

ST. NICHOLAS, NEWPORT, LINCOLN, LN1 3DP  
Registered Charity Number: 1133977  
www.stnicholaslincoln.org.uk  
**5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021

### NOTES

***Please continue to let us know if you plan to attend worship in church. We still need to keep records of those who attend as well as making sure our numbers are within safe limits.***

### TODAY

9:00 am Said Eucharist  
10:30 am Said Eucharist

### THIS WEEK

#### **MONDAY**

8:45 am Morning Prayer

#### **TUESDAY**

8:45 am Morning Prayer  
12:15 pm *Funeral – June Butler*  
7:30 pm Parents' Fellowship

#### **WEDNESDAY**

8:45 am Morning Prayer  
9:30 am Said Eucharist

#### **THURSDAY**

8:45 am Morning Prayer



9.30am-11.30am - ST. NICK'S NIPPERS  
Worship & Friendship for young children and those who have care of them.

### NEXT SUNDAY – 6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER

9:00 am Said Eucharist  
10:30 am Said Eucharist

### READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK

<u>SUNDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY</u>
Acts 10:44-end	Acts 17:15, 22-18:1
Psalms 98	Psalms 148:1-2, 11-end
1 John 5:1-6	John 16:12-15
John 15:9-17	

### FROM THE VICAR

When I began work in the Lord Chancellor's Department (as it was then) many years ago, a senior colleague told me I had bagged a good posting as my first job. In outlining its many blessings, he added a phrase that struck me as much less than encouraging; 'unreasonable expectations'.

I did not then, and I do not now, think that unreasonable expectations are a positive thing to look for in a job. They are, however, unavoidable, and I fear increasingly so. We are, it seems to me, placing one another under ever more pressure to live up to ideals of how we look, how we behave, how we speak and how we think and I'm sure I'm

not the only one who can't remember agreeing to be judged against these standards.

The unreasonable expectations of others may only be the tip of the iceberg, however. When we consider the expectations we have for ourselves, and the harshness of the judgements we execute on ourselves for failing to live up to them, what other people demand may seem trivial in comparison. In pastoral ministry, we often encounter people who have been crushed by their sense of failure to live up to the standards that they have set themselves.

It's easy to read the Bible as just another set of unreasonable expectations. If we do that, we may end up with a 'triple-whammy' of condemnation – from God, from others, and from ourselves.

Thankfully that is entirely the wrong way to read the Bible. B-I-B-L-E is *not* an acronym for 'Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth', whatever you may have heard, and indeed the 'instructions' we find in its pages are much better understood as invitations and promises.

Human beings who know themselves to be created and loved by God, who are secure in the faith that their eternal destiny is safe in God's hands, are people whose sole priority is to stay where they are. 'Remain in me' says Jesus in today's gospel reading, which is again offered to us on Wednesday. The disciplines of prayer, theological reflection and sacramental worship are what enable this to happen. And the promise that follows from it is that we will bear fruit. Living well, in the richest possible sense, is something that happens quite naturally when people are in a good relationship with God.

This isn't easy, of course, but it's not an unreasonable expectation, just a very simple invitation. God reaches out to us at all times and in every place, each and every moment filled with the possibility of grace. Those who accept this invitation discover freedom and joy and find that it transcends the expectations of the world around us, as well as those that we place on ourselves. Being drawn into the eternal life of God is where we discover that who we were created to be, who we are and who we want to be are being made one in Christ.

May God bless you all,

Hugh

### PARISH INFORMATION

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Notices for next week's sheet by Wednesday please.

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www.stnicholaslincoln.org.uk

## **NOTICES**

### **COLIN WEAVER**

Colin Weaver worshipped at our church from 1967 and played an active role in many ways. He was a member of the church choir for 20 years. An accomplished organist, he willingly played the organ for Services when asked. He was a church warden for 5 years, the secretary to the 'CofE's men's society (sadly no longer in existence), and the secretary to the PCC of St Nicholas Church. He was always available to help, willing to assist and with his quiet demeanour supported many parishioners in a variety of ways. In more recent years Colin headed up the team administering wine at Holy Communion, and was an active committee member of 'The Messenger'. Colin will be missed by so many. He was a very committed and caring man. Our thoughts and best wishes go to Beverley and also to his family. Donations in Colin's memory can be made directly to MIND.

### **ANNUAL MEETINGS ON 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY**

We are moving towards our annual meetings for the election of Churchwardens, PCC members and other officers on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May. This will take place as soon after the 10:30 service as possible. Full details of the arrangements will be announced in the coming weeks. In the meantime, now is the time to consider prayerfully these questions: 'Is God calling me to play a more active role in the church? Could I be a Churchwarden? Or join the PCC?' Please speak to the Vicar if you would like to know more about these important roles.

### **A GOOD PROBLEM TO HAVE...**

Numbers are starting to get tight at our 10:30 service. Although things are changing in the world around us, *all* of the Covid restrictions in church are likely to remain in place until at least the summer. So please:

- Make sure you let us know if you plan to attend a service;
- Tell us if you've 'booked' a place, either as a regular or as a one-off, that you no longer need;
- Consider attending the 9 o'clock service instead.

We are working very hard to avoid having to turn people away, and so far we have been successful. Please help us to keep things that way.

### **ASCENSION DAY – THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY**

As usual, we will celebrate Ascension Day with an early morning Eucharist at 7:30 am. Unfortunately we will not be able to offer breakfast this year.

In addition to this Eucharist, there will be an open-format service in the garden on the corner of Newport and College Close (the site of the old St John's Church) between 3:30 and 4:30 pm. Please come along, and bring a friend.

### **CALL FOR HELP**

We have a great outdoor service planned for Ascension Day, which will be held just behind Mildmay Park between 1530-1630. If any of you were able and willing to help out, please let me know. We will be inviting

families from Westgate and Mount Street schools, so I hope that the service will be well attended. Please call or email me (07708 286972

/ kimitchell882@gmail.com) if you would like to support this event with: one of the four "prayer stations"; track & trace; moving tables. Although the prep and take down for this is likely to be between 1500-1700, any time you could give would be greatly appreciated. *Kate Mitchell*

### **ST NICK'S NIPPERS**

St Nick's Nippers has now resumed on Thursday mornings in church at its usual time of 9:30. There are still some things we can't do, but we can once again gather for friendship and fun, so spread the word.

### **THE RETIREMENT OF THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN**

In a letter to colleagues and a press notice to the wider community on Friday, the Right Reverend Christopher Lowson, Bishop of Lincoln, announced his intention to retire at the end of this calendar year. We give thanks for Bishop Christopher's ministry both in our Parish and in our Diocese and wish him all the best for the year ahead and his retirement beyond.

### **WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY – SATURDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

#### ***ST NICK'S COMMUNITY LITTER PICK***

As our contribution to World Environment Day, St Nick's ECO Church Group is organising a community litterpick on the morning of 5th June. Subject to government restrictions, we will begin at St Nick's, spread out in teams around the area and finish back at St Nick's. Weather and safety rules permitting, we would like to end with prayer and possibly a very informal, "Bring Your Own" picnic in the churchyard. Appropriate equipment for the litterpick is kindly being provided by CLEAN, Lincoln.

If you would like to take part, please email or phone the Parish Office and we'll add you name to the list of volunteers. *Sue Humphrey*

## READINGS

*Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May*

### **COLLECT**

Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen**

### **FIRST READING**

ACTS 8:26-END

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.'

The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

### **PSALM**

PSALM 22:25-END

**Refrain: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.**

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

I will perform my vows

in the presence of those that fear you.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

those who seek the Lord shall praise him;

their hearts shall live for ever. **R**

All the ends of the earth

shall remember and turn to the Lord,

and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.

For the kingdom is the Lord's

and he rules over the nations. **R**

How can those who sleep in the earth

bow down in worship,

or those who go down to the dust kneel before him?

He has saved my life for himself;

my descendants shall serve him;

this shall be told of the Lord for generations to come.

They shall come and make known his salvation,

to a people yet unborn,

declaring that he, the Lord, has done it. **R**

### **SECOND READING**

1 JOHN 4:7-END

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

### **GOSPEL READING**

JOHN 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower.

He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit.

Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the

word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide

in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself

unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you

abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those

who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit,

because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever

does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and

wITHERS; such branches are gathered, thrown into the

fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words

abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be

done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

#### **POST COMMUNION**

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

### ***Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May***

#### **COLLECT**

Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen**

#### **FIRST READING**

ACTS 15:1-6

Certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers. When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.'

The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter.

#### **PSALM**

PSALM 122:1-5

**Refrain: How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts.**

I was glad when they said to me,  
'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'

And now our feet are standing  
within your gates, O Jerusalem;

Jerusalem, built as a city  
that is at unity in itself.

Thither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,  
as is decreed for Israel,  
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

For there are set the thrones of judgement,  
the thrones of the house of David. **R**

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He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit.

Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide

in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

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