit that had just descended on him like a dove, the symbol of peace. The Greek New Testament word "pneuma" can be equally validly translated as spirit, breath or wind. So is a pretty powerful image of what St. Mark is wishing to convey as he writes of Jesus not simply being sent or called into the wilderness but being "driven" there.

Metaphorically speaking we do live on the edge between Jerusalem, the Holy City of God, and the wilderness where there is nothing else at all for us whatsoever except God. As we embark on our Lenten journey, then, we deliberately turn towards the desert, relinquishing the comforts and delights of "Jerusalem", so to speak, in order to strike out into the unknown. We embrace that part of God that forces us to face and accept our own insignificance in the vastness of the universe which so defies our human understanding and comprehension. There is no avoiding the tough tasks we face, the hard knocks of life, but at the same time we can be sure that we are loved and cherished by our God who is faithful and just. So we go forward as beloved children, safe in the knowledge that if we rely on that very Spirit that drives us, we shall indeed return to the glories of Jerusalem in just a few weeks as changed people, able to truly rejoice in Christ's triumph over death and over the desert.

Canon Tony Bundock

Weekly Services:

SUNDAY

10:00 am GMT On-line Morning Worship with Hymns on Zoom

TUESDAY

9:30 am GMT On-line Celtic Morning Worship on Zoom

WORSHIP AT ST. JOHN'S

Buckinghamshire remains in **Tier 5** which is in effect a third National Lockdown. Current guidance is where churches decide to do so and it has been judged safe, collective worship is still permitted, although the latest Guidance from the Bishop strongly encourages churches to suspend collective worship in church and switch to on-line services. However, the PCC has decided that in-church collective worship will be suspended for the present. This decision has been made to protect our congregation due to high infection rates in Buckinghamshire including with the new more transmissible strain of Covid-19. (The other churches in the Risborough Team are also suspending in-church services for the present.) It is currently expected that this arrangement will continue until further notice.

We will continue to hold an On-line Morning Worship Service with Hymns on Sundays (at 10:00 am GMT for the rest of January and into February). The Tuesday morning service has been replaced with an On-line Celtic Morning Prayer service at 09:30 am GMT. We will also be opening the church for private prayer on two days during the week (Tuesday Morning from 10:00 to 10:30 am and Thursday Evening from 7:00 to 7:30 pm).

COLLECT FOR THE SUNDAY 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; 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, *Amen*.



READINGS FOR 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

Genesis Ch. 9 VV. 8 – 17
1 Peter Ch. 3 VV. 18 – 22

Mark Ch. 1 VV. 9 – 15

PRAYER CHAIN PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK (THIS SUNDAY THE INTERCESSIONS WILL BE LED BY MARK ROBERTS)



Lord God Almighty, shaper and ruler of all creatures, we pray for your great mercy, that you guide us towards you, for we cannot find our way and guide us to your will, to the need of our soul, for we cannot do it ourselves. And make our mind steadfast in your will and aware of our soul's need.

Strengthen us against the temptations of the devil, and remove from us every unrighteousness, and shield us against our foes, seen and unseen. Teach us to do your will, that we may inwardly love you before all things with a pure mind.

For you are our maker and our redeemer, our help, our comfort, our trust, our hope; praise and glory be to you now and forever.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us evermore. Amen.

MORNING WORSHIP ON THE 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

This Sunday's Online Morning Worship service on Zoom will be led by Canon Tony with assistance from Graham King. The service will start at 10:00 am GMT. Details are being supplied in the email sending out this Pew Sheet, and are as follows:

Topic: Morning Prayer with Hymns
Time: Feb 21, 2021 10:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71729717895?pwd=enpGbUk4ME0wVnMwcnp2bmFOcVV3UT09>
Meeting ID: 717 2971 7895
Passcode: Kw08R4

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Lent Course

This year's Lent Study course as adopted by Churches Together in Risborough will be based on the book "Singing in Babylon" by Jeff Lucas. Ordering this book via St. Mary's Princes Risborough is now closed, but the book can be ordered online from various stockists.

The 5 sessions will be weekly and online; and the St. John's sessions will be Thursday afternoons at 2.30 pm starting on 25th February. The Zoom link will be supplied to those who have registered to attend.

For further details, please speak to Canon Tony.

