

The Benefice of Benenden & Sandhurst

Our Mission: "To know and love Jesus and make his love known to all"

Our Worship: Sunday 21st March The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Collect: Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; 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.

Sunday 21st March – The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Readings: Hebrews 5.5-10, John 12.20-33

10 am

ONLINE HOLY COMMUNION

led by Revd David Commander &
Revd Rosemary Kobus van Wengen

Link: <https://youtu.be/iNQRp27Cubk>

(Link available via the church websites)

followed at 11am by an

ONLINE COFFEE MORNING VIA ZOOM

Link: (Meeting ID: 397 110 2878 Passcode: 658989)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3971102878?pwd=UkpkY2R2Z1lXbmJqNUdzdzB2RVZUUT09>

(Link available via the church websites)

NB Links to all services (also available to watch as recordings) are detailed on the following St George's and St Nicholas church websites, Facebook pages and A Church Near You.

Websites:

<http://www.benendenchurch.org/>

<https://stnicholassandhurst.org/>

Facebook Pages:

@StGeorgesBenenden

@StNicholasSandhurst

A Church Near You:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 22nd

7.30pm

Benenden PCC meeting via Zoom

Tuesday 23rd

7.30 pm

Lent Course Week 5 – via Zoom – joining info below

NEXT SERVICE: Sunday 28th March – Palm Sunday

Readings: Psalm 118.1-2 & 19-end, John 12.12-16

10 am **ONLINE HOLY COMMUNION**

led by Revd David Commander & Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie

Service link published Saturday prior to the service.

Followed by Zoom coffee morning

Readings: Sunday 21st March – The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Hebrews 5.5-10

⁵ So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

‘You are my Son,

today I have begotten you’;

⁶as he says also in another place,

‘You are a priest for ever,

according to the order of Melchizedek.’

⁷ In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, ¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

John 12.20-33

Some Greeks Wish to See Jesus

²⁰ Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ ²²Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

Jesus Speaks about His Death

²⁷ ‘Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—“Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ ²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ ³⁰Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ ³³He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

EASTER SERVICES IN BENENDEN & SANDHURST

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday. We will still be worshipping remotely but palm crosses will be available in the parish churches from Sunday 21st. Please collect one. If you are unable to get to church please give Revd David a call and he will try to get one to you.

Holy Week There will be a **Compline** service streamed live on **Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday** (Easter Eve) at 7:30pm on Zoom. Here is the link for these services:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3971102878?pwd=UkpkY2R2Z1lXbmJqNUdhdzB2RVZUUT09>

Maundy Thursday - There will be a recorded service, from St Nicholas, shown on-line (YouTube) at 7:30pm on Thursday 1st April. (A link will be available once the service is recorded, edited and uploaded)

Good Friday - There will be a recorded service, from St. George's, shown on-line (YouTube) at 10am on Friday 2nd April. (A link will be available, as above)

Easter Sunday - There are a choice of services.... **in our churches!**

6:15 am: Sunrise service at St Nicholas

8 am: Communion at St Nicholas

10 am: Communion at St George's

It will be a delight to be back worshipping again together in our parish churches. Although we are not sure there will be any singing when we first go back to public worship. The restrictions on this have not been lifted, as yet. But it will just be good to be together! Revd David

LENT COURSE 2021

Lent Meditations with Julian of Norwich

Our five week Lent course concludes on Tuesday 23rd March at 7:30 pm

Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3971102878?pwd=UkpkY2R2Z1lXbmJqNUdzdzB2RVZUUT09>

The material for this week's Zoom is provided below.

The material for all previous weeks – and the Zoom link for Tuesday - are also available via the church websites and Facebook pages.

Lent Meditations with Julian of Norwich – Week 5 – Tuesday 23rd March



Those who know nothing of Julian and her writings will still often have heard, and associate her chiefly with her saying 'All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well'. This sounds perhaps glib, like wishful thinking or very superficial, heard like that, out of context. So, what does Julian mean? Where has she got these words from? How are we to understand the message they bring?

In her book, this message comes from Christ himself. He shows her that, although sin is inevitable, as we are not perfect, he can and will overcome this to 'make all things well'. Julian is perturbed and confused by this. She had been taught, and thought herself to understand, that her sin, and everybody's sin, was the

great stumbling block to union with God. She writes:

'It seemed to me that if there were no such thing as sin, we would all be as pure as our Lord created us, reflecting his likeness. And so, like a fool, I used to wonder about this. Why wouldn't God, in his omniscience, have prevented sin when he created us? If he had left sin out of creation, it seemed to me, all would be well. I know I should have abandoned this disturbing line of thought, but I couldn't seem to help myself. I grieved and lamented this beyond all reason and discretion.'

She was clearly very preoccupied by the idea of sin and its negative influence. But Christ reassured her, that this is not something to be worried about.

'But in this showing Jesus gave me all that I needed. "Sin is inevitable," he said, "yet all will be well and all will be well and every kind of thing shall be well."

This is one of the great, revolutionary teachings in Julian's visions, that sin is **inevitable**. Not that it is desirable, or good, but that it cannot be avoided. It is bound to happen. God knows this, and he accepts it. *'For we are all troubled to some degree, and we shall continue to be troubled as we follow our Master Jesus to the place where we are fully purified. Eventually we will be stripped of our worldly flesh, and all the inner inclinations that are less than good will fall away.'*

In Julian's understanding, sin is a sort of 'anti-Materia', it has no real existence or heft; it is literally a '**no-thing**'. And eventually it will simply cease to be. How this will happen, Christ never reveals to her, but just reassures her that he both can, wants to and will make it happen.

...But the truth is, I did not see any sin. I believe that sin has no substance, not a particle of being, and cannot be detected at all except by the pain it causes. It is only the pain that has substance, for a while, and it serves to purify us and make us know ourselves and ask for mercy.

....'What this means is, It is true that sin causes all this pain, but all will be well, and all will be well, and every kind of thing shall be well'. When he said these gentle words, he showed me that he does not have one iota of blame for me, or for any other person. So, wouldn't it be unkind of me to blame God for my transgressions, since he does not blame me? At the heart of these words I saw a wondrous, exalted secret hidden in God, which he will openly reveal to us

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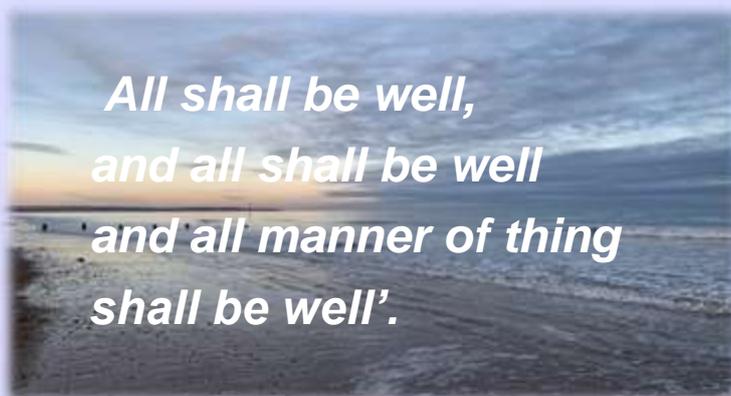
in paradise. With this secret knowledge we will finally understand why he allowed the suffering of sin to come into this world, and we will endlessly rejoice.'

Julian is reassured again and again that this is how God operates, although it is impossible for us to understand while we're still in this world:

Once our Beloved said, "Every kind of thing shall be well," and on another occasion he said, "You will see for yourself: every kind of thing shall be well." My soul recognized a number of teachings contained in these phrases. This was one: He does not only pay attention to lofty and noble things, but also to things that are humble and small. He cares about the one as much as the other, this as well as that. When he says, "You will see for yourself: every kind of thing shall be well," he is referring to this level of care. He wants us to know that he will not forget the least little thing. Here is another: From our point of view, there are many actions in this world that seem to be done with evil intent, and we see that they cause great harm. It seems impossible to us that such things could ever have a good outcome. When we think about this, our hearts are filled with such sorrow and grief that we cannot rest in joyfully beholding our God, which we would like to do. The problem lies with our faulty reason. We are too blind to comprehend the wondrous wisdom of God, too limited to grasp the power and goodness of the blessed Trinity. That's why he says, "You will see for yourself: every kind of thing shall be well." It's as if he had said, "Hold this in your heart, in faith and trust, and everything will be revealed to you in the end, and you will see it all in the fullness of joy."

To read Julian of Norwich is to constantly discover new layers. Much like when we read Holy Scripture, there is so much, the text is so rich and filled with meaning as well as delightful detail, that we find something fresh every time. In these last few weeks, we have touched on a few themes, turned our eyes towards the cross aided by Julian's vision, and dwelt a little in her small cell and her vast universe. I would encourage you to go on discovering more of her vision for yourself. She is a sure guide that leads us ever closer to Christ and deeper into his love.

Throughout the time of my showings, I wished to know what our Beloved meant. More than fifteen years later, the answer came in a spiritual vision. This is what I heard. "Would you like to know our Lord's meaning in all this? Know it well: love was his meaning. Who revealed this to you? Love. What did he reveal to you? Love. Why did he reveal it to you? For love. Stay with this and you will know more of the same. You will never know anything but love, without end."



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