



**St Nicolas Church,
Cranleigh**
WORSHIPPING AT HOME
7th Sunday of Easter
24th May 2020

WELCOME

. . . . to our Church at Home resources for this Week. We invite you all to stay connected with each other and the life of the Church Community, by using these Worship and Prayer resources at home.

Also, if you do have internet access, you will find a video version of a said Communion Service, with the sermon on the Church Website www.stnicolascranleigh.org.uk and on the St Nicolas Church FaceBook page.

For Families, there will also be live worship at 10am with Gabrielle Clarke available via WhatsApp and Zoom. If you want to join: *(this code is the same every week)* Join URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/148785166> or Meeting ID: 148-785-166

There is also an opportunity to join church friends for a **Virtual Afternoon Tea and Chat on Tuesdays at 4pm!** The Zoom joining code for this is ID: 804-694-233

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

COLLECTS:

O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Risen, ascended Lord,
as we rejoice at your triumph,
fill your Church on earth with power and compassion,
that all who are estranged by sin
may find forgiveness and know your peace,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

FIRST READING: *Acts 1.6-14*

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends

of the earth.’ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

GOSPEL READING: *John 17.1-11*

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.

Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

SERMON (Written by the Revd Martin Booth)

The German theologian Rudolph Otto once coined a phrase in Latin: *Mysterium tremendum et fascinans*: The tremendous and fascinating mystery that is God.

When we look at how artists struggle to depict the extraordinary event known as The Ascension of Christ, we almost invariably come down to an image of someone in sandals floating off into the clouds.

Hardly tremendous and fascinating. Though a mystery, certainly.

To some extent, Jesus floating off into the clouds for some people verges on the unbelievable. Despite whatever is the truth

of the matter, is it any wonder that in a society that demands scientific proof for everything, people start to question this, and other great moments in Christ's earthly ministry?

Well, may I let you in on a little secret...? Human beings have – and have always had – difficulty in believing Things.

So we shouldn't be surprised if we, as human beings – find this event just as difficult to get our heads around.

For example: Have you looked at your old photo albums lately? Have you ever looked at the picture of your younger self and in disbelief said: "Who is that person in the picture?" and "I didn't really look like that, did I?" Or seen an old photograph and said to yourself "I don't remember doing that... or going to that place... or being with those people...? But it must have happened because here's a photo of me doing it, being there, alongside those people".

For some reason, our minds cannot always grasp some things. And this is what we really mean when we say we find something hard to believe. Not that it didn't happen. Just that we find it hard to believe. The fault is in the human mind's capacity to believe. Not necessarily that such-and-such a thing didn't really happen. And, if we can't quite grasp something – so we human beings have a tendency to dismiss it. We start thinking about something else altogether; something easier to understand. That's not a problem. It's just the way it is with us.

Whatever happened at Jesus' Ascension – whether he floated up into the clouds; or just kind of fizzled out like Captain Kirk; or was simply wrapped in a cloak of mystery and somehow hidden from view - we may never know. So, is it any surprise that Luke writing his Gospel some thirty or more years later couldn't quite put into words what actually happened either?

In the end, he - and I imagine the disciples at the time - did the best they could. They used a biblical metaphor or image that they'd learned from their own upbringing: the story of the great prophet Elijah ascending into heaven at the end of his time on earth, and being enfolded by clouds.

Just like the disciples, it is entirely understandable if, in our finite, limited, fallible humanity, we can't quite take everything in. Especially something so extraordinary as that. Because, you know, once in a while... Jesus just asks us to trust in him.

To simply to lift our eyes from the things of the everyday and - even if we find it beyond the reach of our understanding - to look up into the skies and just gaze... in wonder... in awe... in love. Which is really all that the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* of the Ascension is asking us to do... Thanks be to God. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

Eternal God, giver of love and power,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world
to preach the gospel of his kingdom:

confirm us in this mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS:

A Prayer at this time:

Lord, as you send rain and flowers
even to the wilderness,
renew us by your Holy Spirit,
help us to sow good seed in time of adversity
and to live to rejoice in your good harvest of all creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For those who are ill:

Merciful God,
we entrust to your tender care
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe.
Comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For hospital staff and medical researchers:

Gracious God,
give skill, sympathy and resilience

to all who are caring for the sick,
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.
Strengthen them with your Spirit,
that through their work many will be restored to health;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Weekly Prayers of Intercession

Church and Christian Ministry:

- For all Licensed Lay Ministers, and others lay people in authorised ministry, working across the Diocese, as they work in partnership with Ordained colleagues in spreading God's Word.
- For Judy Wedderspoon, our own LLM, and for our Pastoral Assistants.

National and World Affairs:

- For all affected by Coronavirus, and for the Governments across the world, seeking to find ways of combatting the virus
- For all scientists working to produce effective drugs and vaccines

Community and Family:

- For those who live in Furniss Court
- For our Church Administrator, Elise Whittington

- For all whose jobs have been put at risk and those already unemployed
- For all those who continue to work in public service, especially for NHS staff, police, fire and rescue, paramedics, and shop workers, keeping us well, safe and fed

The Sick and those in Need:

- For Robin Burnett, Mike Ford, Stella Goldsmith, Tony Kenison, Libby O'Brien, Brian Pettyfer, Jean Quallington, Marion Tomkins, Mac Walker, Angela Wild, Henry Young
(And from Dunsfold and Hascombe: Sandra Baxter-Brown, Sami Bennewith, Judy Bolt, Sue Bowden, Sally Davis, Sue and Dennis Evans, Jenny Glover, Peter Hutley, Dru Ridley, Sally Rivett, Sue Simper, Lorna Thompson, Jackie Williams, Paul Wiltshire, Christine Woof, Francesca, Hugh)

The Departed:

- Edith Corbett *(And from Dunsfold and Hascombe: Jeremy Ayden)*

NOTICES:

Emotional Support Helpline: 01483 901493 – Lines are open 11-3 Monday to Friday if you would like to chat to a friendly helpful voice!

Jean Quallington and her family would like to say a very BIG Thank you for all the flowers, letters, phone calls and kindness

they have received since Tim's death. When the Coronavirus crisis is over there will be a Memorial Service for Tim in our Church.

Plants: Although the Rectory Fete has been postponed, Win Bracking continues to grow plants for the annual plant stall. We are hoping that Win can have a plant sale at the bottom of the Rectory Drive, keeping to all the Covid-19 rules, in the near future. *So watch this space.* Meanwhile she is continuing to sell a few plants from her house (If interested please phone Win on 275573.)

St Nicolas Church: Whilst the Church building remains closed, please keep praying at home, and be assured that the Church is still very much in business and seeking to support those who need our love and care. You can still keep in touch in the following ways

The Rector: 01483 800655 or email

roy@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

Parish Office: 01483 273620 or email

elise@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

Young People's Minister: 07427 748408

gabrielle@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

Church Website:

www.stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

and on FaceBook

Sunday Roast from Rowleys: you can now order a roast dinner from Rowleys. Please speak to Gary or Tina on 277155 and they will help. Their office is open 9am to 2.30pm. You need to:

- 1 Order on a Wednesday for delivery on Sunday
- 2 Make it a regular order of once a week (in a change from normal for the current circumstances, you don't have to order anymore per week if you don't want to.
- 3 The cost is between £6-7 for the roast depending on what it is that week.

Tim Clifford Hill: Our New Curate, Tim, was due to be ordained Deacon on the 5th July, but due to the Social Distancing issues, the ordinations have been postponed until (hopefully) October 10th. This will not stop Tim starting his ministry with us, as he will be licensed as a Lay Minister on July 1st and will, in that capacity, be able to start doing most of the things that he would have done as a Deacon Curate. Tim and Alexandra and young Henry will be moving into the Curate's house this week – please pray for them.

RECTOR ON HOLIDAY: Although unable to go away, roy is taking a week's holiday (23rd – 29th May). All urgent communications should be directed through the Church Office this week.

GDPR: If you have not completed a GDPR contact form we will be unable to contact you at all, so if this is you, please complete one as a matter of urgency. You will find them on the website.

If you have received your news sheet by post and still have not completed a GDPR Form please contact the Rector on 01483 800655 or Elise on 01483 273620

MORE RESOURCES:

In addition to our own resources, here are a few things that you may like to take note of:

- DAILY HOPE The Church of England has set up a Telephone Worship Service with Hymns, Reflections and Prayers – the content changes every day and it is totally FREE TO CALL on 0800 804 8044
- Diocese of Guildford Website (Resources for children and adults) www.cofeguildford.org.uk/
- Guildford Cathedral Website www.guildford-cathedral.org where you will find a lot of worship resources, including Choral Services sung by members of the Cathedral Choir from their own homes.
- Bible Society Website (Resources for children and adults) www.biblesociety.org.uk/
- Premier Christian Radio www.radio.net/s/premierchristian
- CMS Website www.churchmissionsociety.org/
- Cranleigh Community Radio weekly broadcast available each week from Friday morning. Visit www.destinationcranleigh.net/radio

Please send notices for next week to Margie Nursey at
1, Elm Cottages, Smithwood Common (01483 273693)
notices@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk by 7pm on **Tuesday**

KING OF GLORY, KING OF PEACE

These words, which we often sing as a hymn, were written by the Seventeenth Century poet-priest George Herbert, and they are particularly appropriate at this time of year

King of glory, King of peace, I will love thee;
and that love may never cease, I will move thee.
Thou hast granted my request, thou hast heard me;
thou didst note my working breast, thou hast spared me.

Wherefore with my utmost art I will sing thee,
and the cream of all my heart I will bring thee.
Though my sins against me cried, thou didst clear me;
and alone, when they replied, thou didst hear me.

Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee;
in my heart, though not in heaven, I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort to enroll thee:
e'en eternity's too short to extol thee.

NEXT WEEK

. . . . is Pentecost. Our Worship material will be prepared by The Rector, who will for the first time since March be recording the Holy Communion Service from inside our Church.

If you know of anybody who would like to receive a printed communication like this each week, please call us on one of the numbers above!