**Letter from the Vicar**

Friday 22 May 2020

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*God is gone up with a merry noise,*

*and the Lord with the sound of the trump.*

*O sing praises, sing praises unto our God.*

Yesterday, marking 40 days after Easter, the Church celebrated the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord when Jesus returned to the Father’s side in heaven. In years gone by Ascension Day was a Bank Holiday. As a teenager, attending a joint RC & CofE Secondary School, I can well recall trudging up a very steep hill to the nearest Anglican church for a special Ascension Day Eucharist whilst my Catholic friends went to Mass in the school hall. Lessons gave way to this important feast. 25 years on this feast is barely celebrated due to a decline in congregational numbers, and where it is observed it is usually when neighbouring Churches get together as indeed we have done in recent years a Deanery. Last night was no exception; the Deanery joined together virtually to celebrate together Jesus’ ascent to the heavens. My sincere thanks to Lizzie Hood and her tech-support for putting together a lovely service.

Yesterday, we also clocked-up 60 days in lockdown and our ninth clap for key workers. During these days of lockdown I’m sure I am not alone in having moments when I have thought ‘today is going-on a long time’. To me, these days have felt a little bit like when I was a new a parent: the days seem to be long, running into each other, and then suddenly nearly 2 ½ months have passed and you wonder where the time went. Already, for teachers and families of school children, half-term is upon us and yet Easter felt like only yesterday. Time is playing funny tricks on us. More than one person I have spoken to has said to me ‘I don’t know what day it is anymore’ – and it’s not because of dementia but more the sameness in routine of each day.

I have been very grateful for the ability to get out and about for walks with the family each day to break some of that monotony. The rhythm of the Daily Office and our weekly Eucharist punctuate my days and weeks so I have a fleetingly grounding in each day. But, like many, I miss many of the normal commitments that punctuate my days and give each week a shape. There are times when I long for them to return and then I realise that might be some time and actually, secretly, I’m quite enjoying the different shape – it feels a bit like a sabbatical, only more tiring!

Time is marching on, as we can see from nature around us. Soon will come the time when we can gather again. Soon will be the time when we can sing again as a choir and congregation. Soon will be the time when our days feel fraught with business and we are tired for another reason. Perhaps today is the today to be thankful for what we have and to simply live in the present? Perhaps today is the day to glory in the heat and sunshine, and not think about the cold and rain which will inevitably come?

As always, sending you my love and prayers, and may the Blessing of the Risen and Ascended Christ be upon you and those whom you love, for…

**Alleluia! Christ is risen.**

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

In Christ,

 

The Reverend Michael Macey The Reverend Canon Dr Ruth Goatly

*Vicar* *Associate Minister*

01442 243258 07961 980158 / 01727 751542

*vicar@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk**associateminister@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk*