

St Martin of Tours

Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs

Langley Vale

The parish of
St Martin of Tours
with St Stephen-on-the-Downs

Weekly Newsletter
Registered Charity Number: 1134149

Sunday 14th November 2021 – Remembrance Sunday

Dear Friends,

Remembrance Sunday invites us to pause and reflect on the sacrifices made by those fighting for peace. Whatever our views about warfare, all of us wish to be workers for peace and opposers of oppression.

Christ showed the world that to sacrifice oneself in order to save others can be a Godly act. We would not seek to glorify the cruelty of His death, or the circumstances that brought it about, but we do glory in His death for us all.

Likewise, we do not glorify war in our remembrance, but we do see the meaning of the sacrifices made for us, and the freedom we enjoy because of them.

May God be with all who mourn today, and give us all grateful hearts. **Nick Parish**

THIS WEEK

Sunday 14th November – Remembrance Sunday

8.30am - Holy Communion at St Martin's, – led by Nick Parish

9.30am – Morning Prayer at St Stephen's – led by John Padwick

10.00am – Choral Morning Prayer at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish

3.00pm – Beacon Tea in Church

6.30pm – Holy Communion at St Martin's – (in Church and live streamed) led by Nick Parish

Beacon Teas

The Beacon Teas today in St Martin's Church between 3.00pm and 5.00pm. We look forward to seeing anyone who would like some companionship, sandwiches and cake. You can decide which of these is the most important! If anyone is willing to donate the occasional home-made cake we would be most grateful.

Mary Gilbert and Elaine Snook, Pastoral Team

Wednesday 17th November

10.00am – Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel– led by Nick Parish

FUTURE SERVICES

Sunday 21st November – Christ the King

9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by Andrew Haviland

10.00am – Holy Communion at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish

6.30pm – Choral Evensong at St Martin's – (in Church and live streamed) led by Graeme Lodge

DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS

Churches Together in Epsom Monthly prayer meetings:

Following a well-attended social gathering, 'in person' at the Old Moat Café, we decided to alternately locate the monthly prayer meetings to 'Zoom online' or 'in person'. We were able to pray at the end of our social gathering at the Old Moat Café and received a positive response. The Old Moat Café has a covered outdoor area which should prove a Covid-safe environment. The gatherings will start at 9.15 on zoom and at 10 am for the 'in person' meetings. Dates of our monthly prayer meetings for Autumn 2021 are:



- Friday December 10th: 10-11am at Old Moat Café

Old Moat Garden Centre Café is in Horton Lane, Epsom

[Find Us — The Old Moat Garden Centre & Cafe](#)

STEWARDSHIP

Giving to St Martin's and St Stephen on the Downs

For general and stewardship giving you can give online giving via the Charities Aid Foundation. Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit. To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>

OR

2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below

There is also a "Donate" button on our website.



Cheques to St Martin's

If give a cheque donation to St Martin's Church, please can it payable to:
'The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom'

Donation Station

If you wish to give via contactless payment, please us the donation station in Church. You can give a pre-set amount or choose one. You can also gift aid your donation.

OTHER NOTICES

Money Raised at the Garden Party to support the Church in Cameroon

The garden party hosted by David and Nancy Candlin in 2019 raised about £1,000 with the intention to bring a priest over to the UK from Cameroon. This hasn't proved possible, and the money is still in the PCC accounts.

The PCC proposes that it should be designated 'for the purpose of connecting with the church overseas'. Before we do this, we want to consult the congregation, who gave the money in the first instance, and seek your agreement. If you are happy for the money raised at the garden party to be designated "for the purpose of connecting with the church overseas", you need to take no further action. However, if you have concerns or queries regarding this proposal, please contact the Churchwardens no later than Advent Sunday, the 28 November.

Beacon Lunch

A festive lunch will be held on Wednesday 29th December in Church House at 12.00pm for 12.30pm. All are welcome. If you think you are likely to join us it would be helpful if you would sign the list at the back of the Church before the 5th of December to help us to cater effectively.

Elaine Snook and Mary Gilbert

MISSION FOR THE MONTH

HOME MISSION

Through the Roof

Through the Roof is a Christian disability charity that changes the life of disabled people around the world. Through the Roof wants to see everyone valued equally, fully belonging and able to contribute their gifts and skills. They accomplish this in 3 ways, Faith, Freedom and Friendship.

Meg Topley

ABROAD MISSION

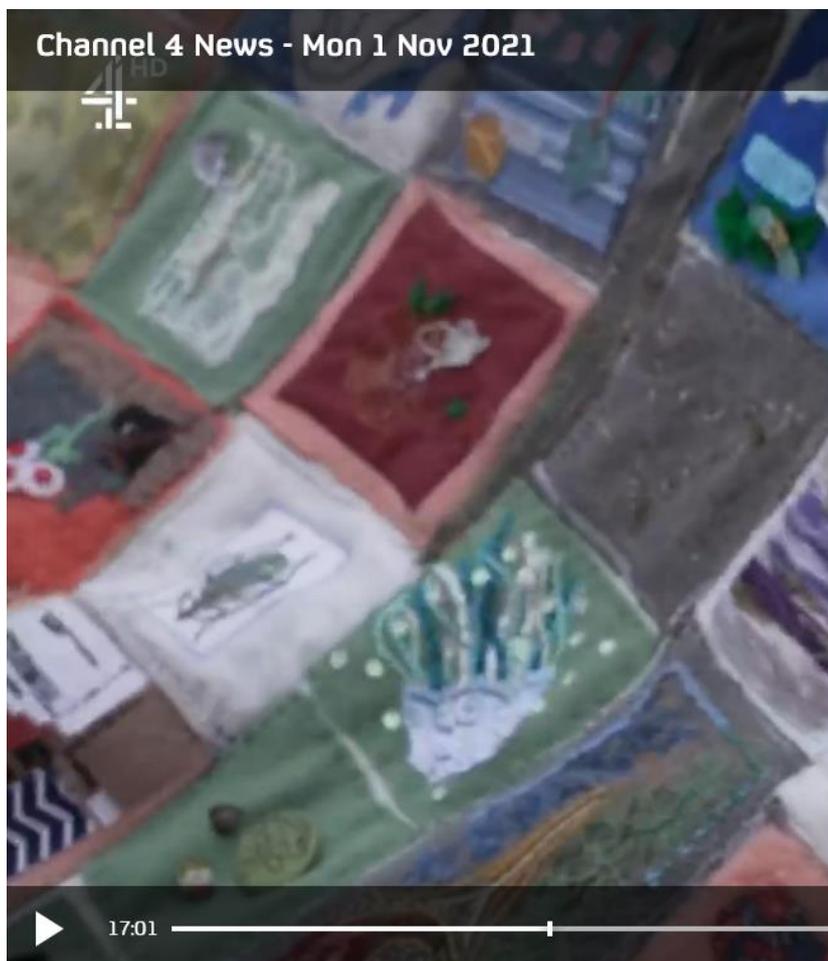
Mercy Ships Charity thanks St Martins Church for their continuing support. The new hospital ship, Global Mercy, having had a free passage through the Suez Canal thanks to the Egyptian President, is now being further equipped and staffed in Antwerp, Belgium. It plans to sail to Senegal in the Spring of 2022 to continue dispensing medical treatment there.

A new church information pack, full of the latest information will be displayed in the back of St Martins Church soon. Do have a look at it.

Peter and Julia White

Coat of Hopes

This is to let the parish know that the patch that was at the Eco Fair (and which Debra Lodge invited people to stitch as they came into church) is now stitched onto the coat and has made it to Glasgow - as featured in Channel 4 news on 1st November, around 17 minutes into the evening news programme. You catch a glimpse of it in the bottom left hand corner. Well done, everyone - we have sent our love, prayers and encouragement to the delegates at Glasgow! You can read more at www.coatofhopes.uk



EVENTS AND MUSIC

IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM THE EVENTS TEAM

With the number of Covid cases and continuing precautions needed, we have to cancel the Christmas Fair, due to be held on Saturday 27th November, also the Epiphany party in the New Year for the same reasons. The Beetle Drive was great fun for those who took part but there were only 10 of us. We would like to get some idea of your feelings about events in the near future so please fill in the anonymous questionnaire attached to this newsletter or pick up and complete a paper one from the back of church. The paper forms can be put in the labelled box or you can email your answers to one of the Events Team. We have some ideas for 2022 but would much appreciate your views so we can plan accordingly. Many thanks! **Events Team** – **Alyson Aronson, Mary Holloway-Neville, Cathy Morris, Nancy Bluett**

St Martin's Music Recitals – Next one 20th November

On Saturday 20th November at 4.30pm we present the dynamic Oxbridge Organ Duo in a thrilling programme designed to entertain all the family.

<http://www.oxbridgeorganduo.com/media.html>

Don't miss this opportunity to hear our recently refurbished Norman and Beard pipe organ played in tandem by Julian Collins and Benedict Lewis-Smith.

Programme:

Variations on Veni Creator Spiritus – David Briggs

Fancy – Thomas Tomkins

Duet – Samuel Wesley

Wave – Ad Wammes

Berceuse and Finale from Firebird – Stravinsky

Payment for the admission for attending a recital as part of Music @ St Martin's can be made by either :

1. Using the Donation Station in Church and select "Giving at a Recital at St Martin's"
2. Put the following link into your web browser:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/14629>

OR

3. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code



CHRISTMAS CARDS – ON SALE NOW

Christmas is coming!! I have set up my display of Christmas cards, candles and Advent Calendars. Please buy now while I have good stocks. Once I have sold out of a particular design, I may not be able to get any more.

Everything will be on sale between now and Christmas.

Payment may be made in a variety of ways:

- Cheque: made payable to "The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom" (please either hand in to the office or place in the wall safe in church)
- Donation Station: contactless payments – please use the "Cards" button
- Cash: via the wall safe in church.

Every packet sold helps the church. Thank you for your custom.

Mary Holloway-Neville





**Project Wenceslas: helping local people with support
to pay fuel bills this winter**

Rotary Club of Ewell and Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell are working together to bring 'Project Wenceslas' to our Borough for the fifth year running. There are people who will struggle to meet the cost of fuel to heat their homes over winter. Project Wenceslas allows those who receive, but do not need, the Government's Winter Fuel Payment to donate it to Ewell Rotary. This money will be distributed to people in critical need of assistance with fuel bills, i.e. those in "fuel poverty". All monies donated are redistributed 100% without any deductions for costs or expenses.

If you would like to know more about donating your Winter Fuel Payment, please contact Ewell Rotary via their website www.ewellrotaryclub.org.uk where you can also find more information about this scheme.

If you are struggling with fuel bills, then contact Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell on 0808 278 7963 (Mon-Fri, 10am – 4pm) or see our website : www.cae.org.uk

For information on support through this scheme, call

Citizens Advice on 0808 278 7963 or visit our website

www.cae.org.uk

THE NATIVITY JOURNEY

A PLAY FOR ALL THE FAMILY

15 - 20 DECEMBER 2021

BOOK
NOW!



Come and enjoy the real Christmas story at Wintershall

Walk with Mary, Joseph and the donkey on the winding, steep road to Bethlehem. Register for the census and journey with other travellers, Roman soldiers and shepherds as you enter the stable to watch the miracle unfold.

The Wintershall Nativity Journey is an unforgettable experience, bringing the true meaning of Christmas to life for the whole family.

Performance Times:

Thursday 16th December	5pm
Saturday 18th December	2pm & 5pm
Sunday 19th December	2pm & 5pm
Monday 20th December	11am, 2pm & 5pm

Prices:

16th December	Adult £20, Child £10 and Family £55
18th, 19th, 20th December	Adult £25, Child £12 and Family £65

Each performance lasts approximately 90 minutes.

Please note that some scenes are performed outside and some inside Holly Barn theatre, your visit includes a 10 minute walk up a steep hill. Limited disabled parking is available for those who need it most next to Holly Barn Theatre but this must be pre-booked by emailing admin@wintershall.org.uk.

Holly Barn, Bramley, Guildford GU5 0LR.



Book tickets **now** on
our website:
www.wintershall.org.uk
or by calling
01483 892167



FESTIVE KNITTING APPEAL



After the success of our Easter Chick Knitting Appeal, Age Concern Epsom & Ewell are running a Festive Knitting Appeal for Christmas 2021.

Help Age Concern Epsom & Ewell to raise vital funds by dusting off those knitting needles and creating one or more of these amazing knitted Christmas Pudding chocolate orange covers.

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell will be selling these knitted creations to raise vital funds for our charity throughout December.

For more information about this appeal or to receive your FREE knitting pattern, please email charlotte.hornblow@ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Thank you for your support

All knitted creations should be sent to

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell,
The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom,
Surrey, KT18 5AG



Latest message from Food Bank

We are collecting for our Christmas Appeal.

It's been a whirlwind of a year for us so far! We know December is a time when people who cannot afford food and basics need us more than ever. Last December we supported a whopping 1,570 people in need with food, essentials and seasonal support. So far in 2021 our numbers are not as high, but with the fuel price hikes and Universal Credit cuts the number of people needing us is rising again. We have helped more than 7,100 people so far this year with food, sundries and support.

Can you help us? We are fundraising for:

🎄 Christmas meat vouchers. Once again we are working with local butchers, we want to give our clients vouchers to enable them to choose their meat for Christmas.

🎄 Funds for seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables to add to our Christmas meat voucher and goodie bags.

🎄 Energy top up funds for our clients' gas/electricity to cook their Christmas dinner.

🎁 Gift cards of £10 each for parents to choose a present for their children from Argos, Wilkos, Superdrug, Boots, or TK Maxx.

You can donate funds here via our website, make a small donation by text (details below), or contact us if you want to make a BACs transfer.

We are also collecting donations from this list for our Christmas goodie bags:

Christmas selection boxes

Christmas napkins, tablecloths, tea towels

Christmas puddings

Savoury snacks

Tinned ham

Christmas biscuits

Festive chocolate, sweets and treats

Mince pies

Packet stuffing

Packet trifle mix



Please make sure items do not contain alcohol as we are unable to give these out. Please donate by Friday 3rd December in time for us to pack the bags ready for our clients.

You can donate at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park (please wear a mask);

Epsom & Ewell Foodbank

Generation Resource Centre

Behind West Ewell Primary School)

Ruxley Lane, Ewell

KT19 0JG

Donation drop off times: Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm.

* Please make sure all donations are sealed, in date and do not contain alcohol

*Donations can also be made if you prefer by texting any amount between £1 and £20 Christmas Gift followed by your chosen amount to 70450. If you wish to donate a larger amount please e-mail us.

Any questions? We are always happy to chat. Call us on 0208 786 8221 or email

foodbank@generation.org.uk

CONTACT US

Parish Office:

Church House, Church Street, Epsom,

KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567

E-mail: stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com

Website: www.stmartinsepsom.org

**Opening hours are Mondays, Wednesday, Thursdays & Fridays
9.30am to 12.30pm**

The Revd Nick Parish – Vicar – 01372 743336

Email: vicar@stmartinsepsom.org

The Revd Canon Adrian Esdaile - Priest in Retirement - 01372 723770

Email: esdaileadrian@yahoo.co.uk

***(available for Contemplative Prayer, Counsel,
Spiritual Direction and the Healing Ministry)***

Sunday

14 November 2021 Second Sunday before Advent

COLLECT

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God
and heirs of eternal life:
grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is
pure;
that when he shall appear in power
and great glory
we may be made like him in his
eternal and glorious kingdom;
where he is alive and reigns with
you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Daniel 12:1-3

A reading from the book of Daniel.

In the third year of King Cyrus a word was revealed to Daniel. "At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever."

PSALM Psalm 16

R *You, Lord, are my portion and my cup.*

or

R *My body shall rest in hope.*

Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;
I have said to the Lord, "You are my Lord,
my good above all other."
All my delight is upon the godly
that are in the land,
upon those who are noble among
the people. **R**

But those who run after other gods
shall have their troubles multiplied.
Their libations of blood I will not
offer,
nor take the names of their gods
upon my lips.

O Lord, you are my portion and my
cup;
it is you who uphold my lot. **R**

My boundaries enclose a pleasant
land;
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
I will bless the Lord who gives me
counsel;
my heart teaches me, night after
night.
I have set the Lord always before
me;
because he is at my right hand
I shall not fall. **R**

My heart, therefore, is glad and my
spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.
For you will not abandon me to the
grave,
nor let your holy one see the Pit.
You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of
joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures
for evermore. **R**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 10:11-14 [15-18] 19-25

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, "he sat down at the right hand of God," and since then has been waiting "until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet." For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. [And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds," he also adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.] Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain

(that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

GOSPEL Mark 13:1-8

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

As Jesus came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!" Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down." When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs."

POST COMMUNION

Gracious Lord,
in this holy sacrament
you give substance to our hope:
bring us at the last
to that fullness of life for which we
long;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Sunday Homily

SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

14 NOVEMBER 2021

YEAR B

“... the end is still to come.”

Mark 13:7

Illustration

A favourite subject of cartoons is the man wearing a sandwich board which boldly proclaims, “The end of the world is nigh.” The caption generally refers to him taking out an insurance policy or booking a holiday – anything to show that he does not really believe the message he is carrying around the streets. “The end of the world” has become a standing joke, only believed in by members of weird sects.

From time to time, groups of such people gather together to await the end of the world as we know it. Very often, they have calculated the exact time from a biblical text, taken out of context. Apocalyptic writings, such as Daniel or Revelation, have always provided fertile ground for the imagination. Yet the dates pass, and the world remains.

Gospel Teaching

In today’s Gospel, Jesus mentions the destruction of the Temple, and his four closest disciples ask for the sign that will precede this calamity. His reply shows that he has read their minds: they are not asking merely about the destruction of a building, but about the end of time. Jesus knows that they have been influenced by prophecies of the end time found in their Hebrew scriptures.

To a first-century Jew, it seemed perfectly logical to connect the destruction of the Temple with the end of time. The Temple was the very heart of Jewish religion, culture and politics, the embodiment of their national identity. If the Temple were to be destroyed, then the world itself must be coming to an end. In a similar way, the 11th September terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in 2001 seemed an assault on American, even “Western”, civilisation. A building can represent much more than bricks and mortar.

The Temple was indeed destroyed, in AD 70, yet the world did not end. The reply Jesus gives to his disciples is the same encouragement we give to someone whose world seems to be falling apart: “Don’t worry. It’s not the end of the world.” Before the end, he says, there will be catastrophes: wars, earthquakes, famines. But these are not to be understood as signalling the end. They are, rather, signs of this age: of a world which still flouts God’s will, channelling vast amounts of

money into war, which could be used to support agriculture in the developing world or build homes away from fault lines.

When Jesus spoke about the stones of the Temple being thrown down, he was quite probably not making any specific forecast about its destruction. He was almost certainly not talking about the end of time. He was replying to the awe in which the disciples held the Temple building itself. For Jesus himself, not the Temple, is now the embodiment of God's dealings with his people; his is the new priesthood. He was reminding them that buildings come and go, national institutions come and go, but God remains for ever. In God's good time, this age will end, and he will make all things new: there will be a new creation, a new birth. But it is not for us to know the day or the hour.

Application

The preoccupation with visible signs of organised religion remains today. It is too easy to think of "church" as the building in which we gather on a Sunday, rather than as the body of Christ, the people of God. It is too easy to invest all our religious feelings in this building, rather than in the life that it represents. We are called to be living stones in the temple of which Christ himself is the cornerstone.

For the end of the age starts now, as we live out the teaching of Jesus in the world, loving God and loving our neighbour. Rather than bother ourselves with calculating dates, rather than look for signs, let us simply accept that the end will come in God's good time. Our Saviour will come again in glory. Until then, our best preparation for the end is to heed the hymn's advice and live each day as if it were our last. Jesus spoke of those catastrophes as the beginning of the birth pangs of a new creation; we can act as midwives, helping the world through its pain and working towards the joy which it promises, however long the labour may turn out to be. For the end, like the best, is yet to come.

MONDAY

15 NOVEMBER

1 Maccabees 1:10-15.
41-43. 54-57. 62-64 *or*
Revelation 1:1-4; 2:1-5
Psalm 79:1-5 *or* 1
Luke 18:35-end

TUESDAY

16 NOVEMBER

2 Maccabees 6:18-end
or Revelation 3:1-6.
14-end
Psalm 11 *or* 15
Luke 19:1-10

WEDNESDAY

17 NOVEMBER

2 Maccabees 7:1. 20-31
or Revelation 4
Psalm 116:10-end
or 150
Luke 19:11-28

THURSDAY

18 NOVEMBER

1 Maccabees 2:15-29
or Revelation 5:1-10
Psalm 129 *or* 149:1-5
Luke 19:41-44

FRIDAY

19 NOVEMBER

1 Maccabees 4:36-37.
52-59 *or* Revelation
10:8-11
Psalm 122 *or* 119:65-72
Luke 19:45-end

SATURDAY

20 NOVEMBER

1 Maccabees 6:1-13 *or*
Revelation 11:4-12
Psalm 124 *or* 144:1-9
Luke 20:27-40

REFLECTION

All the people were spellbound by what they heard" (Luke 19:48) – and we too might hang on to Jesus' words this week. His personality and passion are vividly portrayed in everything he says and does.



Jesus makes time for a blind man who is desperately calling for him. In full view of the large crowd he restores the man's sight – a miracle for which the people around them praise God.

Many devout people would undoubtedly have offered Jesus hospitality in Jericho, but he chooses to call on Zacchaeus, a despised tax collector. In that calling Jesus brings Zacchaeus into the kingdom of God despite the grumbling disapproval of the crowd.

Jesus shows his love for Jerusalem and his grief at the destruction he sees hanging over it. The Son of Man is not afraid to weep in the face of tragedy. Nor is he afraid to be furiously angry when he sees the Temple being used as a den of robbers. And he's not afraid to stand up to chief priests and anyone else who opposes or tries to trick him by their questions.

Jesus still holds people spellbound and he waits for our response.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
we ask forgiveness for those times we lose sight of you.
When we grumble, when we're uncharitable
and judgemental,
remind us of your personality and passion,
remind us to turn to look at you, spellbound.

PRAYER AND HEALING

PART III – HOW DO WE PRAY FOR HEALING?

It is a great privilege to be asked to pray for someone's healing, either as a gathered congregation or as a smaller group. But how do we go about it?

In a time of worship, a congregation will often pray together for people who are suffering in body, mind or spirit. We may not know each person named, but together we ask God to be with them in their troubles. Or we might be part of a smaller group praying for others, some of whom may be known to us, in which case we may have a greater understanding of their circumstances.

In his book *Pastoral Care Revisited*, Frank Wright suggests that prayer for healing is, "a partnership in which being prayerful and being practical go hand in hand... God and the person who prays are... partners in the enterprise". He also suggests that when we pray for someone's healing we simply hold that person alongside us in the loving presence of God and that it can make a huge difference to someone to know that they are being prayed for in this way, held and supported by others in the light and warmth of God's love.

But what do we pray for? Again, Frank Wright offers some thoughtful guidance. He believes that rather than praying for a specific outcome for somebody, we need only name that person before God, praying in a time of silence that he or she will be made whole, thus aligning ourselves with the will of God who wants us all to receive the gift of wholeness.

We've considered many aspects of prayer for healing over the last three weeks, and perhaps we can see a little more clearly that although a cure for a specific illness may not happen, our faith in God's love will bring us and the person for whom we pray the gift of "shalom" – the wholeness of being for which we are created.

LIVE
theWORD

SUSTAINING YOU
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
Caroline Hodgson
and
Heather Smith



Second week
before Advent

Monday 15 November to
Saturday 20 November
2021

WEEK

Stay focused



Katharine Smith *reflects on* Mark 13:1-8

If you're walking along a narrow pathway with a muddy bog on one side and a sheer drop on the other, you need to keep focused on the way ahead, whatever the distractions or temptation to look elsewhere or stray from the path.

Perhaps in today's Gospel reading Jesus is giving similar advice to the disciples, and to

us, about the end of time. We are called to follow in his footsteps and we need to stay focused on the path no matter what is going on around us. There have always been wars and rumours of wars; nations have always risen against one another; earthquakes and famine have shattered the lives of many people down the centuries.

Lord Jesus, help us to keep focused on the path that leads to you. Call us back from temptation and distractions. Walk alongside us as we seek to do your will and fill us with love for our suffering brothers and sisters. Amen.

Keeping Christ in Christmas Part 2 – Christmas presents

by Heather Cooke

Last week we began to prepare spiritually for Christmas, as signs of the festive countdown appear all around us. Some of us may be organised enough to have started our Christmas shopping already. Have you drawn up a list? Planning ahead is no bad thing, and God did just that. God had a plan for our salvation, and Christmas marks

an important part of that plan, to enter into our world as a baby and live a human life. For Jesus is Emmanuel, "God with us". He is on our side, he died for us and rose again; he is with us today, and one day he will come again in glory.

As we start to shop for Christmas presents, let's keep the Christ in Christmas this week, by giving thanks for God's Christmas presence in Jesus, inviting him into our hearts.

"O come, O come Emmanuel!" 🍷

We can't ignore these things, much as we might like to, and the path we're called to tread is the way of peace, healing and love.

Our focus is to stay on those who need to hear the proclamation of God's good news and to keep our sights on the part we can play in that proclamation and the working

out of God's purposes. If we are distracted and start trying to interpret the signs and predict the coming of the end times, we risk straying on to treacherous ground or losing our footing completely.

The message is to keep focused on the path of love, for God is love and everything else is but a distraction. 🍷

Remembrance Sunday

by Caroline Hodgson

Poppy seeds can lie on the ground for years, germinating only when disturbed. In 1915 the soil on the battlefields of the Western Front had been churned up to such an extent that the poppies were blooming like never before. It was around this time that Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae had to preside over the funeral of his friend and fellow soldier Lieutenant Alexis

Helmer, who died in the Second Battle of Ypres. McCrae's grief, and the sight of the poppies, moved him to write his famous poem "In Flanders Fields".

Since then the poppy has become an emblem of both suffering and hope. But it's all too easy for it to become merely decorative – a brilliant piece of branding. Yet each year the solemnity of the ceremonies held in churches and before memorials around the world, the bowed heads and the shared silence, stirs in us a powerful collective memory which, although not ours as individuals, is inherited from our parents and grandparents. 🍷

“**In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.”**

John McCrae (1872-1918), Canadian poet, doctor, author, artist and soldier



Sunday 14 November 2021
Mark 13:24-32
33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

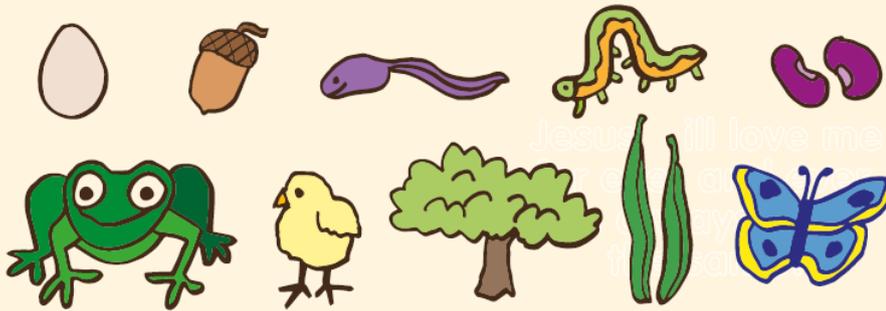
IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

My name is _____

Other things will come and go, but Jesus will always be with us. We are to keep our eyes open because he is coming into our lives again in a special way soon. Just as we know that summer is coming when we see the buds on the trees, we know that Jesus is near.

BE GENEROUS!

Most things change with time. Draw a line from each of these pictures to show what they grow into.



Maze

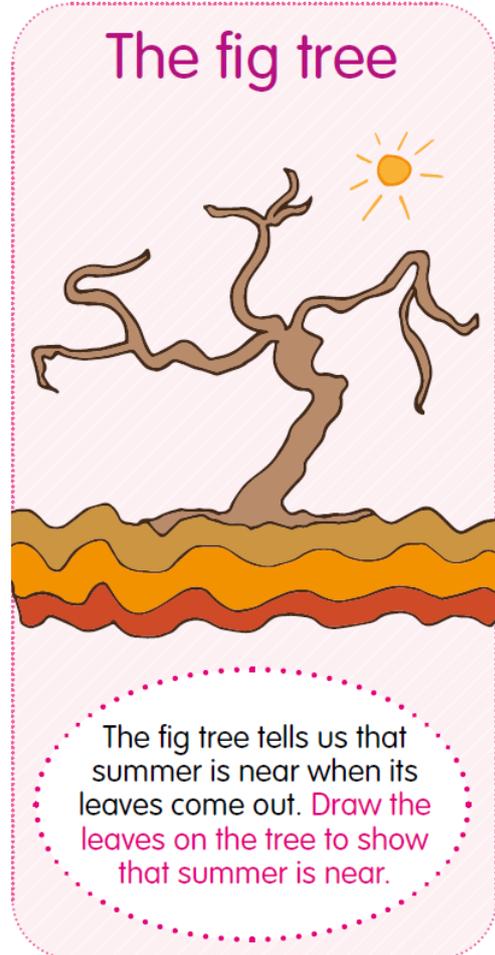
Help Jesus find his way so that he can be together with us again.



Who does God love?

Jesus is always near us, in our hearts and the love we have in our lives.

Draw a picture of you standing close to Jesus



The fig tree

The fig tree tells us that summer is near when its leaves come out. Draw the leaves on the tree to show that summer is near.

A PRAYER TO SAY

Dear Jesus, thank you for always being with me and loving me. Help me to feel your loving presence in my life. Amen.