

# The Grapevine

COVERING THE CHURCHES OF  
GREAT & LITTLE CHESTERFORD, LITTLEBURY WITH  
LITTLEBURY GREEN, & WENDENS AMBO

## Welcome to our services today Fifth Sunday of Easter

### Collect

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

### First Reading Acts 7.55-60

Standing before the high priest and the council, Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

### Gospel John 14.1-14

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.' Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

### Those who are unwell:

Margaret Reed (Gt Chesterford)

### Those who need our support:

Betty Dowsett (Littlebury Green)

Lucy Maskell (Great Chestford)

Kylie Moore-Gilbert (in prison in Iran)

### Friends and families of those who have died:

Those whose anniversaries are this week

### Other topics for your prayers:

- Those offering support to their friends and neighbours
- Those with the responsibility for determining the level of lockdown in the coming weeks
- Those ill with Covid19 in hospitals and at home with thanksgiving for those treating them
- Our churches as we explore new ways to worship
- The effect of Covid 19 on refugee camps, other crowded communities, and nations where the
- Those missing loved ones who have died

## VICAR'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

This week I've been watching Race Across the World, which you can find on BBC iPlayer.

The idea is for five pairs to get across parts of the world using only land or water with just enough money for what would have been the flight only. They have to spend this cash on all their food, travel and board. The first couple to reach the final checkpoint wins £20,000. The current series saw the couples travel from Mexico City to Ushuaia in Argentina.

It is ironic to watch people travel across the world when we can't travel at all at the moment but what has struck me is the kindness of the strangers that the competitors meet. These range from offering directions or a lift to providing a meal and a bed for the night.

In Matthew's gospel Jesus talks about welcoming the stranger. He says 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me . . . Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

It is always humbling when a stranger shows us hospitality or kindness because there is not always a reason for them to do it. You might have some recent examples where strangers have shown you kindness in these strange and troubling times.

When we finally come out of lockdown we will have the opportunity to re-connect with people we know and a chance to engage with strangers once again. I think this could be an opportunity to show the love of God in new and exciting ways. It is an opportunity to open ourselves up and see Jesus in the stranger.

Personally, I have missed face to face contact in ways that I never expected. I have missed being present in people's lives and it is something I hope never to take for granted again.

Reconnecting with one another will be a gift when it comes. When we show love for one another, we show love for Jesus and we therefore bring light into their lives. Let's not waste one minute of it.

With love,  
Alex

## PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

*Reinhold Niebuhr*

## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

### TODAY - TEAM ZOOM SERVICE

**Bishop Roger** will be preaching at a special Team Zoom Service led by Revd Paula Griffiths at 9.30 am. Please contact Alex or Gillian ([website.camvillages@gmail.com](mailto:website.camvillages@gmail.com)) for an invite.

**WEDNESDAY 9.30 am ZOOM HOLY COMMUNION** with Alex Jeewan and Caroline Currer.

Please contact Alex or Gillian ([website.camvillages@gmail.com](mailto:website.camvillages@gmail.com)) for an invite.

### CLOSE ENCOUNTERS (with Jesus)

John Risby's Brief Bible Study outlines continue every Wednesday: Looking at some of the people who met with Jesus - Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman at the well, the paralytic, the rich young ruler, the thief on the cross and Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.

Outlines will be sent by email each Wednesday, open to all, please book in at [john.risby179@btinternet.com](mailto:john.risby179@btinternet.com)

### SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

There is support available in all our 5 communities during the lockdown. Contact details have been circulated. Don't hesitate to get in touch with them or to encourage your neighbours to - whatever the need.

### KEEP IN TOUCH

With all that's going on via our churches' website [www.camvillages.org.uk](http://www.camvillages.org.uk) especially the variety of services available for us on Sundays; don't forget at 11.30 am on Sundays there's also

### Holy Grounds

the Cam Villages Churches virtual after service coffee and chat. If you can, watch the service online and then join us with your mug of coffee on Zoom at 11.30 am - Please contact Alex or Gillian

([website.camvillages@gmail.com](mailto:website.camvillages@gmail.com)) for an invite. We'll be able to see what the children have been up to, discuss the sermon and generally catch up.

If you need assistance to get onto Zoom please email Gillian on [Website.Camvillages@gmail.com](mailto:Website.Camvillages@gmail.com) and she will get back to you and talk you through it.

## NEWS

**PARISH OFFICE** The Parish Office is now closed to visitors but we are contactable by telephone and email as usual.

**ALL CHURCHES IN THE TEAM REMAIN CLOSED** until further notice in accordance with national guidelines.

### WEEKEND AWAY

It won't be a surprise to hear that this year's Weekend Away has been postponed. The new date is **16th-18th July 2021**. If you had booked for this year you should have heard from Sarah Nicholas. There are still places available; go to <http://stmaryssafronwalden.org/weekendaway2021> for details and how to book.

## REFLECTIONS

### A Reflection

This week we have another reading from Acts concerning the earliest days of the Christian Church. Opposition had arisen in Jerusalem and Stephen is seized and brought before the Sanhedrin on a charge of blasphemy. His martyrdom has close resemblances to Jesus' trial and death: Stephen declares to the High Priest that he will see the Son of Man at the right hand of God, just as Jesus had done; he forgives his killers and commends his spirit to the Lord Jesus, modelling Jesus' actions. Stephen is an archetypal disciple, closely following the ways of his Lord - a 'little Christ'.

The gospel reading comes immediately after the Last Supper and points us forward to the ascension, when Jesus will depart physically from his disciples, for the final time. When that occurs, Jesus promises the disciples: 'Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.' (14.12). Instead of being limited to just one body, in a small corner of the earth, Christ's Spirit will be in all his followers, resulting in there being many 'little Christs' whose work will have worldwide scope.

### Going deeper

The departing Christ for ever remains the way, the truth and the life, the model for all who would wish to follow him. He gives us his Spirit to help us love and serve him, enabling us to do the things we are incapable of doing in our own strength. But personal experience teaches us that Jesus' promise: 'If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it', is no simple mantra for success. These words need to be balanced with Jesus' instruction 'to pray always and not to lose heart' (Luke 18.1). Perhaps to truly pray 'in Jesus' name' requires some degree of Christlikeness, by that I mean being drawn into his life and love with the Father, sharing their love, their agenda and priorities. When our prayer is emptied of self and focussed only on what brings glory to God, who knows what is possible!

### I wonder...

Philip spent a long time with Jesus, yet failed to truly recognise in him. What has it taken for you to recognise

## OUR CHURCHES' DIARY

TODAY	10th May	EASTER 5
<b>SERVICES ONLINE at <a href="http://ww.camvillages.org.uk">ww.camvillages.org.uk</a></b> <b>9.30 am TEAM SERVICE on Zoom</b> with Bishop Roger <b>11.30 am HOLY GROUNDS on Zoom</b> (see page 3)		
THIS WEEK		
<b>Monday - Friday</b> 5.00 pm Evening Prayer Zoom <b>Wednesday 6th May</b> 9.30 am Holy Communion Alex Jeewan & Caroline Currer Close Encounters with Jesus John Risby via email		
NEXT SUNDAY	17th May	EASTER 6
<b>SERVICES ONLINE at <a href="http://ww.camvillages.org.uk">ww.camvillages.org.uk</a></b>		

## MINISTRY TEAM

Team Vicar: Revd Alex Jeewan 01799 531153  
email: [vicar.camvillages@gmail.com](mailto:vicar.camvillages@gmail.com)  
Revd Tim Hardingham 01799 542874  
Revd John Risby  
Revd Angela Want  
Elizabeth Marshall 01799 530265  
**Cam Villages Website:** [www.camvillages.org.uk](http://www.camvillages.org.uk)  
Team Rector: Position vacant  
Rector's Secretary:  
Email: [secretary@stmaryssafronwalden.org](mailto:secretary@stmaryssafronwalden.org)  
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