

8th April 2020

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Dear Friends

Happy Easter. **Alleluia! Christ is risen!**

This comes with love and prayers, wishing you all well at this time and wishing you a very special Holy Week and happy Easter.

A message of encouragement – St Paul in lockdown

I find it moving that when Paul is coming to the end of his life he is in prison, in lockdown with his life constantly in danger, and he writes a letter to the Philippians which is full of joy, affection and gratitude. We can learn so much from him to encourage us as we miss meeting together and find life so restricted.

The letter to the Philippians has four special features:

- 1) **It's a message of joy.** Paul radiates joy from his prison cell, summed up in the words: 'Rejoice in the Lord always, I will say it again: Rejoice!' Why does he rejoice? Because Jesus is risen from the dead and is Lord of all. Also, Paul knows from whatever his experience is that he is on the winning side.
Alleluia! Christ is risen!
- 2) **It's a message about Jesus.** Paul could have felt so sorry for himself, but he can't stop talking about Jesus and all Jesus has done, and is doing. The joy of the Lord is our strength when we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.
Alleluia! Christ is risen!
- 3) **It's a message of hope.** Paul knew that Jesus had triumphed over sin and death, so he could say 'for me to live is Christ, to die is gain.' In fact, he longed to be with Christ, so he would join us in saying **Alleluia! Christ is risen!**
- 4) **It's a message of Christian growth.** Paul is ambitious 'to know Christ and the power of Jesus' resurrection'. Yes, even in prison, even when each day is life threatening for him, yes, even when he feels his time may be up. We have an opportunity in these new circumstances to find Christ and, like Paul, to find contentment. Like Paul we can say 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' - whatever we face, all because of Jesus.
Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Church family news

1. Easter resources: on the website there will be a Maundy Thursday reflection, and a Good Friday meditation and we hope to have the usual family service on Easter Day. Advance warning – if you're wanting to participate, try and have an uneaten Easter egg at the ready!
2. Dial a sermon: we have set up a phone number that you can ring to hear the audio of some of our Sunday services. If you know somebody who doesn't have internet access then please let them know about this option to hear the services. This number can be phoned at any time and will play the latest Sunday sermon.
The phone number is 0151 329 2942, and costs the normal rate of a phone call.
3. Website: this is updated regularly. There are resources for worshipping at home for adults and for children and other fun activities. There are also details of community and national helplines.
4. Signposting: please guide people to the Hub phonenumber 0151 428 6810 (messages left are responded to regularly) if they need information or support. They can also email parishadmin@stpeters-woolton.org.uk if necessary.
5. Thank you: a big thank you to all those who are enabling things to function and carry on:
 - the staff team who are working hard to keep the church buildings secure and to ensure people are cared for;
 - the technical team, who are producing the Sunday services and those who are contributing to the content of each service;
 - the whole church family who are encouraging each other, supporting, praying and looking out for those who are particularly vulnerable.

And finally A church billboard had this message:

'Don't worry if this building is empty on Easter morning – so was the tomb!'

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

With every blessing

Kip