



OTTERY ST MARY PARISH CHURCH

Part of the Otter Vale Mission Community

Trinity 5 July 12th

Bible readings for this Sunday are:

Genesis 25: 19 - 34;

Romans 8: 1 - 11; Matthew 13: 1 – 9, 18 - 23

Collect for the fifth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God,

By whose Spirit the whole body of the church
is governed and sanctified;

hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry, they may serve you
in holiness and truth to the glory of your name.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen

Thoughts this week from Revd. Lionel Stock

Twenty-five years ago I presided at a Eucharist for the first time. I remember the occasion clearly, and it brings back waves of emotion. It is a weighty, yet joyful, privilege to re-enter the mystery of God made flesh and blood, coming to us as bread and wine.

Twenty-six years ago I was a newly ordained deacon, settling into our house in Weymouth, and getting used to cycling up the hill to church morning and evening for prayers.

Twenty-six years and one fortnight ago I was trying on my newly-arrived clerical shirt and collar. Our daughter, Victoria, then only eleven, was horrified, "You can't wear that – you haven't been ordained yet!"

Mission Statement: "To know Christ better and to make Christ better known"

It shouldn't matter. The clerical shirt and collar evolved from formal dress only in the mid-nineteenth century. Even liturgical garments – cassock, alb, stole, chasuble – are all descended from clothing in secular use in earlier centuries. Perhaps it shouldn't matter, but for many, laity as well as clergy, it does. At the very least, it is a uniform, worn with as much pride and respect as that of a soldier or hospital nurse. Wearing clergy uniform reminds me of my own ordination, the promises I made, and the prayers that were made for me.

So I feel deeply sorry for those who could not be ordained at the end of June. Many of those who should have been made deacon have been licenced as church workers and sent to minister in their parishes. They will be undertaking the same tasks that they would have been doing had they been ordained, so perhaps it shouldn't matter, but it does. Those who were to have been made priest have had their ordinations delayed by only a few months, so perhaps it shouldn't matter, but it does. Ordination, vestments and all the rest of it are outward signs of an inward vocation, are tools to aid clergy in their ministry. But that only really matters to them. If they can't get ordained on time, that's unfortunate for clergy, but it's not the same for the laity. The clergy have a vocation and ministry. The rest of us just go to church.

But hear what today's collect says: "hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry they may serve you in holiness and truth."

Vocation and ministry don't depend on ordination, and have nothing to do with what you wear. They have everything to do with being a child of God, and a member of the body of Christ on earth. Each vocation is unique, each is precious, each necessary for the building up of the kingdom. All of us have one, and that vocation is not diminished by the circumstances, whatever they may be.

We are cautiously stepping towards a new-normal. We don't want everything to be the same as it was before – not how we treat the environment, not how we regard key-workers, not how we interact as a community. And not how we live as a church. Lay or ordained, retired or active, may you know your vocation and ministry, and may you live it out in holiness and truth.

Welcome to this edition of Contact Sheet. I can't believe how quickly time has gone as the next edition will be my last as editor ! I DO hope that before too long we will have a chance for a proper goodbye. Steve

Church opening times

The church building continues to be open from **10am – 12 noon on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays**, for those wanting to pray in silence.

Church services We held a short 15-minute service last Sunday at **10am and 11am**, of reading, thoughts and prayers, each led by Revd. Steve Weston.

We would love to welcome you this coming Sunday.

10am reading, thought and prayers Canon Dr. John Hall

11am Reading, thought and prayers Revd Steve Weston

Although our usual capacity is severely restricted in order to be Covid-compliant, we nonetheless had plenty of room especially at the 11am slot. If you'd like to attend please read the safety arrangements on the church door, and make sure you follow the instructions.

For those who are housebound and unable to access a computer, you can telephone "Daily Hope" for hymns and prayers – the number is **0800 804 8044**.

The Ottery Prayer Diary for July is now on the website.

Church News and Notices

In our prayers – Dorothy Ward, Myra Risk, Jayne Costello, Hazel Abley, Peter and Pat Cottrell, Patricia Jackson, Ann Decent, Ruth and Barrie Swift, Suzanne Howse, Derek Baxter, Pat Roy and Shirley-Ann Williams. Pat and Shirley-Ann have both moved to King's Manor. We continue to pray for all the bereaved at this difficult time. Steve is preaching at a Zoom service for Newton Poppleford on Sunday 12th July, at 10am, and would appreciate your prayers.

John Maybery writes : *"There must be a lot of used stamps kicking around as the post box in church has been out of bounds for such a long time. If you have any, and need the exercise, they can be posted through the letterbox of 1 North Street please!"*

Katie Drew writes:

The Melanesian Mission Summer 2020 magazine is now out. Please contact Katie if you would like a copy posted to your home, or view the magazine online www.mmuk.net Many thanks for your prayers and support for the Melanesian Mission and the Anglican Church of Melanesia. mission@mmuk.net (01404) 851656

Team Rector: Rev Steve Weston (day off Tuesday) 01404 812979 or 01404 812062 during mornings from 10 – 12 noon

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