

Vicar's Letter – Friday 29 April 2022

Sermon series

From 1st May we are starting a new sermon series in the New Testament book, the Acts of the Apostles. We will be looking at chapters 19-21, a time of great growth for the Christian Church, but also a time of opposition and challenge.

Why study this book and why now?

Acts helps us keep our eyes on Jesus and not get distracted by so many things around us. We see encounters with people, who have been transformed by coming to know Christ for themselves. Often we are tempted to think things never change and we settle for the Church bumping along in decline and obscurity. But Acts is a powerful remedy to that. It shows us the power of the Gospel and lives changed. The Gospel has utterly changed this country and we have seen wonderful revivals in the past. We must pray that it could happen again and in our own lifetime! In the 18th Century characters like John Wesley and Gloucester-born George Whitefield committed themselves to proclaiming the Good News of Jesus in every part of the country and to every person, from the highest to the lowest.

Let's pray that God would encourage and bless us as a church family as we look at Acts together.



George Whitefield Preaching in Bolton, June 1750

'Seeds of Faith'

This is the name of our parish mission 18-25th September. There will be a series of events and services happening across Lechlade with the clear aim of presenting the Christian faith in an attractive and relevant way and encouraging people to respond.

We have already started to publicise this week of focussed mission and outreach through the Easter card which was delivered to every household in the parish. We included a pack of sunflower seeds for people to grow as a reminder of 'Seeds of Faith'.



We are delighted to be welcoming Roger Simpson to be an important part of our initiative. He has immense experience in this country and overseas as a vicar and evangelist. Roger has preached for us before and we will welcome him again soon. You can have confidence that he will explain the Gospel in an attractive and accessible way.

>> Why not invite a friend or neighbour to hear him?



This mission week will only work if we are bold as a church family and personally invite people to events.

There is no point in looking over our shoulder and expecting other people to do the inviting – this is the responsibility of all of us as local Christians. 'Seeds of Faith' is not for one particular group of people in the church to get involved with. It is for every personality, every age, every background, every Sunday service whether 8am, 10am or 5pm. This is *our* parish mission.

Let us use this great opportunity to welcome people to the Christian faith and to our church! It might seem scary to invite people. It might not seem 'our cup of tea'. It might be something we have never been involved with before. Let's take the plunge and trust God to transform people, just as we see in the book Acts. Let's pray that we would see God move powerfully among us.

Pattern of Worship

The PCC have recently reviewed our pattern of worship across our Sunday services. We recognise that as a parish church we need to offer a variety of styles of worship and music covering both the traditional and the more contemporary. We will never keep everyone happy and there are strong opinions on both sides! We hope that our pattern is broad enough to satisfy most people. We do need to be gracious and loving towards those of different views- we worship the same God, although the style may be different.



The PCC also recognise that it is not just about keeping existing church members happy, but also providing accessible services to welcome new people to. We need to both honour existing forms of Anglican worship and try new things with appropriate forms of language and use of technology.

The PCC have agreed to keep the existing pattern for the foreseeable future:

8am		Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10am	Week 1	Family Communion
	Week 2	'Together at Ten' all-age
	Week 3,4	Informal Service
	Week 5	Traditional Holy Communion
5pm	Week 1,3,4	Choral Evensong (Book of Common Prayer)
	Week 2	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	Week 5	Healing Service

And finally...

Do continue to pray for St. Lawrence Church, for its ministry and people. There is always lots going on and we give thanks to God that He has enabled us to press forward in building up the Kingdom of God.

We haven't even mentioned our children's holiday club or our re-ordering project- that will happen in another newsletter.

Sunday services are important, but they only reveal a little of what is going on in the spiritual life of our church family. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and keep us.



Yours in Jesus Christ's name,

Andrew Cinnamond

Vicar