

Dear Friends in Leamington Hastings, Grandborough, Willoughby and Flecknoe,

I do miss being with you in church! The last time we met seems so long ago. And I do hope you are keeping well; please do let me know straight away if you are ill, or if you are worried about a family member, so that I can ramp up the prayers for you and them.

I am praying for you every day. Somehow, in my isolation, I have found a new inspiration to pray Morning and Evening Prayer on your behalf, and it's been a pleasure.

There are some interesting services for you on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> April.

Firstly two of our favourite churchwardens, one incredibly able caterer, and one rather familiar vicar got together (online) and made a Breakfast service for your worship. If you watch it at 9am, that's the time when most of us will be watching it, so we can be together in worship.

Here's how to do it: go to the St Mark's Church website [www.stmarksflecknoe.co.uk](http://www.stmarksflecknoe.co.uk) and click on the link to the video site, then click the arrow to start it playing. It's our first attempt, so please be patient with the slip-ups! It's not too long.

Or you can go to the facebook page - @StMarksFlecknoe. at 9am.

You may also like to watch services on:

- **BBC Sunday Worship** is broadcasting on BBC One at 10.45am
- and at 11.15am will be available on [BBC iPlayer](#)
- **BBC Songs of Praise** is broadcasting on BBC One at 1.15pm and at 2pm on [BBC iPlayer](#).
- **Coventry Cathedral** will be live streaming on their [Facebook Page](#) at 9.15am (Liturgical service) (I expect this will be a service of Holy Communion)

I'm also writing the talk I did for tomorrow's service, for those that don't find the internet that easy; see below.

If you are handy at sending photos by email, I would love to have one! Then I can see you as well!

With my love and prayers,

*Anne*

*Talk for Sunday Service (like the one on the Video)*

As we begin our 3<sup>rd</sup> week of isolation, there's a greater concern: the frustration that our lives are on hold. We care about those who are elderly, infirm or alone; and are concerned for those in hospital or care homes, those struggling to get home from abroad, plus our families and friends; and are confronted with the thought, 'When will it end?'

Last week as I walked down the road, a man shouted, 'Hi Anne!' across to me, 'how are you doing?' He expressed frustration as he's trying to work at home, with little children constantly interrupting him.

And further along the road an elderly lady is confronted with her newly repaired internet not working again, and no-one will come out to repair it. She feels isolated and alone.

Feelings of fear, anxiety, and anger are natural at a time like this. Our lives have been turned upside down. We're in lockdown.

This week's service is about Jesus walking to the cross. It was pandemonium as the soldiers pushed their three prisoners down the road. Jesus was now so weak they forced a bystander to carry his cross. Women were wailing, people shouting. Jesus turned and spoke to them gently, warning that worse was to come for their city. They came up the hill to the place called 'The Skull'.

The three criminals were ordered to pull off their clothes; and were nailed to the crosses naked, shouting and crying with pain. Fear, anxiety and anger besieged them.

Some in the crowd cried out mockingly, "Come down from the cross, Jesus, *if you are the Messiah!*"

Jesus had conquered his fear, anxiety and anger. His trust in God did not take away the pain and agony, but it did enable him to cry out words of forgiveness, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Today, Jesus offers us his calm nature, and the peace that overcomes the fear, anxiety and anger. He offers to each of us his peace, the peace that is beyond understanding. Breathe in his peace; breathe out the fear, breathe out the anxiety, let the anger go.

For those that have got coronavirus, or those affected by it, I can't imagine how you feel. Jesus can enter your fear with his calm words of peace – "Peace I offer you, my peace I give to you."

God has promised to hear us when we pray. Prayer is a strange concept – but try it! It works! If you don't often pray, you may find it easier to light a candle, and let that be the prayer for you.

Prayer is like these seed cases containing Alder seeds. Alder seeds are tiny, less than 2 mm, but they grow into huge trees. I have 3 alder trees in my garden, 40 feet high!

Prayer is like this seed that grows unseen. It's underground. If it could speak it would say, "It's really dark down here." Above ground it looks as though nothing is happening, for some time.



We are invited to trust, for it *will* grow; it will become a huge tree.

*My prayer is that you will know peace today and every day; and you will be enabled to pray.*

Amen