

# *This Week at St Mary's*

29 March 2020

## WITH OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS CLOSED

We broadcast a service last Sunday in which I know many of St Mary's participated. There were 51 'unique listeners'. It's more difficult to organise one this week, without access to the church building, but **it is happening**. It'll be 'live' from 11.00. The music and readings are listed on the final page. Francis Shepherd has done masses more work on the technical side. Many thanks indeed.

We have also now made it possible for the choir to join you at home for Evensong, any evenings(s) you want! See new *Worship Resources for use at home* section on our website. The C of E website (ours has a link to it) will give you the liturgy of the day, with the Psalm and readings, etc. For sung 'preces', magificat, nunc dimittis and prayers, click on the one you want and be transported to St Mary's.

For many years Joanna and I have been praying daily with others via a skype conference call. It's transformed prayer for us, locating it in a group of people who become friends. The internet makes these things easy. The present restrictions we are living under emphasise. Do discuss further with me if you'd like to take further.

Food banks. Beth Mitchell has offered to be our co-ordinator, please liaise with her if you can make a donation: anoirtak1@icloud.com

With two weeks to Easter, Passiontide begins. The virus has drawn us deeper into the suffering of our world. This came with intensity to Christ during his temptations and then especially at the Cross. It's this combination of love and suffering lying at the heart of Christianity we are more fully entering. Let's open ourselves more and more to receive into ourselves God's love, and so get onto the wavelength of all that Christ has done for us - to celebrate how He, from Easter Day, has opened the way for all things to be made new.

Tom Gillman

## A POEM WHICH HAS PARTICULAR MEANING FOR ME

### THE LOOM OF TIME (Anon) - Biddy Walker

This is a poem I've known most of my life, and I pretty well know it off by heart. It inspires me to hang onto faith, trusting in God as long as I possibly can, indeed always. Judy (my daughter) read it at Geoffrey's funeral - managing to do so without her voice cracking.

The first verse gives me confidence that there is a pattern given by God to our lives, even though it may only be with hindsight we can see what it might have been. The third verse helps me see how easily we don't appreciate as we could the different things which happen each day.

I have always particularly liked the last verse. When I worked in the medical world, I would, if I thought appropriate, send it to someone who had been bereaved on the anniversary of the death. Many said how much they appreciated my so doing.

At this time, the poem speaks vividly to me. It's as though the dark threads are the floods, the virus, and etc. The silver and gold strands stand out sparkling against them, the sacrifices and bravery of people, not least the NHS, our coming together, indeed the country pulling together in a new way.

God's hands are holding us, He who knows the beauty and who guides the shuttles, is doing his work of weaving in our lives, in good times and in bad. It's for us to hold onto him.

*Man's life is laid in the loom of Time/ To a pattern he does not see,/ While the Weaver works and the shuttles fly/ Till the doom of eternity.*

*Some shuttles are filled with silver thread,/ And some with threads of gold;/ While often but the darker hue/ Is all that they may hold. But the Weaver watches with skilful eye/ Each shuttle fly to and fro,/ And sees the pattern so deftly wrought/ As the loom works slow and sure.*

*God surely planned that pattern,/ Each thread - the dark and the fair -/ Was chosen by His master skill/ And placed in the web with care.*

*He only knows the beauty/ And guides the shuttles which hold/ The threads so unattractive/ As well as the threads of gold.*

*Not till the loom is silent,/ And the shuttles cease to fly/ Shall God unroll the pattern/ And explain the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful/ In the Weavers skilful hand/ As the threads of gold and silver/ In the pattern that He has planned.*

## WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE WORKSHOP

*Lorna Hamilton attended our workshops and reports as follows*

Well-being has become top of the agenda within the workplace and in many aspects of life. However, the meaning is often confusing and somewhat obscure. I was therefore curious when I read of St Mary's 'Well-being in the Workplace' course and I was interested to know what it entailed.

The classes began at 7:15 am and ran for 75 minutes over an 8-week period. At first it seemed rather contradictory for my well-being to be taking a class at such an early time in the morning. However, it was encouraging to be with the same 10 participants and course leaders each Wednesday in the quietness of the grand old church on the hill. Attendees came from various backgrounds and roles, some worked within large organisations whilst a few, like me, work solo.

The course began with our looking at the pressures we face today in society and what we do to overcome those anxieties. Although the answers may seem obvious, it was surprisingly helpful to speak them out and hear other's points of view.

However, the most key weeks were in the ones to follow, where we looked at emotional, physical and spiritual needs. Probably the most impacting for me was the need for inner stillness. As part of our reflection time at home, we were asked to practice this. It made me feel more alive and gave me a calm entrance into the day ahead. Of course, the challenge is not in a one-off attempt but in creating daily habits.

Perhaps the most beneficial part of the course was to be actively part of a community whilst exploring these issues. The course has planted seeds for thought and development as I consider what I need to do to keep myself mentally healthy.

**Wherever you are, we extend a very warm  
greeting to you, especially if you've  
recently discovered St Mary's**  
**We regret that in the current public health context,  
St Mary's has to remain closed.**

**Sunday Service 11.00 broadcast via our website**

*Organ prelude, Lied from Louis Vierne's 24 Pieces in Free Style*

*The King of Love My Shepherd Is*

*1<sup>st</sup> Reading Romans 8.6-11*

*Chorale Prelude: Christe, aller Welt Trost - by JS Bach*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reading John 11.28-44*

*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

*Anthem: Pergolesi's Stabat Mater (first section)*

*My Song is Love Unknown vv1,2,3,7)*

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**Please continue to pray for**

Estelle Barks

John Bowers

John Conway

Harry Palmer

Mike Ridley

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