

SERVICES

Although public worship is suspended during lockdown, you are very welcome to come to St Mary's for private prayer and reflection during the following times:

Wednesday mornings 10.00-12.00

Sunday mornings 10.00-12.00

We hope you find comfort and peace in this quiet place.

Sunday Evening Prayer **on Zoom** 17.00
(for details email hazelwhite1@btinternet.com)

Next Sunday: Advent 1
Readings: Isaiah 64:1-9
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

If you wish to support the work of the church financially, you can be part of the Parish Giving Scheme. You can also fill out a Gift Aid Declaration to increase the value of the gift. See wardens for information. Here are our account details:

PCC St Mary's Church Selly Oak
HSBC Account number: 41565818
Sort code: 40-11-20

Parish ministry team

Clergy

Revd Hazel White – 0121 4713517

Revd Jayne Adams 07894 167552

Revd David Parker 0121 445 1901/07532 338961

Licensed Reader

Mary Cutler 0121 472 3343

Church Wardens

George Harrison: 07831 573169 Martin Sorby 07982 850 444

Please note: Hazel usually observes Friday as her day off.

If you have any notices to add to the TWS, please email sarahjherbert@aol.com by the end of Tuesday for inclusion in the following Sunday's edition.

A prayer for the Nation

Loving God, at this time of crisis when so many are suffering, we pray for our nation and our world. Give our leaders wisdom, our Health Service strength, our people hope. Lead us through these parched and difficult days to the fresh springs of joy and comfort that we find in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

www.stmarysellyoak.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarysellyoak/>

Parish of Selly Oak St Mary



TWS

This Week Sheet

Christ the King

Sunday 22nd November 2020

We are sad to be unable to offer public worship during the next four-week lockdown. This newsletter will continue to provide you with the readings, prayers and any other information each week. Church will continue to be open for private prayer – please see the back of this newsletter for details.

Collect:

God the Father,
help us to hear the call of Christ the King
and to follow in his service,
whose kingdom has no end;
for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, one glory. **Amen.**

Readings: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
Ephesians 1:15-end
Matthew 25:31-end

Post Communion Prayer:

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good
works,
may by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For your prayers:

Those who are unwell: Hilda Stormont, Pat Westwood

Those who have died: Gary Stephenson, Eileen Millar

We also pray for the General Synod of the Church of England meeting 23-25 November over Zoom

Church of England Birmingham Praying Together is available online:

<https://www.cofebirmingham.com/everyday-faith/being-a-christian/cofeb-praying-together/church-of-england-birmingham-praying-together--november-2020.php>

If you would like to be added to our prayer list, or know someone else who would like our prayers, please email sarahjherbert@aol.com or speak to one of the clergy.

Keeping safe

- Please complete the simple form provided in your seat to assist with NHS Test and Trace.
- It is now mandatory to wear a face mask unless you have a legitimate exemption.
- 2m social distancing must be maintained at all times including on entry and exit.

If you or anyone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus, in line with Government advice you are asked to stay at home.

November Monday Evening Group on Zoom

Please email me before 6pm on Monday if you would like to connect with others for a 40 minute session reflecting on wellbeing starting at 7pm.

Hazel (email: hazelwhite1@btinternet.com)

Foodbank

From our friends at the foodbank: "Thank you to St. Mary's congregation once again for your donations. While many people are experiencing compassion fatigue or financial difficulty as Lockdown II kicks in, it's lovely to have such consistent givers – especially at a time when our food parcels are flying off the shelves! Here's this week's list of shortage food and toiletries: puddings (tins or cartons), canned meat, tinned spaghetti, tinned fruit, jam or other spreads, dilute-to-taste squash, uncooked rice, sugar, coffee, hair conditioner".

The PCC would like to encourage support for the foodbank especially during Advent. Donations can be brought to church on Wednesday and Sunday mornings when the church is open for Private Prayer. For Christmas, why not buy extra treats (eg: chocolate, mince pies, cake) for food bank clients to enjoy too? Do please check sell by dates, and also bear in mind that Christmas treats need to be in church on or before 13th December so that donations can be processed in time for Christmas.

PCC update

At the November meeting of the PCC Stuart Smith, Head teacher of St Mary's Primary School, gave an update on the School. The following decisions were made:

- It was agreed that the church be kept open for Private Prayer on Wednesday and Sunday mornings during Lockdown 2.
- The Company Infinitas was appointed by the PCC to undertake the work needed to outline our available options for upgrading our heating system that will also enable us to aim for a net carbon zero footprint. Laura Bishop from Infinitas will be visiting during this coming week to undertake the work.

- Charitable donations for 2020 were agreed: WaterAid, Diocesan Malawi link, Sense, & Acorns each to receive £600, and St Mary's Hospice to receive £400.

Working Party – Saturday 5th December, 9am

Provided lockdown is lifted on 2nd December, we are planning a further working party for a final clearance of leaves and a general tidy up of the churchyard, including the garden of remembrance. Could you spare a couple of hours for some socially distanced outdoor exercise that will also help the church? It would also be helpful if you are able to bring tools including rakes and brooms.

Advent calendar idea

We are considering whether it might be possible as a congregation to create a 'window advent calendar'. The idea is that each day of advent, one household from the church would unveil a window display in the front of their house, lit up so that it can be seen in the evening, and creating a sort of trail that people could walk or drive around the parish (or slightly further afield for those who live outside the parish) to see. It would of course need 24 households to take part, but it would be a lovely thing to do if we have enough take-up. Please contact Hazel ASAP if you might be interested in this.

The Readings

This week's readings bring to mind a book I read – *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep* (Joanna Cannon, if you're interested.) During the course of what is essentially a mystery story, two young girls discover that hardly anyone on their street is quite who they seemed to be and that it is much harder to sort out the "good" and "bad" people than they have been led to believe.

In the Old Testament reading from Ezekiel, the implication is that the "sheep" the Lord will gather and protect are the Jewish nation who have been scattered far and wide. They will be saved more because of who they are and what has been done to them, than because of what they have done. By the time Matthew is writing, the message is essentially the same but with a crucial difference; whether a person is saved or not depends entirely on their own actions.

When sorting the goats and the sheep, God is unlikely to get it wrong (although I don't really like the aspersions cast on goats!) But we easily could. Therefore, how we are judged will depend not on whether our judgement is good or bad, but rather on whether or not we are able to withhold it. Matthew makes it clear that it is not for us to decide who deserves kindness but to bestow it equally on all. And that way, perhaps a few more goats may turn out to be sheep in disguise!

Kate Cheyney