



APRIL

Collects

Sunday readings for April plus a few thoughts on the gospel readings.

Sunday 5th PALM SUNDAY

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 21:1-11

This reading from Mathew's gospel gives the account of Jesus coming into Jerusalem and the reception that greeted him. Think about the reaction of the crowd and how a few days later the voices were crying 'Crucify him!' What causes us to be inclined to betray Jesus or lose our faith in God? What are the things that encourage us and help us to be faithful? How can we draw on those things even in these strange times?

Sunday 12th EASTER DAY

Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18

Mary Magdalene went to the tomb while it was still dark. Perhaps the darkness was symbolic of the situation as well as indicative of the urgency to be where Jesus was; she could not wait for it to be light. Mary came away from the tomb knowing "I have seen the Lord!" and ready to tell others. She saw Jesus in an unexpected way at an unexpected place. She saw him—darkness no longer because the Son had risen. At a time when our lives may seem to be in darkness pray for the light of the risen Christ to shine on, in and through you.

Sunday 19th 2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-end

The reading from John's gospel reminds us that even closed doors are not a barrier to the risen Jesus. When the disciples were huddled together in fear, Jesus came and stood among them offering peace and the life of the Holy Spirit. Let's welcome those gifts of God's peace, presence and power today.

Sunday 26th 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

1 Peter 1:17-23

Luke 24:13-35

The Road to Emmaus is a beautiful resurrection appearance that turns confusion into hope. As you read the account imagine being on that road with Jesus. What would you want to ask him? Look for ways in which you 'recognize' Jesus today in your daily life.

Palm Sunday

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory.

Easter Day

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

2nd Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father.

3rd Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope: strengthen us to proclaim your risen life and fill us with your peace, to the glory of God the Father.

Pause, ponder...

The Storm

Be careful as you approach the storm
Look for your loved ones, your friends
and neighbours
Look for all survivors

Remember that you may see their way out
But, to them, the path is blurry
Call them and reach out your hand

Be patient as they stumble
Forgive them all their wrong turns
Keep calling and willing them to find the right path

It is easy to see another's folly
And to see a way to their redemption
But be careful of the storm's edge because it
moves and seeks to draw you in

Be still, be patient and maintain your bearing
Because, just as they are blurry to you,
you are blurry to them
You appear to be stumbling in a storm of your own

Be not arrogant as you watch their efforts
It is easy to be master of another's storm
But impossible to be master of your own

MATTHEW GIBSON (St Nicolas)

Holy Week

As we enter Holy week leaving lent behind,
A singing congregation
Moves through town centre
To remind Saturday morning shoppers
Of sacrifice.

But now voices have disappeared into the wind,
Their echo bent into a hostile world,
The hymn emptied of words
Into a cold damp street,
Where evening not yet grown to maturity of night
Carries memory of day time feet,
And in retreating light
Discarded polythene bags caught
By a chill breeze inflate,
And are silently blown
Against rough wood
Of the Cross standing in the rain,
And stone thoughts trace
Shadows of pain
Through empty market place.

PAT BIDMEAD (St Nicolas)

Pray

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your
love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

For hospital staff and medical researchers

Gracious God,
give skill, sympathy and resilience
to all who are caring for the sick,
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.
Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their
work many will be restored to health;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A prayer remembering God is with us

Lord God, you are always with me.
You are with me in the day and in the night.
You are with me when I'm happy
and when I'm sad.
You are with me when I'm healthy
and when I am ill.
You are with me when I am peaceful
and when I am worried.
Today I am feeling (*name how you are feeling*)
because (*reasons you are feeling this way*).
Help me to remember that you love me and are
with me in everything today.

A prayer before sleeping

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love, would keep
Your watch around us while we sleep.
Tonight we pray especially for (*family or friends*)
and the people of (*country or place*).
Please give them your peace and love.



HOLY WEEK AT HOME

Find a small box, cover it with some wrapping paper or plain printer paper.
Make or find an item each day to go into the box.

Sunday 5th April: Palm Sunday

Make a small Jesus figure from paper, a pipe cleaner or play dough.
Make paper palm fronds from green paper.

The people cut down palms and cheered as Jesus entered Jerusalem. Read Mark 11:1-10.
How can we welcome Jesus into our lives and homes?



Monday 6th April: Holy Monday

Find a small coin to put in the box.

When Jesus came to Jerusalem, he went into the Temple. There were people cheating others out of their money. Jesus was very angry. Read Mark 11:15-19.

How can we use our money wisely?



Tuesday 7th April: Holy Tuesday

Put a second small coin in the box.

The religious leaders asked Jesus if it was right to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor. Read Jesus' answer in Mark 12:13-17.

I wonder how we can give to God?



Wednesday 8th April: Holy Wednesday

Place the third coin on the box.

Jesus watched people in the Temple giving money to God. Some made a big show of giving lots of money. But one person didn't. Read her story in Mark 12:41-44.

How can we give to God's kingdom?



Thursday 9th April: Maundy Thursday

Use the top of the box as a table.

Draw a cup and plate on it, or make a cup and plate out of modelling clay.

Today we remember the last Passover meal Jesus had with his friends.

Place Jesus by the table.

Read Mark 14:12-25.

In church, how do we remember this meal?



Friday 10th April: Good Friday

Make a cross out of a pipe cleaner.

The religious leaders wanted to get rid of Jesus. They told lies about him. Jesus was arrested. It was a very sad day; the authorities put Jesus to death on a cross.

Read Mark 15:1, 15, 22-25, 37, 39.

How do we see Jesus loving us through the cross?

Find a small piece of cloth— a piece of bandage or a tissue.

When Jesus had died, his friends took his body down from the cross and wrapped it in linen cloth. They placed Jesus' body in a tomb cut out of rock. Wrap Jesus in the cloth. Place him in the box and put the lid on. Read Mark 15:40-43, 46, 47.

I wonder how his friends felt?



Saturday 11th April

Light a tea-light. Try to be very still and quiet for 3 minutes.

On the Saturday, everything was so still you could almost hear the earth breathe. There was nothing that could be done. Holy Saturday is a waiting day. Place a tea-light by your box as a way of showing that you are waiting.



Sunday 12th April: Easter Day

Open the box and place Jesus at the side of it. Place the cloth neatly at the bottom of the box.

Early on the Sunday morning, the women went to the tomb and had an amazing surprise. Read about it in Mark 16:1-8.

I wonder what difference it makes that God raised Jesus to life?



NEWS IN BRIEF

APCMs (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) for St James and St Nicolas have been postponed until later in the year. We aim to make the annual report available at some point during April so that you can see a precis of some of the things we were up to during 2019.

In October we appointed Revd Adrian Guthrie to be the Associate Minister of St James. Adrian's licensing was due to take place in May. This is not able to go ahead at this time and so Adrian will be continuing to minister in Alcester for the time being and join us when we move beyond the Coronavirus situation.

On Sunday 22nd March Kelly had the privilege of baptizing Elliott Elwell at St Nicolas Church. Because of the restrictions it was a private baptism with just Elliott's parents, godparents and the vicar. However we are looking forward to welcoming Elliott a little later in the year when we can all be there to meet him and affirm our support of him and his family. In the meantime please do pray for Elliott and his parents Joe and Joanne.

Kelly's sabbatical (planned for mid June until early September) will be delayed until a more convenient time for the parishes and her.

A few of our church weddings have had to be postponed until later this year or next year. Please pray for all our couples in this time of uncertainty. Pray also for those who were due to be Confirmed at Easter.

The deadline for the May newsletter will be Monday 20th April. Please email revkells@gmail.com with your contributions.

During this time when we cannot gather for worship it is still vital that we support our churches financially if they are to survive. Those who give via standing order and the Parish Giving Scheme will already be doing this by the regular donations coming from their bank accounts. For those who give via envelopes or by putting money in the plate please consider how you can maintain your support of church mission and ministry at this time. Can you give by bank transfer?

CHURCH BEYOND THE BUILDINGS

During this time when we are unable to meet as church communities we are establishing a significant online

presence and aiming to be in touch with church members by telephone. We have been encouraged not to deliver cards, letters and magazines for most people unless it is a helpful means of providing pastoral care for those who don't have access to the internet.

We also have basic supplies of non-perishable food items and some toiletries for anyone who is vulnerable and unable to access usual networks of support (e.g. family or friends).

Below is our programme of activities online. We'll try to keep to this each week but please bear with us if we don't manage to deliver everything.

If you are feeling a little daunted by online engagement why not give someone a call and ask for help. Kelly, Mark and others are willing to help if you want to give Facebook or Zoom a try.

Sundays 10am - Sunday Worship Service live streamed on Facebook. You do not need to be a registered Facebook user to be able to access this - just put the following link into your browser <https://www.facebook.com/stnicolaschurchnuneaton/>

Sundays 11am-12noon - Post service chat via Zoom. Email Mark for more details—20s30s@stnicolaschurch.org.uk

Mondays 8am - Morning Prayer on Zoom.

Tuesdays 10am - SWANS session with Sally-Ann live streamed on Facebook. You do need to be a Facebook user for this and a member of the SWANS Facebook group.

Tuesdays 2.30pm - Children's Slot with some story-telling and songs live streamed on Facebook.

Wednesdays 7-8pm - Word & Worship - an online version of our Wednesday evening programme with some Bible study and chatter. This will be on Zoom.

Wednesdays 8.30pm - Night Prayer - live on Facebook.

Thursdays 11.30am - Songs for Little Ones - linked with Baby Hub Sally-Ann will be leading a short session of songs. Thursday is also pastoral care catch-up day!

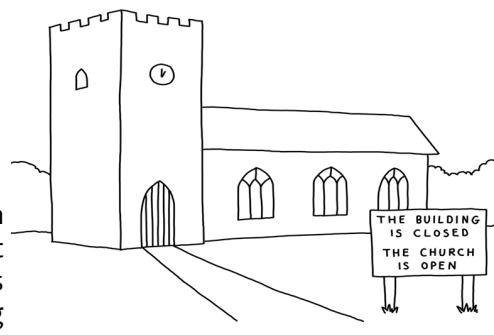
Saturdays 4-5pm - Church Family Time - a social programme on Zoom.

CONTACT

Kelly: revkells@gmail.com, 024 76346900

Mark: 20s30s@stnicolaschurch.org.uk

Sally-Ann: saveasey@postmaster.co.uk



CartoonChurch.com