

Dear friends,

**Last Sunday** is known as “Low Sunday” and its origin is uncertain but certainly it is meant to contrast with the “high” of Easter Sunday. In the experience of most clergy, it also has also come to mean low numbers of people at church so at St. Peter’s we prepared accordingly. So, imagine my surprise and amazement when I stepped into the church and saw so many people. My eyes turned to the board which records roughly how many wafers we’d need, and it read “98”. We had downgraded our expectations and even thought about just using one chalice, so we had to prepare more wafers and charge the second chalice. It certainly lifted my mood, and everyone seemed to enjoy the choice of hymns. It was a joyous service and I even got to talk about my favourite apostle, St Thomas!

### **23rd April – 3rd of Easter**

The reverend Jean Burrows will be presiding at both services at St. Peter’s and I will be presiding at All Saints and St. Michael’s at 9.30 and 11am respectively.

**Acts 2: 14a, 36-41.** Peter tells the assembled people that this man Jesus of Nazareth is also the Messiah (Christ in Greek) and therefore Lord of our lives. In other words He is to command our Loyalty and we should do what he commands us (as with any earthly Lord) and follow in his steps. It is fairly well known that Jesus never asks us to worship Him but constantly asked us to follow in his footsteps – to follow his “way” of living life. This is why we were originally known, not as “Christians” but as followers of “the way”.

**1 Peter 1:17-23.** The loyalty that Peter is asking for in the book of Acts he writes about in his first letter. Our loyalty is bought not with money but by the revealing of the sacrificial love of God for the world enacted through the crucifixion. Such love for us needs a response and this should be reflected in us showing a similar love for others. This is the sign of being born again.

**Luke 24: 13-35.** The road the Emmaus story is an acted parable about the Eucharist and the abiding presence of the risen Christ in our lives. Jesus walks with two of his disciples unrecognised but his spirit interprets the scriptures about himself (one of those may have been psalm 16 Peter quotes on the day of Pentecost). Jesus Christ is only revealed to them at the breaking of the bread. At which point he again vanishes from physical sight. The meaning of the story is explained in the last verse he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread”.

## **Class visits to St. Peter's from our church school.**

A big thank you to the volunteers who have stepped up to show 10 classes of children over 10 consecutive Fridays around our church. This is very much appreciated!

## **Fish and Chip quiz night this Saturday – 6.30pm for 7pm**

This great annual event is this Saturday. Only £12.50 a ticket. Tickets from our quizmaster and treasurer extraordinaire Tony Gray.

## **St. Peter's Giving Day – 13th May – 10am till 1pm**

This has been a difficult five-year spell for all churches and Saint Peter's is no exception, with the covid disruption and the recent cost of living crisis. It has caused us significant financial problems. Of course, the favoured method of giving is a Direct debit which ensures a steady regular monthly income, but I do know that there are many very generous people who are both willing and able to support their church with one off payments. On the 13th May I will be in church with our treasurer and other wardens who will be there to gratefully receive any offering that you can afford to give – either one off payments or direct debits.

## **Thought for Today**

Immediately after the exertions of Holy Week and Easter Sunday, Louise and I took a couple of nights break in Bath, a city I had never visited before. I was stunned by the regal beauty and cosmopolitan feel of the place – it was like being in the west end of London. This is a double edged sword of course. There are historic streets and stately buildings, lovely parks, but huge crowds, queues for everything and crowded restaurants. The two big draws are the Roman baths, which is why the town exists at all and of course Bath Abbey. A more beautiful abbey I can't remember seeing and I learned that it is here that the first king of a united England was crowned here in the year 973AD by the archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury. It is amazing to me that the coronation ceremony that the church will be using on May 6th is essentially unchanged from the one written by St. Dunstan all those centuries ago. In such a place as Bath Abbey, one gets such a feeling of history, of continuity, of stability, dare I say a sense of the eternal and divine. It is not just churches like Bath Abbey that can invoke such feelings. That same sense of tradition and history, of permanence that hints of the divine and eternal can be evoked by buildings much younger but play a part in the family histories of so many people. Of course, the present building of All Saints in East

Budleigh dates from around the 12th century and St. Michael's in Otterton, whilst the modern structure is essentially Victorian has parts of it attached to the remains of a Benedictine Abbey that was a sister abbey connected to the famous Mont St. Michel in France. St. Peter's is again Victorian and was built originally as a chapel of ease to All Saints East Budleigh, but in its comparatively short history now evokes a wealth of historical and family attachment. All special, all significant and all evoking a sense of the divine and eternal in the midst of a turbulent and distracted world.

**The Prayer for Today** was written by Clement of Rome in the 1st Century.

**O God, make us children of quietness and heirs of peace.**

Love and peace,

Martin