

Readings for the week

Today	Acts 2 v 14a & 36 - 41 Luke 24 v 13 - 35
Monday	Luke 1 v 1 - 25
Tuesday	Luke 1 v 26 - 38
Wednesday	Luke 1 v 39 - 56
Thursday	Luke 1 v 57 - 80
Friday	James 1 v 1 - 12
Saturday	Luke 2 v 21 - 40



Prayer

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

1. *Pray for those who have become unemployed and are suffering financial hardship because of the virus. Pray that they may quickly get the support they need from local and central government.*
2. *Pray for all the students and pupils who would have been starting a new term at school/college/university, that they may continue to learn well at home.*

It is with regret we must inform you of the death of Bishop Simon Barrington-Ward, former Bishop of Coventry.

The Diocese of Coventry new website has been launched please view it on <https://www.coventry.anglican.org>

If you want to volunteer, or need help, contact Alcester Community Resilience on Facebook or Tel: 0770 759 8379 or email Alcester.response@outlook.com

Prayers for use during the Coronavirus
A Church of England 32 page PRAYERS booklet is available to order or download from:
https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/Prayer%20Book%20Digital%202%20April_0.pdf

Check out the Minster website for resources to worship at home and, during the Coronavirus, you can also access the most current edition of Minster Matters and the Link from the Welcome Page of the website.



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 26 April 2020

Easter 3 White

"...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 2 v 38b

Collect

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened
the disciples with the sight of the
risen Lord:
give us such knowledge of his
presence with us,
that we may be strengthened and
sustained by his risen life
and serve you continually in
righteousness and truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our
Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Alternative Collect

Risen Christ,
you filled your disciples
with boldness and fresh
hope:
strengthen us to proclaim
your risen life
and fill us with your peace,
to the glory of God the
Father.

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster

Easter 3 'Thought for the Day' presented by Gill

Reading: Luke 24 v 30 – 31

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight.

[from the Gospel reading Luke 24 v 13 – 35]

Thought for the Day

It has become a bit of a contemporary cliché that 'we are living in strange times', and indeed we are. People have probably not known times like these, when they had to isolate themselves from friends and families, since the days of the Black Death; but there is one thing that doesn't change and that is God's creation. Spring has come; bulbs flower, leaves burst forth, blossom appears, lambs are born and birds build their nests, just as they always do at this time of year. And with the extra time we have on our hands, I have found that I have become ever more aware of the beauty of the natural world.

As I take my daily walk in the field and the garden, and look at the beauty all around me, I find that I am even more aware of God's presence in his beautiful creation and of Jesus walking beside me, just as he did with the disciples on the road to Emmaus on that first Easter Sunday. Jesus had told his disciples many times, in many different ways that he would die and rise again. The parable that seems most relevant now, at this Easter season, in the springtime, is the one we find in St. John's Gospel, in which Jesus says that '*unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains a single grain, but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.*' But even with that story, the Disciples had never really understood what he was telling them, so that, on that first Good Friday, as they watched him die in agony on the cross, all their hopes and dreams were shattered and they sank into despair.

Then, on Sunday - the third day after the crucifixion - strange stories began to circulate in Jerusalem: the tomb was empty. Where had the body of Jesus gone? Nobody knew. And still they didn't remember what he had told them, so is it any wonder that the disciples on the road to Emmaus didn't recognise him? He joined them as they walked and he began again to explain what the prophets in the Bible had predicted about the Messiah, and later they recalled that their 'hearts burned within them', but still they did not realise what was happening until, in the spirit of hospitality and loving neighbourliness, they asked him to join them at supper. Suddenly, as Jesus blessed and broke bread with them, the disciples recognised him! And He vanished from their sight. All their weariness and despair vanished in an instant, and they couldn't wait until morning, they immediately set out again to walk the seven miles through the countryside, back to Jerusalem to tell everyone about this amazing revelation – **Jesus was alive!**

May we all in this strange period, take comfort in that knowledge and cherish the opportunity to spend time walking with him and being aware of his presence with us, even if all other company is denied us for the time being.

*All around me, Lord, I see your goodness,
All creation sings your praises,
All the world cries, 'God is love'
(from Mission Praise ©1986 Greg Leavers)*



Prayer

O Lord we pray in this beautiful springtime that our risen Saviour may fill us with the joy of his glorious and life-giving resurrection.

Amen