

I HATE gardening.

So, moving to Alcester with our small walled garden has been a delight compared to the giant jungle we had at the previous Rectory. However, the previous occupants were gifted gardeners and I have actually enjoyed discovering what is going to emerge next out of the borders so lovingly prepared and manicured over numerous years. However, I feel completely inadequate and unprepared to take over the care and husbandry of the garden, compared to our predecessors. It doesn't help that as I remember growing up, my parents had amazing, manicured borders, full of colour and vitality. In comparison to all these people, I feel a failure. Why should I even bother?

Being a follower of The Way, a disciple of Jesus, has always been this way. How can you possibly compare yourself to someone who turned enormous vats of water into the finest wine, fed thousands with a packed lunch and walked on big waves to get to his friends? Who can measure up to The human who had compassion for all the irreligious, broken, hurting people that society walked past or actively hurt? Who has the self-control and discipline to spend so much time without food and communing with God, or to stand up to the authorities who are abusing their power over the people?

Well, thank goodness as a Christian I don't have to. I don't need to compare myself with the more gifted, the more experienced, the more Holy, the more faithful. If you find that hard to believe just read about the first followers of Jesus in the accounts of his life. They were a rag tag bunch of all social classes and temperament. Hot tempered, vain, argumentative, and excitable are the immediate words that spring to mind thinking about Peter and his brother Andrew, James and John. We all know people like that and can probably identify with some of those characteristics. Yet these were the people Jesus sought out to learn from him and to share the faith they developed. He asked them to do what they could, starting with baby steps, and to trust that Jesus would help them do more.

So, just like me and my journey starting to become a gardener, Jesus asks those who follow him and his teachings to do what they can, starting with baby steps, and to trust He will help them do more. Like learning to sow seeds or to plant cuttings, we are instructed "And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way." (1 Peter 3: 15-16). Sowing the seeds of faith by sharing our own experience of following Jesus.

So, wish me luck as I am learning what is a weed, a plant, a bush or a poisonous growth from seeds dropped by birds! And I will pray for you to have an opportunity to tell someone who Jesus is to you.

Paul Cross



Welcome to the Alcester Minster Group of Churches

Sunday 15 August 2021

**The Blessed Virgin Mary
Trinity 11**

*White
Green*

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

John 5 v 51

Collect for

Blessed Virgin Mary

Almighty God,
who looked upon the lowliness of
the Blessed Virgin Mary
and chose her to be the mother
of your only Son:
grant that we who are redeemed
by his blood
may share with her in the glory
of your eternal kingdom;
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.

Collect for Trinity 11

O God, you declare your almighty power
most chiefly in showing mercy and
pity:
mercifully grant to us such a measure
of your grace,
that we, running the way of your
commandments,
may receive your gracious promises,
and be made partakers of your
heavenly treasure;
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

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Alcester Minster website: www.alcesterminster.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster

Next week's services and events

Sunday 15 August **Trinity 11** *Green*
Alcester 10.00 am Holy Communion
Coughton 10.00 am Morning Prayer
Jubilee Fields 3.00 pm *ACT Joint Thanksgiving Service*

Tuesday 17 August
Via Zoom 12 noon Prayer Gathering

Wednesday 18 August
Alcester 10.00 am Midweek Communion

Sunday 22 August **Trinity 12** *Green*
Alcester 10.00 am Holy Communion
Great Alne 10.00 am Morning Worship
Weethley 3.00 pm Holy Communion

Coffee Morning with Books at Church House Saturday 21 August 10:00 – 12:00

Entrance £1.00

In aid of St Nicholas Church Restoration Fund

Remembrance and Thanksgiving

On **Saturday 14th August**, Alcester Churches will be open throughout the day for **Reflection** on the events of the past eighteen months, culminating with a service at **St Nicholas at 5.00pm.**

If you miss Saturday don't forget to come along on Sunday afternoon.

On **Sunday 15th August**, an open-air service of **Thanksgiving at 3.00pm** will be held on **Jubilee Fields**, (weather permitting, or inside the Eric Payne Centre) followed by a **'Bring Your Own Picnic'**.

Readings for the week

Today	Ephesians 5 v 15 - 20 John 6 v 51 - 58
Monday	Mark 5 v 1 - 20
Tuesday	Mark 5 v 21 - 34
Wednesday	Mark 5 v 35 - 43
Thursday	Mark 6 v 1 - 13
Friday	Mark 6 v 14 - 29
Saturday	Mark 6 v 30 - 44



Prayer

Please pray for the following topics:

1. *Lord we pray for the people of Greece who have lost their homes and livelihoods in the terrible wildfires sweeping their country.*
2. *We offer our prayers in faith and thankfulness trusting in the grace of God and his love for all.*

Please ensure all mobile phones are switched OFF during the service. Visitors are invited to Gift Aid their offerings in the envelopes provided.

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 weeks' notice sheet.

Check out the website calendar for further details on events/services coming up



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