

Readings for the week

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| Today | Acts 7 v 55 – 60 John 14 v 1 – 14 |
| Monday | Luke 4 v 38 – 44 |
| Tuesday | Luke 5 v 1 – 11 |
| Wednesday | Luke 5 v 12 – 26 |
| Thursday | Acts 2 v 37 – 47 |
| Friday | Luke 6 v 1 – 11 |
| Saturday | Luke 6 v 12 – 26 |



Prayer

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

1. Give thanks to God for 75 years of peace since VE day and pray for all those around the world still suffering the effects of war. Pray that God may give strength and wisdom to all those working towards conflict resolution and reconciliation.
2. Pray for all those suffering domestic violence at this time of lockdown, when there can seem no way out. Pray that they may find ways to reach out for help and that God will provide people with the necessary skills to respond.

There is a new national free dial-in worship available 24 hours a day called **Daily Hope**. The telephone number is 0800 804 8044. Please share this with anyone you now who is not able to join on-line services.

Sadly we are not able to attend funerals during this period but there is a prayer card available from the Church of England:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/Funerals prayer card single public.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/Funerals%20prayer%20card%20single%20public.pdf)

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



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 10 May 2020

Easter 4 *White*

“But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God..”

Acts 7 v 55

Collect

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son
Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to
us the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going
before us you put into our minds
good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen 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,
your wounds declare your
love for the world
and the wonder of your
risen life:
give us compassion and
courage
to risk ourselves for those
we serve,
to the glory of God the
Father.

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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, Spernal 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: 07840 284 294
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

Easter 4 'Thought for the Day' presented by Adrian

John 14:1-6

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶ Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

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Thought for the Day

I expect you, like me have lots of questions at the moment: some about practicalities concerning what 'normal' life might look like; others more theological such as 'Where is God in the Corona Pandemic?' It's good to ask questions, and to take them to God in prayer.

Thomas is someone who asked Jesus a question in this passage. I feel sorry for Thomas; the way he gets labelled 'Doubting Thomas'. His response to the news of Jesus' resurrection is the main reason – 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.' Actually, we all benefit from Thomas' reaction. John, the Gospel writer, uses Thomas to show us that a right response to Jesus Christ is a personal confession of faith. Following his expression of 'doubt', Jesus appears to him, and Thomas exclaims – 'My Lord and my God!' We should be grateful for Thomas diving in feet first with his 'doubt', because he is one of the first to model personal faith in Jesus Christ.

At one time, the most popular modern worship song was 'My Jesus, my Saviour', although I think it might have been pipped to the post by the 'UK Blessing' that is currently circulating around (Google 'UK Blessing 65 Churches' for a heart-warming and moving sung blessing). Even if you don't like the song 'My Jesus, my Saviour' or don't know it, the sentiment is universally Christian – our absolute reliance on Jesus to

forgive our wrongdoing, unite us to Father God, and fill us with the Holy Spirit. Like Thomas, I love to declare that dependence on him as my Saviour.

And in this well-known passage above, we come across Thomas being the first to speak up again. He was probably verbalising what the other disciples were thinking! 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus' response gives a very clear statement about his unique role in providing the means for us to know God – 'No-one comes to the Father except through me.' Jesus' statement gives us no wriggle room – it sets Jesus Christ apart as the only way humanity can connect to God. Jesus is God's provision for all people.

The Corona Virus is a universal problem needing a universal solution, just like the problem of sin. Jesus' death is a once and for all solution to the sin barrier that pervades all humanity and leads to spiritual death (eternal separation from God). Without him we're scuppered – Jesus said 'No-one can come to the Father *except* through me.' We've got Thomas' question to thank for Jesus' clear and unequivocal answer. I'm so glad Thomas jumped in with his 'doubts' and questions, so now we're in no doubt! So take your questions and 'doubts' to Jesus too – he delights in responding to us.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to walk in your way, to know you and your truth more fully, and experience your eternal life in me, for the glory of Father God. **Amen**