



WEEKLY UPDATE

The First Sunday of Lent – 21st February 2021

Dear all,

This year, I think it's ok if you don't want to give up chocolate for Lent.

I mean, we've all given up a fair bit recently, haven't we?

And in any case, I'm not sure Lent is really a competition to see who can give up the most anyway. I think it's a bit more like a yearly invitation to return to the simplicity of God's love, and to the strange gift of our lives: *Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

So if you don't want to give up chocolate, perhaps you could just try and make a little bit of time every day to give thanks for the dust of which we are made; for the life of spring emerging from the soil around us; for the gift of *this life now.*

And who knows, maybe as we give thanks for life today, we will find ourselves worrying a little less about what life might be like tomorrow. Maybe as we return to the simplicity of our own dustiness, we will find ourselves naturally letting go of the things which complicate our lives.

Perhaps we could also try and make a little more time to remember the God who delights in dust. The God who came to us in the dust of Jesus' body; the God who again and again takes people who are treated like dirt, and in them sows the most glorious seeds of grace and new life; the God who rose impossibly from the dust, and who promises that we will do the same. Maybe as we try to trust a little more in the love behind that promise, we will find ourselves loving other people more as well.

So good luck to everyone who is going to try and give up chocolate this Lent – you have more will power than your curate at the moment! But don't worry if you're not. The most important thing this Lent is to remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return: precious, vibrant, and loved beyond anything you can ever imagine by the God of dust. If we make more space for that love over the next 6 weeks, who knows what graceful seeds might spring up after Easter.

With love and prayers,
Rev Lyndon



THIS SUNDAY'S READING: Mark 1.9-15

THE COLLECT

Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer
that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

A prayer from the Methodist Church on behalf of Broadstone Churches Together:

On this first Sunday of Lent, we pray for the Church and ask that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church, would fill it with all truth and with all peace; and that even though the doors of our buildings are closed we, the Church, may continue to be our Lord Jesus' witnesses. Let us give thanks for the wonderful relationships within CTiB and ask that the Lord would use the Lent Course to minister to leaders and participants at their point of need.

Special prayers for the sick: Robert, Bill, Dorothy, David, Marjorie, Roger and Frances.



RIP Bill Board and Philip Blunt

We also remember Alfred Hodges, whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

'May they rest in peace and rise in glory.'

St John's Church
Sadly all public worship has moved online at this time. We are also not able to open for private prayer. All services can be found at www.stjohnschurchbroadstone.org.uk

Food donations for Poole Food Bank 



Food items can be left inside St. John's Church porch on Wednesdays & Sundays 11am – 4:30pm (updated 5th January 2021)

POOLE FOOD BANK Social distancing rules apply and please wear a mask

Visit the Poole foodbank Facebook page for a list of items urgently in need at this time

News

✚ **Revd Helen** is on study leave until Friday 26th Feb. During this week please contact Revd Lyndon Webb if you need a member of the clergy.

✦ **St John's Coffee Morning** Remember to join us at 10am on Friday for the next St John's Coffee Morning. This is a special time, when we have an informal chat with friends and catch up with what's going on in people's lives. The zoom link is in this week's email.

✦ **Easter Eggs** Real Easter Eggs (Fairtrade chocolate along with a leaflet telling the Easter story) are available from Traidcraft (also other items, see traidcraftshop web site). I can order direct; please get in touch if you would like me to order something for you (post free), as soon as possible please. Val Renyard. Contact details 01202 682460, vandprenyard@gmail.com

✦ **Lent Groups start this week** - Those who have signed up for Lent Groups should have received an email from Revd Helen about which group they are in, start times, and a note to read the introduction, and chapter 1 and 2 before the first sessions on Wed 24th Feb and Thurs 25th Feb.

✦ **Pray Feb** Last October we had a month of praying in our deanery for the situation we find ourselves in with Covid-19. **Pray Feb** is a similar deanery initiative, but this time, we are not asking you to set aside a particular day, but to set aside just 5 or 10 minutes a day to pray. With the email you will find a prayer diary we have sent out, with a suggested area of focus for our prayers.

✦ **Virtual Lent Lunch** Advance warning that Churches Together in Broadstone are hoping to host an online Lent Lunch on Wednesday 17th March. Bring your own sandwich or soup to the computer screen, and let's share in a lunch across the distance! Further details to follow.

✦ **World Day Of Prayer** There will, sadly, be no physical service to attend this year, but there will be a service available online. This will take place / be available from 10.30am on Friday 5th March.

✦ **Big Sleep at Home – March 5th** Helen Inglis from Alabaré Christian Care & Support has been in touch with the vicar. This is a charity based in Salisbury but with homes and services across the South West supporting those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness,. They have produced a video to promote their *Big Sleep at Home* on March 5th, in which none other than our own Jean Hutchinson appears! A film star – who knew? Jean's daughter, Nicky Matthews, is Deputy Marketing Manager for the charity and encouraged her mother to take part.

Helen says, 'The Big Sleep involves sleeping anywhere except your own comfy bed, and seek sponsorship for us. We're delighted at the way churches and individuals are signing up, and I'm sure the video is helping!' If you would like to know more about the charity, their website is <https://www.alabare.co.uk/>. If you would like to see the video, which only lasts for a minute, here is the link:

<https://youtu.be/269MYQKPEyU>

✦ **St John's 50 Club** Help support St John's by joining our 50 Club, run by our treasurer Nick. We are now appealing for 50 people to join this monthly bit of fun, which will help raise essential funds for our church. You need to be on our electoral roll to take part: if you are not, please contact Revd Helen who will provide you with a form. For £3 a month, you will be given a number 1-50 which remains your number for 12 months. Every month we will draw one of the

fifty numbers out of a hat, and the winner receives £50 prize money. It is that simple, and with a 1 in 50 chance of winning each month, adds a bit of local fun to the month. To join, please contact Nick our treasurer (his contact details are in the email being sent out) to add your name to the list so he can give you a number. He will ask you to then make a one-off payment for the year of £36 or set up a Standing Order for £3 a month (see below). We have already had 16 people sign up, so there are 34 spaces left to join. Don't miss out! Get in touch with Nick to be assigned their number for the draw.

Nick says, 'To set up a Standing Order you need the St John's bank details, which are: Sort Code 30-96-73 A/c No. 02328599 – if everyone could try and use the 1st of the month that would be helpful. I can also accept payment in cash or cheque but this needs to be clearly stated it is for the 50 Club and one annual payment of £36 all in one go.'

✦ **Local Helpline** If you have a vulnerable health condition you are being asked to shield once again. The local helpline if you need shopping or prescriptions is 0300 123 7052. They will find you a suitable volunteer to help. However, if you are struggling and the helpline doesn't give you the response you need, please call me directly. We are family and will support one another in all the ways we can! *Revd Helen*

✦ **APCM Invite to Stand for Positions on PCC.** Our APCM will take place on 22nd April. We are inviting people to stand for the vacant positions. This year, Roger will stand down as church warden - he has served 6 years with such dedication, and we shall give our proper thanks for that in due course.

Gill is offering to stand as new church warden - of course anyone else is also able to stand as nominee if they wish, which will mean we would hold an election at the APCM. We now have 4 nominations for PCC but still require a Deanery Synod rep who also serves on PCC. The commitment is to attend 3 Synod meetings a year, currently online, and 6 PCC meetings a year, also currently online. For a discussion about this role and more information, please contact the Vicar.

✦ **Electoral Roll Revision 2021**

This year's formal review of the Electoral Roll will take place from 14th March to 7th April.

During this period those of you who are on the Roll should advise of any changes to your home and email addresses, home or mobile telephone numbers. Forms to correct your entry can be obtained from Revd Helen at the Vicarage. You can pick these up from the vicarage during your daily exercise or Helen is also very happy to post them through your door. No changes can be made after 8th April until after the APCM on Thursday 22nd April.

This is also an opportunity to encourage those of you who are not on the Electoral Roll to join. Membership allows you to attend and vote at the Annual Parish Meeting. If you wish you may also put yourself forward to serve the Church by volunteering to join the Parish Church Council. Again forms available from Revd Helen at the Vicarage.

It is stressed that information held on the Electoral Roll is used only for communication between the Church and the Members on the Roll. *Marion Marsh – Electoral Roll Officer*

ECO NEWS FEBRUARY

Did you join the Great Garden Birdwatch in January? What did you see?

This month the Dorset Wildlife Trust is asking us to watch and listen out for the Songthrush and Mistle thrush. Listen out for the songs of both. Click on link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VEDsg0VI_M



Song Thrush

Mistle Thrush



For some beautiful sounds try YouTube for songs from both birds.

Later this month and all of next month birds will be pairing up and laying eggs. A tip I heard from a keen birder this week. Brooding female birds need a lot of calcium to form their eggs. For choice do not use snail and slug pellets in your garden, and when you find snail shells, stamp on them to break them up and then leave the broken shell in a patch of rough ground for the birds to fund. Even ground up bought egg shell can be left for your garden birds. *Mike and Mary Thornton*

Puzzle Corner

The answers to last week's quiz – Can you find the pop groups?

1.	They gather no moss - The Rolling Stones
2.	Fertile spot in a desert - Oasis
3.	Very dark holy day – Black Sabbath
4.	Macaques, maybe, in a very cold place – Arctic Monkeys
5.	Joint of the body - Elbow
6.	Pow! – Take That
7.	Area for a male child - Boyzone
8.	North or East maybe – One Direction
9.	Just a primary colour – Simply Red
10.	Smudge - Blur
11.	Celebrate them on 1 st November – All Saints
12.	Insanity - Madness
13.	The very best – The Supremes
14.	Swedish palindrome - Abba
15.	Alternating or direct current – AC/DC
16.	In the beginning... Genesis
17.	Desperate circumstances – Dire Straights
18.	Entrances or exits – The Doors
19.	Her Majesty - Queen
20.	Lads by the sea – The Beach Boys

In this week's quiz, all the answers contain a colour

1.	Queen for nine days
2.	Aristocratic German flying Ace
3.	Dorothy must follow this for happiness
4.	What every cloud has?
5.	Fossil resin
6.	Spinster of Cluedo
7.	The soldiers of the UN
8.	Florid section of prose
9.	Iron Pyrites
10.	To abandon someone
11.	A large aircraft
12.	Enjoying excellent health
13.	Military fire engines
14.	The General of the Jesuits
15.	Wave it to surrender
16.	Nickname for Ireland

17.	A flat fish as a fruit
18.	One that can be tickled
19.	Willem- Alexander is the Head of this
20.	A variety of beryl, the Latin meaning sea-water

And a butterfly puzzle from Joyce -

Brimstone butterflies hibernate in winter. Often the first butterfly we see flying in the spring is the yellow coloured male Brimstone, and the word “butterfly” may come from this “butter-coloured fly”. The wings of the female are very pale green, almost white.

$$2 \times \text{[Image of a pale green leaf]} - \frac{3}{\text{[Image of a pale green leaf]}} = 5$$

Photo Gallery



Spring flowers

David sent in this photo saying,

‘We wondered what this was wafting about in the wind. Our neighbour explained it’s a squirrels’ dray and we marvelled at its stability so far over the road and prone to high winds. They’ve named the squirrel Andy and invade his privacy using binoculars. He hasn’t complained yet! Perhaps the RSPB Garden Bird Watch scheme should be extended to include a Squirrel Watch?’



Please send contributions for the Update to office@stjohnschurchbroadstone.co.uk

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Sermon: 21st February 2021
Revd Paul Renyard

Sam never did play it again and Scotty never beamed anyone up. They are examples of how things can be twisted or confused as they pass down the line, as in Chinese whispers. The one I have in mind today appeared in its original form in an edition of 'Punch' magazine early in the last century. We have it today as 'Sometimes I sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits.' I draw you back to one of the famous or he might say infamous sermons of Lyndon our curate about fig trees. This one about Nathaniel sitting under his fig tree, perhaps greeting people, passing the time of day, perhaps thinking great thoughts, when he is aroused from his reverie by Philip, who leads him to Jesus. The leaves of the fig tree- and they are very large leaves, have obscured him from seeing the full truth about God. But much to his amazement Jesus seems to know exactly who he is and all about him. In fact Jesus is rather amused by him, and I think he takes that view of us, a rather indulgent big brother who laughs with us, picks us up and dusts us down, and is indulgent of our very feeble efforts. But we are each a miracle of creation, someone God has made for good and so often we do not realise it. We hide away under our fig trees, under all those pretend people we try to be and do not realise that we have been chased out of Eden and need to find the way back.

But we must be a bit careful of this picture of Jesus. He is not just frothy and the babe in the manger. That is where many of our contemporaries would like to leave him. Jesus comes as judge and redeemer. He is full-bloodied, adult and in charge, though fortunately for us gracious and merciful also or else life would be hopeless. We have St Mark's Gospel particularly to remind us of that. It is almost brutal in the way he starts the Gospel; no birth narratives for him. We have heard some of the first verses in our reading just now. What is important is that the herald prophesied by Isaiah is believed to be John the Baptist who arrives and starts his proclamation and baptising. Jesus is baptised and alone receives the Spirit of God and alone hears the voice of God acknowledging his sonship. He is driven to the wilderness to work out what that sonship entails, what he needs to do. Having struggled with Satan and overcome him he sets off to proclaim the Good News. And it is the Good News, the Gospel, that Mark is all about. It is a stark introduction in comparison with Matthew, who is anxious to show the link with the story of Israel so far, and Luke wanting to show Jesus' humanness. This is Mark, getting down to business. The story will lead to a Cross, as we too are led year by year through Lent. But it is also a story for Mark's readers, from then until now, and a reminder of the Gospel we should be living and proclaiming.

Now one of the things that Jesus came to do was to restore humanity to its proper place with God. There is in Mark's wilderness story the talk of angels, always seen as protectors of God's servants and givers of his messages. There is also mention of wild beasts, who did Jesus no harm. Here was the new Eden, prophesied in Isaiah, where all would live together in harmony and peace. This was the backdrop upon which Jesus mapped out his way. And his way was not to be cotton-woolled or easy or self-indulgent. Against a world which had so turned away from its maker there were likely to be some hard struggles. Although Mark believes that Jesus had ultimately overcome Satan, there was still work to do while evil did not accept its defeat. It all ultimately needed to be silenced and given no place to remain. And the first stage of that, just like Nathaniel, is we all have to see the path to follow. Just like

Jesus we have to entrust ourselves to God's word, have his rule in our lives and turn away from all other gods. This needs constant awareness and renewal, and Lent is a good time to remind us of that.

Back to the fig tree. Or at least, what we do when we discover that Jesus has called us, even us, to be part of this proclamation, part of this showing forth of the love of God. And in prayer we have one means of sorting it out. Sometimes I sits and thinks. This prayer is natural and important, bringing before God all our concerns about the world, about our friends and families within it, about how we can right wrongs and what the first steps are to do so. We call this part of prayer Intercession, and we have a place for it in each service of worship as well as part of our own prayers. It is only natural to cry before the Lord, even though he knows perfectly well what is going on, because it helps us to sort ourselves out and often gives us ways to proceed. And sometimes, as Helen the Vicar reminded us in a sermon about a month ago, those ways are sometimes very surprising and often not at all what we expected. Especially if we watch and wait and listen. For the Lord will come to us in unexpected ways and in unexpected places, especially it seems when things are going all wrong. As John Monsell's hymn reminds us, God 'Will comfort thy sorrows and answer thy prayerfulness, guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.'

But what about the 'sometimes I just sits' bit? Be still and know that I am God. The first step is to stop nattering, though as we have said, that has its place, but the second is to allow God in. It is not just sitting & idling. As Lyndon said, when we are quiet and let God do the talking, miracles can indeed happen. There can be transformation. We need for this prayer to stop struggling, to leave all our worries to one side, all our thoughts as to what we are to do next. Write them down if they are getting in the way and then forget about them until this period of prayer is past. Just give ourselves time to relax into the presence of God. It takes time. Force is not part of it. To some people it comes almost naturally. Others never quite get there. But it is worth a try and I encourage you to try it this Lent. It is called in 'churchy language' contemplation. Although we know that Jesus had his struggles in the wilderness with the dangers of this world- itemised by Luke and Matthew, As Patrick Hastings said last week in their transformation the disciples had to work out a completely new kind of Messiah to the one they were expecting and perhaps Jesus was coming to his decisions about that in the wilderness too. But I am sure he also had his silence, his just sitting, his being filled with the glory of God. Sometimes I just sits, with no agenda, no timetable, no overt thoughts, and see where this path leads. All you need to lead you out of the wilderness is the experience of the certainty of the promise of God.

Lord, when I sit in quietness, give me your peace of acceptance, a thankfulness for life, a stillness from fretting and a calmness of outlook, that I may be led in your path to eternity. Amen.