



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 20th March 2022
Third Sunday of Lent

What on earth did they do to deserve this? That might be the question that goes through your mind when you hear the news sometimes. Perhaps when you heard of the destruction of more than one hospital full of sick patients or women in labour, or the bombing of a theatre sheltering children and older people. The answer of course is 'nothing'. They just got in the way of representatives of a violent immoral regime. But sometimes terrible accidents happen – on the roads, on building sites – innocent people die or are seriously injured – and we ask ourselves the same question.

Behind the question is a view of God as controlling events in our world, and meting out punishment to sinners. A somewhat medieval view, informed by the way that rulers of that period dispensed justice.

But in today's gospel, Jesus puts forward a different perspective. Pilate incurred the enmity of Jews in Roman-occupied Palestine by ignoring their religious traditions and culture, and promoting Roman deities and traditions. Here Jesus refers to an atrocity committed by Pilate's over zealous troops, in which Galilean Jews (looked down on by Jerusalem Jews) were killed in the Jerusalem temple while making a sacrifice to God. Jesus reminds them about a seemingly random event of fellow Jerusalem Jews dying in a tower collapse. If it was true that the Galileans who died had it coming, do they think it is true that the ones who died when Siloam fell also deserved it?

Judging whether someone else is sinful enough for their experience of suffering to be justified misses the whole point. We are all sinners – all caught up in what the prayer book calls 'the changes and chances of this mortal life'. The less repentance of sin there is, the more dangerous the world becomes. The less repentance of sin there is, the more self-inflicted suffering occurs. The more time we spend judging when we look at the suffering of others, the less time we spend actually loving, becoming responsible, and doing something about it. We cannot indefinitely live in a way that bears no fruit, and expect to evade God's judgement. Nevertheless, the gardener is there for us: we have a loving God who is unbelievably patient and is willing to encourage us and strengthen our faith. Lent is an appropriate time to try to grow in faith and fruitfulness.

Eternal God,
give us insight
to discern your will for us,
to give up what harms us,
and to seek the perfection we are promised
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Reading : Isaiah 55.1-9

The LORD says this:

Everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;

let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;

let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Gospel Reading: Luke 13.1-9

There were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them - do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.' Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?" He replied, "Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."' "

THE WEEK AHEAD

Mon	7.30pm, Zoom: Bible Study Group
Tues	12:15pm: Funeral of Jeffery Ball
Wed	2:15pm: Funeral of Barbara Surtees
Wed	7.30pm: St Cuthbert's: ' An Adventure with God ' - Right Rev'd Mark Bryant
Thurs	12pm: Lent Lunch, St Aidan's - Simon of Cyrene
Fri	4:30pm: Messy Church at Great Park Community Centre
Fri	5pm, Church: Food for Thought via Zoom (see code below)
Sun 27th	9.30am, Church: Mothering Sunday Family Communion Leading and Preaching Rev'd Gerard Rundell - Readings TBC
Sun	4pm, Church: Taize service

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wed (NB) 30th Mar 12pm: Lent Lunch, St John's URC - Mary Magdalene
Wed 30th Mar 7:30pm: Lent Course with Rev'd Dr Jennifer Moberly at St Cuthbert's
Thurs 31st Mar 12.45pm: Funeral of Jane Hatton
Thurs 7th April 12pm: Lent Lunch, St Cuthbert's Brunswick - The Two Thieves
Sun 3rd April 11am: Annual General Meeting
Wed 6th April 7:30pm: Lent Course with Rev'd Ben Doolan, Master of St Thomas'

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link is <https://bit.ly/3rdLent22>

☆ **TONIGHT** ☆ **FUNDRAISING CONCERT** - Newcastle University Wind Band Society present *A Musical Feast - with music from Stage, TV, Screen and Concert* at 7:30pm. A fundraiser event for Ukraine, pay by donation on arrival.

SCHOOL EASTER ACTIVITIES – we're planning a day of craft, activities and telling the Easter story at Brunton First and Broadway East schools during the week of 4th April. If you are interested in helping plan and deliver the day, please contact Gerard or Ruth.

ADRIENNE TULIP – left a lovely telephone message thanking everyone for their kind messages during the weeks when she was poorly. She is feeling much better, sounds wonderful, and will be home soon.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – will take place on Sunday 3rd April at 11am in church. We will be electing Churchwardens, a Deanery Synod rep, and DCC members at the meeting. If you are interested in any of these roles please speak to Gerard.

MESSY CHURCH – Happy Mother's Day Messy church is at Great Park Community Centre on Friday 25th March between 4pm and 5:30pm. As always, there will be crafts, stories and food. A great, fun session for all ages – please come along and bring your family too.

SUPPORTING REFUGEE FAMILIES – as we pray for peace in Ukraine, many Ukrainian families are seeking refuge, and it is possible that some of us here at St Aidan's will be able to offer shelter within our homes. We know at least one person is considering it! We are asking if, as a church, we can come together as a community to help support the home owners and refugee families as they settle in their new homes. Please let Gerard know if you are able to help in any way.

ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION – Over the next week notice is given for the revision of the Electoral Roll prior to the AGM. This is not a new Roll, so if you gave your details in 2019 there's no need to give them again. If you're not on the Electoral Roll and would like to be, please speak to Howard Cleeve or one of the Wardens.

CHAT AND CRAFT – bring your crafting along for a friendly, relaxed session where you can chat and craft with friends, Thursday 24th at 2pm in the community room.

ROSEMARY ORDINATION – will take place on 2nd July(morning). More details to follow.

SONGS OF PRAISE - are recording at St Andrew's Church, Corbridge on Monday 21st March, 6:30-9:30pm. To apply for free tickets, please send your name, address, contact phone number and number of tickets requested to SOPcongregations@avantimedia.tv. Please include 'Songs of Praise Corbridge' in your subject header, or call 07734 030 888. Please only apply if you know you are able to go.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP LENT SERIES The Bible study group is continuing on Zoom with Rev Miranda Threlfall-Holmes' video series How to Eat Bread, based on her book exploring different ways of reading the Bible, looking particularly at how the Bible itself uses biblical texts. 7.30 Monday evenings. All welcome, whether or not you have been part of the group before. Meeting code: 884 3537 3515 or Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88435373515?wd=ODA3Q1dQbIRqZnNiaUNHK1UvTkZ1dz09>

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDsm1KOURtQT09>

Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan **BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS:** if you would

like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

CHURCH CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS – face masks are optional, please sanitise your hands on entering church, and maintain at least a one metre distance.

CHURCH OPENING – church is now open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – Particularly for Mark Edwards and St Cuthbert's and St Matthew's, our Sunday school and youth groups, our family service and all involved in our work with children and young people.

For the community – for the West End Food Bank

For the world – Particularly during the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, for her people, refugees and the Ukrainian community in the UK, and our own national and political life.

For those in particular need - Gladys Johnston and

For those who have died and those who grieve – Donald Wright, Bill Richardson, John Malkin, Michael Croft, Derek Chinnery, Arnold Roylance, Joyce Corscadden, Eileen Liebetanz, John Tait, Judith Howard, George Robinson

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