ST PAUL'S BLOG by Val for week beginning Sun 17 March 2024

This Sunday the Reflection from Rev Ron is from the Gospel of John ch12 from verses 20-33 and it is about Jesus talking to his disciples and others about what he would be facing – namely his death. Whilst he was with them the crowd heard a 'voice from heaven' and some said it had thundered and others said an angel had spoken to Jesus. These verses are about death, about glory and about defeat. *BUT defeat is not, perhaps, what you would normally understand it as – it is DEFEAT God's way!*

We are now at the 5th Sunday in the time of Lent, a short period of time begins called 'Passiontide'. This reflects the time we begin to become more aware of Christ's suffering and death as we are drawing closer to the events of Holy Week and Good Friday.

This coming **Weds we have the 10.30am said Eucharist** with tea/coffee afterwards. We had planned to have the Lent Soup lunch and study but due to news I had last Monday at Peterborough Hospital, Rev Ron and I have to get to Glenfield Hospital in Leicester for 2pm as I have an appointment there as part of my preparation for an operation there on April 6th for cancer in my lungs. I thank God that since my bowel cancer op in Nov 2022 they have done regular scans and have picked the cancer up early. Your prayers will be appreciated.

On Thurs 21st all are welcome to our Drop In at the Church at **2pm called OASIS Time**. Come to chat over tea or coffee and relax. We finish for 3.30pm. OASIS is held each month and is ideal to invite friends along to.

See Newsheet for HOLY WEEK SERVICES that begin on Sun 24th with PALM SUNDAY and, if weather is fine, beginning with Procession of Palms from Church into the street and around the Triangle area back to Church to continue the Eucharist service for those able to do the walking.
The Church will be open on Mon 25th, Tues 26th from 3.45pm – 5pm for **4pm PRAYER (a short Evening Prayer) followed by tea/coffee. ALSO OPEN ON**
Weds 26th for 10.30am said Eucharist. At 12.30 Soup Lunch with a short Study from 1 Thessalonians. Please let me know if coming for Soup Lunch..so we have enough soup!
The church is open again on Weds from 3.45pm – 5pm with 4pm Prayer & Refreshment.
On Thurs 27th the church is open from 3.45pm – 5pm for 4pm Prayer & Refreshment.
GOOD FRIDAY we will have a silent Procession of Witness from Church at 1.45pm around the Triangle and then back in Church for our 2pm Stations of The Cross service when we 'walk' using each of the plaques on the wall that show Jesus' journey carrying the cross until He is crucified and then put in a tomb. WE conclude by standing underneath the Cross with Jesus on it that is on top of our Sanctuary Screen.
After the service all are welcome to stay on for hot cross buns, tea and coffee.

Later on Friday or on Saturday there will be flower arrangements done in Church in preparation for Easter Sunday. Also there is usually an Easter Garden arrangement done in the outside Stable which has the 'Tomb' where Jesus was laid in. If you would like to do that

please could you contact me. Also anyone who can do flower arrangements is welcome to help Jenny, Elisabeth and myself – just speak to Jenny or myself for dates and times.

Easter Sunday is a CELEBRATION DAY and all who are baptised into the Christian faith are encouraged especially at Easter time to be at a church somewhere to worship God and receive the Holy Sacraments of wine and bread in remembrance of our Saviour's death and of his resurrection. His death is the gateway for each one of us to have life, and life in all it's fullness because he died and rose again. Continue reading the Gospel of John or read Matthew, Mark or Luke to know why Jesus is The Way, The Truth and The Life.

Last Sunday was Mothering Sunday and it was a joy to give out a card and primroses to all the ladies at the service. One of our younger members, Laurynas with fiancée, Gizzel also brought several bunches of tulips which 2 children distributed out as well.

THANK YOU to those praying for me on Thursday. My colonoscopy procedure went smoothly and no issues. Just have to look forward to another one in 3 years time!
As you may know we have been keeping **Sam Edney** in our prayers as he went onto life support in Peterborough Hospital during February. His mum, Lynda Barton with husband Peter were told last Weds morning by the Hospital that despite all their effforts Sam was not now responding at all and at 11.50pm Weds 13th Sam died. We continue to hold in prayer Lynda, Peter, Sam's children and all who are grieving his death, including members of the church who had got to know him this last year.
We also pray for the family of Charlie Oldham and give thanks for his life of 88yrs. This evening Rev Ron and I were at a 'Charlie's Party' gathering at Beckett's in Chaucer Rd (where he lived with wife Audrey) to remember him and all he meant to those who were there. He loved music, playing the guitar and singing in a group with his wife and others; his allotment; chatting to people, riding his bike. In his time he had been a traffic warden in Peterborough; worked at Brotherhoods and been in the Merchant Navy as an engineer. Rev Ron was asked to speak and he shared our remembrances of Charlie, especially at the Shakespeare Centre events when he was usually in the group doing the entertaining with guitar and songs. Rev Ron also included a Bible reading and encouraged those present to say out loud what Charlie had meant to them, which worked really well.
PRAYERS are asked for all mentioned on the Newsheet please. Jenny Baxter, who had known Charlie well, had a heart attack recently and is currently in Papworth Hospital being looked after; Judy Pender is in a Care Home with dementia and very ill now; Trevor is having to have more care as he has less mobility; you will know others not well – please ask for God's healing touch and peace for them.
Please keep us informed of any prayer requests you may have – we do not put all the requests on the Newsheet but we have a small group of people who are committed to pray in faith and confidentially for those people or situations that are of concern to you.

As we face each day it is good to thank God and to ask for His help in all we do and say, trusting in His promises that are in His Word, the Bible. It is not weak to do that, rather the opposite. I love the book of Joshua ch1...where the words 'Be strong and courageous' are mentioned several times. Especially v 9 **'Be strong (bold) and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'**
God bless you from Rev Ron and Val