

Sunday 14th February 2021

Sunday next before Lent

Welcome to everyone today – wherever you are!

Although our church buildings are temporarily closed for public worship, the church is very much open! The decision to close was not an easy one to make but we want to protect everyone in our church family and help bring an end to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Parish Eucharist is at 10am live on St Thomas' Facebook page.

You can also *dial in* to listen live, or later, using our new phone number

01706 599309.

There are also hymns and prayers to listen to and these will change from week to week.

The Collect

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading 2 Kings 2.1-12

Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, 'Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel.' But Elisha said, 'As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So they went down to Bethel. The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, 'Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?' And he said, 'Yes, I know; keep silent.'

Elijah said to him, 'Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho.' But he said, 'As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So they came to Jericho. The company of prophets* who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, 'Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?' And he answered, 'Yes, I know; be silent.'

Then Elijah said to him, 'Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.' But he said, 'As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.' Elisha said, 'Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.' He responded, 'You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.' As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, 'Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!' But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Gospel Reading Mark 9.2-9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Prayer after Communion

Holy God,

we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ:

may we who are partakers at his table

reflect his life in word and deed,

that all the world may know his power to change and save.

This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Week Ahead & Information

Today (and each Sunday)

Join us for coffee after the Sunday morning service, 10.45-11.15am on Zoom. You just need the email link to join in – if you've not received one please email Fr David (frdavidstephenson@gmail.com)

Monday - Saturday

9am Morning Prayer *live on St Thomas' Facebook page*
5pm Evening Prayer *live on St James' Facebook page* (not on Wednesday or Saturday)

Wednesday

10am Service of the Word for Ash Wednesday
available on St Thomas' Facebook page
12pm Lunch Deliveries *see note below*
5pm Sung Eucharist for Ash Wednesday
live on St James' Facebook page

Thursday

12.30 Funeral service for Lena White RIP at Accrington Crematorium

Next Sunday (21 February –First Sunday of Lent)

10am Eucharist *from St James' live-streamed on St Thomas' Facebook page & dial-in*
10.45am After church coffee *on Zoom*

Lent

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, this week. There will be a *Service of the Word* on St Thomas' Facebook page at 10am and a Sung Eucharist live on St James' Facebook at 5pm (instead of Evening Prayer).

Lent booklets, *Read, Mark and Learn*, based on the Gospel of Mark, are on their way out. If you haven't had one by Tuesday and would like one, please let Fr David or Fr Andrew know.

The Lent Course will be on Thursday afternoons, 2.30-3.30pm, on Zoom. This course will guide us through some of the Psalms of the Old Testament in a course written by the Archbishop of York. Please **email** Fr David (frdavidstephenson@gmail.com) for a Zoom invite. **5 Thursdays beginning on 25 February.**

Wednesday Lunches *continued*

Please book one of our homemade lunches with Fr Andrew **by the previous Saturday**. Absolutely **anyone** is eligible. No charge but donations of £5 welcome. Fr Andrew – andrewinhaslingden@gmail.com, 07460 899451

Please note that we are also able to provide frozen main meals to keep you going during the rest of the week, for families or individuals. Please let us know of anyone who might benefit from a delivery. The current menu includes: Cheese & Onion Pie, Hollands pies, Hotpot, Lasagne, Cottage Pie, Chicken Korma & Rice, Tuna Pasta Bake, Macaroni Cheese

Prayers

Please let Fr David know of anyone who should be included on our weekly prayer list. (frdavidstephenson@gmail.com, 07539264279)

For your prayers

Those able to enjoy a half term break this week; all who continue to work to support our communities and especially the vulnerable and isolated; the work of Christians in all denominations of the Church; all working in caring professions; those who shoulder the burden of leadership and responsibility.

For the sick: Ian, Alan, Denzil, Edna, Charley, Rita, Dorothy, Jim, Matthew, Jimmy, Jean, Mary, Mother Enid, Judith, Julie, Mandy, Alexander, Emily, Mandy, Rob, Jimmy, Alan

For all who have died in the past week and all whose anniversaries fall in the coming week. *Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.*