

# Dear all,

**Oulton Broad Team Ministry**  
The Parishes of St. Mark with  
St. Luke and St. Michael.

*Alleluia! Christ is Risen!*

This Sunday, our Gospel reading reminds us of the time when the risen Lord Jesus entered the disciples' lockdown. John 20:19—*On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"* Jesus greeted them with peace, he brought joy and he breathed His Holy Spirit on them.

Isn't that just what we need at this time? We're all experiencing this lockdown differently. For some, it's a welcome relief from the busyness of life; a chance to be in the garden, more time for a hobby or for prayer and bible reading. For others, it's lonely, frightening and a time when the losses are felt so much more keenly.

I'm so glad to report that the vast majority of our wider Church family, across all of our congregations, are in the first group; but we continue to earnestly pray for those who are finding this time significantly more challenging. Whatever we're feeling in this lengthy time of necessary social distancing, let's be remember that a closed door, or even a locked one, is no barrier for Jesus. Let's take a moment to settle our hearts ...to receive his peace ...to remember his nearness ...to experience the joy that we can feel from knowing him ...and to breathe in the Holy Spirit.

Thomas wasn't with the other disciples, behind the locked door, during that first encounter with the Risen Lord, but Jesus graciously returned again, and attended to all of Thomas' concerns. He's always ready to reassure, even the doubters.

The lockdown is now set to be extended for another few weeks, and the social distancing season even longer but, in every crisis there is opportunity, and so this bookmark, <— which you might like to cut out and use, is a reminder to position ourselves for every opportunity that God may present to us. Thanks to Jo for thinking of a good verse which will encourage us to do just that.

Do continue to let us know if you need help with anything, would appreciate extra contact or if you have any prayer requests. Debbie from St. Michael's is committing herself to a day of prayer and fasting each Monday during the lockdown, and is happy to receive prayer requests on that day. You can contact Debbie by phoning 01502 538573 or by emailing (alan\_debbie@hotmail.co.uk).

We are currently compiling an audio CD which includes different people reading Common Worship Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline, as well as some other prayers that you might find useful during this time. If you'd like a copy, please email me (revhelenjary@gmail.com) or leave a message on St. Mark's Office answerphone (01502 514774). The answerphone is being checked most days during the week, although it may take a little time to get back to you as the office is not 'staffed' in the usual way.

Our regular Sunday Worship via Zoom continues at 10.30am each week. It is followed by Holy Communion at Midday. You can join these gatherings via the Zoom app, as many are doing, but also by phone if you don't have access to the Internet. If you would like to

“Keep your  
spiritual  
fervour.

Be joyful in  
hope, patient  
in affliction  
and faithful in  
prayer.”

Romans  
12:11-12

be able to listen to our Sunday Morning Worship, all you need to do is call the following number: **0203 481 5240**. When prompted, you'll then need to enter this meeting ID: **588 877 574** and press the # key on your phone keypad when instructed to do so. This call will cost you the same as any UK national call. For others, joining the Sunday online gathering with video, the meeting ID 588 877 574 remains unchanged.



**<— If you will be joining us this Sunday for worship, and if you are able, please have a nail to hand. Any nail will do, but the bigger the better.**

The Clergy are celebrating Holy Communion each Wednesday morning at 10.30am. In the week ahead this will be live on the St. Mark's page on Facebook. Do join us if you can. Future Wednesdays will be via Zoom, and will also include the phone-in option.

UCB 'Word For Today' Booklets contain a bible reading and some words of commentary for each day of the year. I know that many of you enjoy 'Word for Today' and find that it speaks into your circumstances time and time again. Marilyn kindly orders and receives these booklets for us, and will leave a pile of them in St. Mark's Church porch, which is being kept open at present, for anyone who wishes to collect a copy. If you're not able to get out, but would like to receive a copy of 'Word for Today', just let us know.

Here's a challenge for any children that will be joining us for the Zoom Worship Gathering on Sunday. You should receive, along with this newsletter, a sheet for making a 'Peace be with you' hug. Have a go at making your own and we'd love for you to show it to us on Sunday.

The first week of a Joint Home group took place this week. It was a really helpful time. Thank you to Rachel for preparing all the material, and for leading us. It is based on the book of Daniel. Discussion/Reflection sheets are sent out at the beginning of the week. You can receive these and just use them on your own. Alternatively, you might like to also join in with a shared discussion group on Wednesday evenings, at 7pm. You can join that gathering by Zoom video link or by phone. We had both types of participants joining the discussion this Wednesday past. The meeting ID will be: 533 181 156 with no password required. If you're joining by phone, you should call 0330 088 5830 and be ready to enter the meeting ID, followed by the # button on your phone. Please let Rachel know if you wish to receive the material by leaving a message on the Office answerphone (514774) or by emailing [racheljhayden@outlook.com](mailto:racheljhayden@outlook.com)

Who Cares? - Online East Coast Vision Meeting. 'Who Cares?' is a mission initiative which involves asking one simple question, and asking it to as many people as possible. The Question is: "*What hurts the most?*" The answers to the question are then compiled by professional survey analysts, and all participating Churches will be given the results. Each Church, or group of Churches, can then decide how they will respond. I'd love us to think and pray about getting involved with this. I took part with my previous Church and we found it to be a very useful way of engaging in meaningful conversation with a wide variety of people. Everyone is welcome to join the Zoom Vision/Information evening on May 5th in order to find out more. Further details will be in next week's newsletter.

*And now, may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. With love and prayer, Helen*

#### *A Prayer for Today—no. 4*

Blessed are you, God and Father of  
our Lord Jesus Christ.  
To You be glory and praise forever!

By raising your Son from the dead,  
death has been destroyed and  
new life has been restored. In him  
the victory over sin and the grave  
is won.

As you call us to newness of life  
may our lives reflect his glory.  
Blessed are you Father, son and  
Holy Spirit.

In this time of extended crisis Lord  
we pray that we all maintain  
commitment to abiding with the  
restrictions and not falter in our  
faith.

We pray also for those suffering  
from the virus for the families of  
those who have died and also  
those who are lonely and need  
support.

Let us be forever sure of the love  
of God and let us rejoice in that  
love and the knowledge that this  
crisis will end.

Merciful Father accept these  
prayers for the sake of your son  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
Amen.

*Written by Tony from St. Luke's.*