

Readings for the week

Today	Romans 6 v 12 - 23 Matthew 10 v 40 - 42
Monday	Acts 11 v 1- 18
Tuesday	Luke 15 v 11 - 31
Wednesday	Luke 16 v 1 - 18
Thursday	Luke 16 v 19 - 31
Friday	John 11 v 1 - 16
Saturday	Luke 17 v 11 - 19

Prayer

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



thanks to God for all his blessings, for the beauty of the world around us and for the love and compassion we see in others.

2. *Pray for all those couples who had planned weddings this summer. Pray that they may still find ways to celebrate their love, and be able to make new plans for weddings in the future.*

"The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class. Father, forgive." From the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation.

Bishop John's has written an article called

'Profoundly uncomfortable times'

which can be found on the Diocesan website.

To read please use the link below

<https://www.coventry.anglican.org/news/profoundly-uncomfortable-times.php>

Help needed - we are really pleased to be gradually opening our churches for private prayer. In some churches, we plan to have a supervisor on duty to welcome and guide individuals to their places and oversee sanitiser and pew cleaning. If you are under 70 and not shielding, could you spare an hour or two to be on a rota at one of the churches? Please speak to the relevant Churchwarden or Tricia Berry.



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 28 June 2020

Trinity 3 Green

"Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me."

Matthew 10 v 40

Collect

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son
into our hearts whereby we call
you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our
freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be
brought to the glorious liberty of
the children of God;
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

God our saviour,
look on this wounded
world
in pity and in power;
hold us fast to your
promises of peace
won for us by your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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Trinity 3 Thought for the Day' presented by Adrian

Romans 6:17-20

¹⁷But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

[New International Version - UK \(NIVUK\)](#)

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Thought for the Day

Paul uses an example from everyday life that now leaves a bad taste in our mouths! He likens being a Christian to being a slave to righteousness. In my previous church we celebrated 200 years since Wilberforce's campaign led to the outlawing of slavery. We celebrated, but we also lamented, because slavery is still with us.

The 'Black Lives Matter' campaign very uncomfortably challenges us that some of the values that underpinned the 18th century slave trade are still prevalent in our world and society. Please follow the link on last week's notice sheet to Bishop John's article 'Profoundly Uncomfortable Times' for further comment on this.

Unfortunately, the slave trade has not gone away either. Modern Slavery is happening in our country today, and the Church of England is working with the Clewer Institute to bring this to our attention. For instance, some people employed in car washes, nail bars and labour gangs are held in a form of bonded labour, housed in very poor conditions, working illegally long hours, and economically tied to their masters.

It is not very convenient with a pandemic to manage, to also have social justice issues to challenge and resolve, but are these completely isolated and unconnected issues?

So, should we skirt over a Bible passage that uses the slave image as an illustration of our relationship either to sin or to righteousness, or can we learn from this, recognising that slavery was part of everyday life in the ancient world the Apostle Paul inhabited? I think we can, because he is not talking about forced slavery which is clearly an evil, he is talking about 'offering' ourselves to be slaves to God.

The trouble with sin is that it has the power to become our master. So whilst we might start by choosing to sin, before long it becomes a power that controls us, rather than us controlling it. So the Apostle says in an earlier verse in this chapter: 'Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.' Instead, he implores us to offer ourselves to be 'slaves of righteousness', slaves to God's ways.

When we offer ourselves to become God's slaves, we continue to exercise freewill; it is not taken away from us. So each day, we are free to choose to obey God or not, because God wants us to love him rather than obey him out of duty or fear. In another letter, Paul likens the Christian to a slave who has been adopted as God's son or daughter. Will you offer yourself again today in loving service to Jesus?

Prayer

Lord God, be our Master and reign in our hearts and minds. Direct us to make choices in line with your perfect and life giving values, and help us to challenge and resolve social injustice. For Jesus sake, who gave all of himself for all of us. Amen.