

St Peter & St Paul West Mersea

Newsletter – February 2021



Prayer – Some thoughts by John Pantry

Prayer; there is not much else we can do in life that's more important than to pray and yet most of us get a guilty feeling that we're not praying as much as we should. As followers of Jesus we are called to be disciples and one of the key elements of that is to be disciplined. There's no doubt that daily prayer and constant communion with God requires discipline.



Jesus spent much time in prayer -sometimes praying all night, sometimes fasting and praying and always listening to His Father. We are called to do the same.

He gave us the Lord's prayer which provides not only a set prayer but a pattern we can follow in our own prayers. Now you might say - well I do pray a little but I get disheartened because God doesn't always answer my prayers - well that's true - God does not always give us what we want when we want it. God's ways are beyond our understanding and just as we don't let a toddler have everything they want for reasons that are obvious to us, so God, good Father that He is, knows our real needs and lets us have those things and answers those prayers which will draw us closer to Him and be a blessing and not a danger or distraction.

Matthew 6:33 says: Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and God will give you the desires of your heart. It's easy to make that a name it and claim it verse but what it's saying is when we seek first His kingdom, when we pursue His righteousness, the desires of our heart will not come from our selfish human nature but from God Himself. GOD will give us the desires of our heart and when our heart's desires are aligned with His then nothing is impossible.



Now there's nothing like a crisis or a moment of impending doom to bring us to our knees and stories of answered prayer in dire situations abound, though if we have no real relationship with Him, you have to question - why should God listen to that prayer? Is prayer in extreme circumstances just an opportunity to control the things that happen to us and make the situation fit our agenda? Well of course we should pray about everything and worry about nothing and God does care deeply about what happens to us in every circumstance and will often graciously reach out and answer even when we don't deserve an answer.

Following prayer, people are sometimes dramatically healed, circumstances suddenly change and so on. On occasion we may experience a remarkable rising of faith that our prayer will be answered and the eventual outcome confirms that.



More generally we need to start thinking of prayer not as a shopping list of people and things we'd like to see God change to suit us and those for whom we pray, but as a means of giving thanks, strengthening our relationship with our creator and hearing from Him and all the time expectant that God will give us the faith to see those prayers answered.



None of that should keep us from praying for other people and situations and asking for God's blessing on them, trusting that the outcome is ultimately in His hands. As Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane wanting to avoid the horrors of crucifixion - "nevertheless not my will but Yours."

Like many things about God that are just out of our reach, how and when prayer is answered and why some are answered and some apparently not must remain a mystery - that said we must never stop praying because as the hymn says "God is working His purpose out." Finally prayer should be a dialogue not a monologue, King David writes in Psalm 62 " My soul waits in silence for God alone" Waiting in silence is not easy - most of us are afraid of what we might hear, a reminder perhaps of our sins not yet dealt with , sins of commission and omission.

Perhaps we're afraid that God may ask us to put right some wrong or do something else that we have been reluctant to do. In addition the thoughts and impressions that come to mind as we wait in silence can arise from those old enemies - the world, the flesh and the devil as well as God. Learning to focus in on God's voice alone is going to take practise and there's no time like the present! As this year progresses let's initiate a new routine to worry less, pray and listen more, and give thanks to God for all the blessings!

Day of Prayer 16th January 2021

Since the beginning of the pandemic, various organisations have called Christians to prayer at different times, and at the beginning of this year, a member of the parish church's Monday prayer group, Barbara Jones, felt very strongly that we should organise a day of prayer. Accordingly, Saturday 16th January was set aside for this purpose.

As we were in lockdown, we all needed to pray in our own homes, and over 30 people committed to pray for a minimum of half an hour during the day, so that over the 12-hour period, a continuous chain of prayer was being offered. Prayer resources from the Church of England and 24-7 Prayer websites were provided, and in order to maintain a sense of corporate prayer, the day was both launched and rounded off with a half-hour Zoom session, which gave a sense of being united in our common aim.

There was a lot of heartwarming feedback from people who had taken part. For me it was a welcome opportunity to unpack and re-discover some inspirational prayer materials from our pre-Mersea days. The atrocious weather that day also ensured that I could not be distracted from prayer by any form of outdoor activity!

I think all of us who took part were much encouraged by spending that extra time with God, and I hope it spurs us all on to keep praying in these difficult times.

“Pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” 1 Thessalonians 5: 17,18



A huge THANK YOU to everyone who joined in.

Liz Willey

Prayer for the Government

'Grant and continue unto us a succession of legislators and rulers who have been taught the wisdom of the kingdom of Christ. Endow all members of parliament with a right understanding, a pure purpose, and sound speech; enable them to rise above all self-seeking and party zeal into the larger sentiments of public good and human brotherhood. Purge our political life of every evil; subdue in the nation all unhallowed thirst for conquest or vainglory. Inspire us with calmness and self-restraint and the endeavour to get your will done everywhere upon the earth. Amen'

Sent in by Lesley Talbot



Contribution sent in by Jenny Hull.

Firstly my sincere thanks to Val our editor, all the contributors to, and distributors of the St Peter and St Paul Newsletter. I am always very pleased to receive my copy. I wonder how many of you, like me, used to hurry home from school or playing with friends, to listen to "Children's Hour" on the radio? Or listen to messages to and from loved ones in the forces? Such a wealth of programmes and it is the same today. During these past difficult months, the Daily Services have been a great comfort to me, and at times, challenging. Such a variety of wonderful people, who very thoughtfully share their real faith with us through bible readings, hymns and prayers. I CAN sin the hymns if I wish to and I did not miss out on my favourite Epiphany ones! There is another person saying the Lord's Prayer with me and forming my jumbled thoughts and anxieties into meaningful prayer. Maybe, like me, you are already listening, but if not, please do tune in.

I list below the services :-

Radio 4 Long wave Monday to Friday 9.45am Daily Service

Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am (definitely worth getting up for!)

Radio 3 Choral Evensong Sunday afternoons 3pm

Radio 3 Choral Evensong Wednesday afternoons 3.30pm

Take care everyone and God bless you. Sincerely Jenny Hull.



A poem to which we can relate (well, some of us!!)

I remember the corned beef of my Childhood,
And the bread that we cut with a knife,
When the Children helped with the housework,
And the men went to work, not the wife.



The cheese never needed a fridge,
And the bread was so crusty and hot,
The Children were seldom unhappy,
And the Wife was content with her lot.

I remember the milk from the bottle,
With the yummy cream on the top,
Our dinner came hot from the oven,
And not from a freezer; or shop.



The kids were a lot more contented,
They didn't need money for kicks,
Just a game with their friends in the road,
And sometimes the Saturday flicks.



I remember the shop on the corner,
Where biscuits for pennies were sold
Do you think I'm a bit too nostalgic?
Or is it....I'm just getting Old?

Bathing was done in a wash tub,
With plenty of rich foamy suds
But the ironing seemed never ending
As Mum pressed everyone's 'duds'.

I remember the slap on my backside,
And the taste of soap if I swore
Anorexia and diets weren't heard of
And we hadn't much choice what we wore.

Do you think that bruised our ego?
Or our initiative was destroyed?
We ate what was put on the table
And I think life was better enjoyed.

Author, Unknown...

If you can remember those days...

Continue to enjoy your Retirement .

PCC Jottings following the meeting of the PCC 27th. January 2021

Closure of the Church

Following the announcement of 'lockdown' the decision was made to close the Church. This was endorsed by strong advice from the Diocese of Chelmsford. Barbara Peter proposed a Resolution, seconded by Cathy Roberts and agreed unanimously as follows – **The parochial church council of St Peter and St Paul, West Mersea, acting jointly, authorise dispensing with the reading of Morning and Evening Prayer required by Canon B 11 and the celebration of the Holy Communion as required by Canon B 14.**

The reason for the dispensation is that in the light of the Government's guidance on preventing the spread of Coronavirus, the church cannot be used for public worship.

A new Incumbent! The post for the Benefice will be advertised in February. Alongside this, John Walker is preparing a 'landing' page giving information on the Churches in the Benefice on the Web.

The end of the year December 2020 shows that the books have balanced. Although the closure of the Church has meant the loss of £11K in offerings in church, there has been an increase in giving through standing order and through the Parish Giving Scheme which has made ends meet.

Significant items in finance this year have been the Mrs Chatters legacy which has enabled the PCC to earmark an amount towards the tower repair project. A large amount was paid towards the Church AV installation and the Friends of West Mersea Church paid for the removal of Moss on the Chancel roof.

Roland Gardener is still in need of someone to share his Treasurers knowledge! He also urged that we move the accounts onto an online digital package recommended by the Church of England and this was agreed by the PCC.

Fire ! Alan Hammond has seen to the installation of three new wireless alarms which would trigger in the event of fire. These would ensure that anyone in the Upper Rooms would have ample warning of fire! Thanks to those who do so much to keep our Church in good order.

Long term service and maintenance of the organ is no longer viable and alternatives need to be considered. Investigation is in hand.

The Porch Pantry continues with many donations and is a lifeline to many. Publicity and awareness are being raised so that those in need can be helped.

Cathy Roberts is on the case regarding Health and Safety and Safeguarding in these difficult times.

Easter plans are on the way so that children can be involved as they were at Christmas. Watch for announcements!

The Next meeting of the PCC will be held on Wednesday 10th. March 2021

Notices

West Mersea

The Sunday Morning 10am
Zoom Services of United
Worship & Spiritual
Communion will continue
for the foreseeable future.

East Mersea

We are opening on Wednesday,
Friday and Sunday from 10am to
4pm.

Great Wigborough

St.Stephen's will remain
closed due to ongoing
refurbishments and
concerns regarding safety
for private prayer.

If you have any news and/or photos for our March Newsletter, please send them to Val Bocking on bocking@keme.co.uk or phone 01206 386750 Stay Safe, Keep Praying and thank God for all the positives
Val Bocking - Editor