

The Flow of Love and Peace – right now!

“And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.” (Colossians 3.15-15)

Gosh, we have a challenge before us in these difficult times! And it's not just how we and our nearest and dearest survive. For us, it's never about survival; it's about **real life**.

When Jesus talks about life, he doesn't mean just physical existence. He means all the things that make life worth living: love and companionship and creativity and meaning and peace and a connection with God.

As a Christian community, we have the opportunity in these dark days to show what it's like to be filled with God's Spirit and be infused with prayer, peace, love and compassion. And perhaps some of the other things that are happening just now will help us chart a way to do this well...

Holy Week & Easter

Christ's willing embrace of agony on the cross and his mighty resurrection show that suffering and death are **not** the final word. He will have **nothing to do** with the things that lead to death: selfishness, blame, hatred, bitterness, violence, scapegoating and fear. And so death could not hold him. And he has given us his life...

St Eanswythe – past, present & future

...which St Eanswythe embodied and expressed so richly during her short but remarkable life. The significance of the confirmation that we really do have her relics among us is not only historical. We are the inheritors of the faith community she founded in this place, and which has been maintained all through the years. Because St Eanswythe's life vibrates with prayerfulness, compassion and openness to the needs and contribution of others, her presence with us calls us to embody these qualities too. There's a lot of interest in us internationally right now, so please pray for wisdom as we consider how we develop as a place of pilgrimage.

Coronavirus & caring for each other

The situation and the advice we're getting is changing day by day, so I've no idea what things will be like when you read this. But what I do know is that we are called to demonstrate the qualities expressed by Jesus himself, and the Holy Eanswythe: prayerfulness, compassion and openness to the needs and contribution of others. As a church, we'll be considering both how to keep people safe **and** ways to keep people connected and supported. If you're able to access the website or Facebook pages, please keep up with the news there. See <https://stmaryandsteanswythe.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/sainteanswythe/>

The governance of our church

We have our Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) coming up. It's due on April 22nd at 7pm, but it could be delayed and held in May if the progress of the virus makes it necessary. But whatever the date, if it's safe to come, please do attend. We have to elect two churchwardens, two Deanery

Synod representatives and six PCC members. The team that we assemble for the coming year will have the opportunity to shape the future of our church, so it's important! Please pray about whether you are willing to serve, or whether there is someone you should approach to ask them to do so.

And finally...

...remember this promise: "the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4.7).

Revd Dr John Walker