

Nurturing Love

One of the most heartening things I heard in my preparation for coming to Holy Trinity & St Mary's Guildford was of the hunger of many people to be fed. "Come and feed us spiritually," was a phrase I heard more than once before I arrived and, in different ways, that's what I'm hearing in these early 1-2-1 conversations I'm having with people. Alongside the "getting-to-know-you" element of these conversations, I'm being asked about theology, spirituality, practical tips for growing as a Christian, and lots of questions about faith and doubt.

It's something that came home to me this last weekend at our Quiet Day too. We may not be the most demonstrative of Christians in our English Anglican Tradition (and we can learn from our Methodist friends at St Mary's about allowing our hearts to be warmed by God), but there is quiet devotion and a desire to go deeper not just into understanding our faith but in the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ too.

What a gift that is to a new priest! – and a challenge too!! – because such searching questions and quiet hunger make me ask myself about my relationship with God too, ask me not to rely on the 'muscle memory' of being what you might call a 'professional Christian'. It makes me want to go deeper into faith and the mystery of God in Christ too.

This Sunday – whether we prefer to call it 'Refreshment Sunday' or 'Mothering Sunday' (but not Mothers' Day please!!) – is a day that invites us to ponder the nature of nurturing love. The ideas of refreshment and mothering both invite us to seek renewal, whether we prefer the 'still waters' of Psalm 23 or the 'mothers' milk' referred to in the New Testament (1 Peter 2:2-3). We find in God deeper wells from which to drink and a never-ending source of nourishment. This is the heart of what we call 'spirituality' in the Christian tradition, a reliance upon God to feed and water us.

In our morning service on Sunday we shall say a prayer that reminds us of this, written by St Anselm of Canterbury in the twelfth century. It is a prayer full of rich imagery and generous 'mothering & refreshing' love. May it invite us that little bit deeper into God in the middle of Lent.

Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
 you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.
 Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
 through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.
 Your warmth gives life to the dead,
 your touch makes sinners righteous.
 Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
 in your love and tenderness remake us.
 In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness,
 for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.

Simon Butler

If you would like to subscribe to our newsletter, please do so by visiting our website and www.htsmguildford/newsletter or contact Chloe at comms@holytrinityguildford.org.uk

Events this week

Thursday 7th March	Morning Prayer at St Mary's at 8.30am Parish Office Closed
Friday 8th March	Vigil for Peace at St Mary's from 9pm
Saturday 9th March	Saturday Coffee at Holy Trinity Church from 10am Occam Singers Concert at Holy Trinity
Monday 11th March	Morning Prayer at St Mary's at 8.30am (Zoom via website)
Tuesday 12th March	Morning Prayer at Holy Trinity at 8.30am FREE Organ recital at St Mary's from 1.10pm
Wednesday 13th March	Morning Prayer at Holy Trinity at 8.30am Holy Communion at Holy Trinity 10am Chit Chat at St Mary's at 9.30am
Thursday 14th March	Lent Reflections 12.30 at St Mary's Guildford Diocese Theology Hub Lecture at St Mary's at 7.30pm

Please visit www.htsmguildford.org/calendar for more events

Holy Week is Coming Soon...
and there are some opportunities to take part

Palm Sunday: Alongside our procession through the town from St Mary's to Holy Trinity, there will be a dramatic reading of St Mark's Passion during the part of the service at Holy Trinity. We are looking for a good-sized team of readers to take part, with big parts and small. If you would like to take part in this moving moment at the beginning of Holy Week, please email Rod: rod@holytrinityguildford.org.uk.

Holy Week Passover Meal: There will be a special Passover Supper on the Monday of Holy Week, 25th March, in Holy Trinity, organised by Stephen Marriott. Ben Cahill-Nicholls will be reflecting on his own Jewish heritage during the meal and Simon Butler will offer thoughts on the Last Supper in the light of its Passover origins. Please book via the Parish Office: comms@holytrinityguildford.org.uk.

Maundy Thursday Service, 28th March at 7.30pm. This service will include an opportunity for twelve members of the congregation to have their feet washed as part of our commemoration of the Last Supper. If you would like to volunteer for what is always a special moment in the Holy Week services, please email Rod Pierce: rod@holytrinityguildford.org.uk. There will be a Watch of Silent Prayer from the end of the Service until 10pm.

Good Friday, 29th March: This year, Simon will be using the format of the Three Hours' Service at Holy Trinity on Good Friday. There will be six addresses in the first two hours, which he will give on the theme of *People of the Passion*, arranged in twenty-minute slots of readings, reflection, poetry, silence and prayer, so that people can come and go during that extended time of preaching and worship. Then, at 2pm and as a response to the Preaching of the Passion, there will be the traditional Good Friday Liturgy, with a reading of the Passion of John, the Veneration of the Cross (with time for personal prayer at the foot of the Cross), Intercession and Holy Communion. This is a different format from recent years and an opportunity for us to enter deeply into the Good Friday experience.

Notices

A Special Service Next Sunday Evening at 6pm: In place of the usual service of Choral Evensong, Revd. Ben Cahill-Nicholls and Holy Trinity Choir will lead us in a Passiontide Service of Readings, Music and Prayer.

Elections of Churchwardens, PCC and Deanery Synod Members: Our Annual Vestry & Parochial Church Meetings will be held at noon (i.e. after both churches' morning services) on **Sunday 14th April** in the Trinity Centre. Nominations for elections to the above roles will open soon. To find out more, please speak to the current church wardens, the clergy or Mike Bishop, Vice Chair of the PCC (mikebishop@ntlworld.com).

Preparation for First Communion: We will be running a course to prepare for First Communion on Saturday 27 April from 9-1pm in Holy Trinity, with the children being admitted to their First Communion the following morning in the 10am service. We prepare children from age 7 up, an important step in their spiritual journey. If your child would like to take their First Communion this spring, or you have any questions, please email Pippa at youth@holytrinityguildford.org.uk

Ongoing 1-2-1s: Simon very keen to continue having 1-2-1 meetings with members of Holy Trinity & St Mary's after Easter. Please email him to book a date and time.

New Archdeacon: Our new Archdeacon, Catharine Mabuza, will take up her ministry at a special service in Guildford Cathedral at 6pm on Sunday 17th March. All welcome.

This week's services

Lent 4 • 10 th March 2024 2024	
<p>HOLY TRINITY</p> <p>10am Mothering Sunday <u>Sermon by Corinne Jones</u> 1 Samuel 1.20-end Colossians 3.12-17</p> <p>6pm Refreshment Sunday with Eucharist <u>Sermon by David Mutombo</u> Exodus 6.2-13 Romans 5.1-11 John 12:1-8</p>	<p>ST MARY'S</p> <p>8am BCP Holy Communion <u>Led by Rod Pierce</u> Ephesians 2.1-10 John 3.14-21</p> <p>10.30am Mothering Sunday <u>Led by Paul Glass</u></p>

Contact Us

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