



Holy Trinity Church Blacon

Charity number 1180853

1st November 2020

When lockdown began in March, the regulations told us to avoid leaving our homes if at all possible, but one of the exceptions was for exercise. Work-outs to keep us all fit and healthy were promoted on all sorts of media. Joe Wicks became an international internet hit with his online exercise videos. We are familiar with the need to keep ourselves active in order to remain healthy. Muscles only build up if we use them. If somebody lies in a hospital bed for a long time, their recovery includes building up the strength in their muscles that became wasted and weakened through disuse. Our spiritual muscles are just the same. If we want them to become stronger, then we need to exercise them.

Like a personal trainer will give us particular tasks to do for our different muscle groups, so Jesus shows us what makes us spiritually healthy, and this is beautifully summed up in the familiar passage we call the Beatitudes. These statements outline the sorts of approaches to life, of approaches to our relationship with God, which particularly please Him, revolving around membership of the kingdom of heaven, also.

Some of them are quite straightforward to understand, and are possibly what anyone might expect to be on such a list – being pure in heart, peacemakers, people who are merciful, and people who long to see righteousness in the world. However easy they are to understand, they are really hard to put into practice day by day. But the other five are far more challenging to understand as reasons for God to bless us, let alone to put into practice.

Hear those verses in a version called The Passion Translation:

³ “What wealth is offered to you when you feel your spiritual poverty! For there is no charge to enter the realm of heaven’s kingdom.

⁴ “What delight comes to you when you wait upon the Lord! For you will find what you long for.

⁵ “What blessing comes to you when gentleness lives in you! For you will inherit the earth.

⁶ “How enriched you are when you crave righteousness! For you will be surrounded with fruitfulness.

⁷ “How satisfied you are when you demonstrate tender mercy! For tender mercy will be demonstrated to you.

⁸ “What bliss you experience when your heart is pure! For then your eyes will open to see more and more of God.

⁹ “How blessed you are when you make peace! For then you will be recognized as a true child of God.

¹⁰ “How enriched you are when you bear the wounds of being persecuted for doing what is right! For that is when you experience the realm of heaven’s kingdom.

¹¹ “How ecstatic you can be when people insult and persecute you and speak all kinds of cruel lies about you because of your love for me! ¹² So leap for joy—since your heavenly reward is great. For you are being rejected the same way the prophets were before you.

God blesses you when people hate you, and attack you, and say lots of horrible things about you. God blesses you when there are plots against you. God blesses you if you think you are a worthless person who has no right to any sort of attention from God. God blesses you if you’re deeply grieving. God blesses anybody who doesn’t put themselves forward, but thinks of other people as better than them.

These qualities are all summed up in Jesus, who is the great exemplar of spiritual health for us all. He knows better than anyone about being persecuted for doing what is right. These are all about placing God as top priority, above all else, above other relationships, above our own interests. Being close to God, putting Him first in all circumstances is the muscle we need to work on the most, to be healthy spiritually. We all need to work daily to practise that more and more.

Tina Upton



NOTICES

Holy Trinity Blacon are the living church of our living God, and we continue to be at work here! If you are able, do check the parish website www.holytrinityblacon.org (especially the Coronavirus Support page) or our Facebook page (holytrinityblacon) for updates.

SUNDAY WORSHIP We are now meeting at Holy Trinity Church at 9.30am each Sunday. Everyone will need to wear a face covering (unless exempt). If you have a cough or are feeling unwell, please do not come to church. There is a QR code for scanning at the church, if you are using the NHS Covid-19 App.

MINIBUS The minibus will be providing lifts to church on Sunday mornings for those who need them. If you would like to have a lift, please contact the parish office or Tina Upton.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR ALL SOULS As is our usual practice, we are holding a Memorial Service at 3pm today for those who have recently been bereaved. We will also make this a time to pray particularly for those whose lives have been adversely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. *Please let us know if you plan to come.*

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY is 8th November. Services in church that day will be: 9.30am Eucharist and 10.45am Prayers including a 2-minute silence. At 12.00pm, with our ecumenical colleagues, we will gather at Blacon War Memorial, at the cemetery, for an open-air Service of Remembrance.

PRAYING FOR BLACON Louise and Tina are taking our exercise particularly along those streets we are praying for each week. Do join us in praying for those residents. This week we pray for: *Barnes Close, Griffin Close, Morgan Close and Blake Close.*

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD If you are putting together shoeboxes for needy children for Christmas, they need to be completed and returned to church by 9th-16th November. If you are interested, please see <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/> There are also leaflets and boxes available in church.

CHRISTMAS PLANS Inspired by the NHS rainbows around the place, what if we put scenes from the nativity in our windows this Christmas? Try www.housingaforest.com/stained-glass-nativity/ for inspiration and there are lots of printable nativity silhouettes free on the internet. Let us know if you plan to take part, so we can form a trail around Blacon.

CONTACTS:

Rector	Rev Tina Upton	01244 372721	tina.htblacon@btinternet.com
Curate	Rev Louise Annison	07861 490410	louise.htblacon@btinternet.com
Warden	June Middleton	01244 376933	june.middleton47@gmail.com
Outreach Worker	Sue Mountford	07835 006834 or 01244 313799	
Parish Office	Linda Tudor (Admin)	01244 376085	office.htblacon@btinternet.com