

Readings and prayers for the week

Today	Psalm 23
Monday	Luke 2 v 33 - 35
Tuesday	Hebrews 9 v 1 - 4
Wednesday	Hebrews 9 v 15 - 28
Thursday	Romans 5 v 12 - 21
Friday	Hebrews 10 v 19 - 25
Saturday	Hebrews 10 v 26 - 39
	Hebrews 11 v 1 - 6



Prayer

The Ministry Leadership Team would like you to pray for the following topics:

1. On this Mothering Sunday, give thanks to God for all mothers and pray that they may have the strength, patience and love to nurture their children well.
2. Pray for all those who find this day difficult; those unable to have children, those whose mothers have died recently, those who have lost children. Pray that they may know the love and peace of God.

The Minster has Home Groups which meet most days of the week. If you are interested in joining one, please contact the Rector.

Please remember the Archbishops of Canterbury & York's call to a day of prayer today, particularly remembering those who are sick, anxious or involved in health or emergency services

Contact Tricia Berry (01789 509 278 or 07840 284 294 or administrator@alcesterminster.org) by 6 pm on Tuesday to add notices of church activities to next week's notice sheet.



Did you know that you can now 'LIKE' Alcester Minster on Facebook? Find details and pictures of events at www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster If you would like to submit event notices or photos to be published on the page then please email administrator@alcesterminster.org



Welcome to the Alcester Minster Group of Churches Sunday 22 March 2020

Mothering Sunday [Lent 4] Purple

*"Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
for ever.*

Psalm 23 v 6

Collect

Merciful Lord,
absolve your people from their
offences,
that through your bountiful goodness
we may all be delivered from the
chains of those sins
which by our frailty we have
committed;
grant this, heavenly Father,
for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed
Lord and Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Alternative Collect

Merciful Lord,
you know our struggle to
serve you:
when sin spoils our lives
and overshadows our
hearts,
come to our aid
and turn us back to you
again;
through Jesus Christ our
Lord.

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Ministry Team:

Revd Adrian Guthrie: St Nicholas Rectory, Old Rectory Garden,
Alcester, B49 5DB Tel: 01789 764 261 email: rector@alcesterminster.org
Revd Sue Henwood: Kinwarton Rectory, Spermal Lane, Great Alne
Alcester B49 6HY Tel: 01789 488 344 email: sue.henwood@live.co.uk
Revd Julian Davey: The Field House, Allimore Lane
Alcester, B49 5PR Tel: 01789 764 640 email: jw.davey@yahoo.com

Children & Family Worker:

Beth Clarke email: beth.clarke@covLEC.org Tel: 0749 432 9638

Administrator:

Tricia Berry (Monday - Friday 10.00am - 1.30 pm) Tel: 01789 509 278
email: administrator@alcesterminster.org Alcester Minster Office, Church House,
17 Butter Street, Alcester, B49 5AL (Office Opening Hours 10.30 - 12.30pm)

Alcester Minster website: www.alcesterminster.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster

Mothering Sunday 'Thought for the Day' presented by Adrian

Reading: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. ⁵For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. ⁶If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. ⁷And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

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Thought for the Day

I can remember quite vividly being confined to bed when I was ill as a child and how time seemed to drag. I was upstairs in my world of illness, but I was aware of another world going on elsewhere. Mum, who had been a Ward Sister, had traditional approaches to illness, which involved isolation and being confined to bed until one's temperature returned to normal. Every now and again, and it didn't seem often enough, she would appear with Aspirin or food, as the world of the well overlapped my world of illness. These moments were the comfort I needed in my distress. Today, we celebrate our Mother's love and ability to reflect, illustrate and demonstrate God's comfort for us too.

The word for comfort in the original version of Paul's letter to the Corinthians most probably means 'deliverance', and so he is thanking God for being the God of all deliverance. Throughout the letter are lists of the difficulties, tests, afflictions and persecutions he has had to endure, so we know that he is not talking about God delivering him to have no experience of trouble; rather deliverance from the worse effects of them. Equally, this comfort has given him encouragement and strengthening grace during his time of affliction. We have a

deliverer, Jesus the Messiah, and one day he will return and rid the world of everything that is fractured about creation and our lives, but in the meantime, we can experience something of his world of deliverance here and now, just as my mum's comforting visits gave me encouragement and a sense that final deliverance from illness would come one day.

And in these difficult and challenging days of the Corona Virus, we must look to Jesus to bring us both aspects of comfort – encouragement in our adversity and deliverance from our adversity. As well as being people who comply with the government's safety measures, let's be people of prayer who seek God's comfort and deliverance found in Jesus Christ.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have called us to a national day of prayer this Mothering Sunday:

"We have called, along with our fellow church leaders, for a day of prayer and action this coming Sunday - Mothering Sunday has always been both a day of celebration for many and a sensitive and emotional day for some. Wherever you are this Sunday please do join in this day of prayer and action and remember especially those who are sick or anxious, and all involved in our Health Service. As one action, we are calling on everyone to place a lighted candle in their window at 7.00 p.m. as a sign of solidarity and hope in the light of Christ that can never be extinguished."

Prayer

Lord, thank you for the gift of relationship and community. We pray that, despite having to be separated during this crisis, you Lord, will keep us together at this time. For those of us who are anxious, bring peace. For those of us who are sick, bring healing. For those of us who are caring for others, bring strength. For those of us who are lonely, bring comfort. For those of us who are not lonely, help us to see those who are, and help us to reach out to them in whatever ways we can. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen**