

Benefice of Goring & Streatley with South Stoke



Sunday 21st November

Christ the King

Welcome to Church

We welcome our mission partners working in Honduras, Steve and Lindsey. They are preaching at the morning services in all three churches (we let them off 8am). The service will be Zoomed from St Thomas' for those of you unable to join us in person.



They are staying for a communal lunch. Please book and come!

The Collect, the prayer for this week

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion Prayer

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may
by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This weekend:

- 8:00am** BCP Holy Communion at St Thomas'
9:30am Good News service at St Thomas' and by Zoom
11:15am Holy Communion at St Mary's
11:15am Good News service at St Andrew's
12:30pm Lunch with Steve & Lindsey Poulson in the Canterbury Room
3:00pm Wild Church meeting at the top of the Coombe
5.00pm Discoverers

To enter Zoom directly use Meeting ID: 826 6127 7602 and Passcode: 038739.

Final call to book your lunch seat today!

Sunday 21st November is Steve Poulson's birthday. He will be with us. You are invited to Lunch in the Canterbury Room after the morning services from 12.30pm. It will be a light meal of homemade soup, bread and cheeses, birthday cake, tea and coffee for only £5 a head, and afterwards Steve will give us an illustrated update about his work with the street children in Honduras. Bring friends and neighbours.

Telephone Mary Scriven on 872686 (by Friday 19th please).

Advent candles will be in our churches on Sunday

Advent Candles and cards are now available and cost £4. Orders can be taken at the office.

Afghanistan Concern

Thank you so much for all the donations of warm coats for the Afghan refugees. We have had such a wonderful response with more than 60 coats donated. This appeal is now CLOSED.

However, we are buying each of the 52 children a brand new set of pyjamas. If you would like to buy a pair please contact Ben and ask for the age, boy/girl requirements, or tell them you are happy for Lesley to shop for you and you donate the cost.

They will be wrapped on Saturday 4th Dec at 10am and delivered that day to their Christmas party. Any spare funds will be used to buy new underwear for refugees via Care4Calais.

Attention to God

Do consider joining in the daily Morning Prayer at St T or St M. A good way to listen to God and pray together. In our churches as follows:

8.30am on Mondays at St Thomas' **plus** Evening Prayer at 4:30pm

8.30am on Tuesdays and Thursdays at St Mary's

8.30am on Fridays at St Thomas' **All Welcome** one off is a start!

Or try **Bible Reading Notes** This can be helpfully done with an accompanying guide. Daily Bible reading note samples are on display in each church. Please have a look and consider ordering a set, or even as giving them as the best and most original Christmas present to someone. If you can't get to church do ask Ben to drop them round for your inspection.

8am Sunday BCP Holy Communion

Thank you for your feedback on this. We are resuming weekly services in the pattern of 1st and 3rd Sundays at St Thomas' and 2nd and 4th at St Mary's. Fifth Sundays will depend on where the United Service is.

We pray this will be a blessing to all who come.

Zoom requests for Wednesdays 10.30am. We are happy to do this, but please phone the Vicarage 875651 by 8pm on a Tuesday evening if you would like the service Zoomed. Thank you.

Friends of St Mary's Charity (Dog) Walk and Lunch

This walk (to which you are welcome with or without a dog!) will take place on Wednesday 24th November starting at 10:30am at Streatley House, off Vicarage Lane, Streatley RG8 9HY. It will be followed by a soup and rolls lunch at 12:30pm. The cost is £10 (walk and lunch) or £5 (walk only) with donations most welcome. Please contact Sarah Brownlee (sarah@brownlee-home.co.uk, 07774437044) for more information.

We pray for Bishop Steven as he starts his visits to each of our 29 deaneries, for all those he meets and for fruitful discussions as they share their experiences and reflect on what God is calling them to be and do.

We are also asked to pray for Elizabeth and Caroline Ainsworth, Ivor Wilson, Jean Dixon, Jo Moore, Jo Harvey, Clive McCann, the Gregory Family, Jenny Fay, Rose Fay and all their families.

RIP We lift to God the recently departed including Tim Osborn Jones. We pray for their families and friends.

Diary for this week:

Wednesday 24th November

10:30am Little Lights at St Mary's

10:30am BCP Holy Communion at St Thomas'

The readings will be Dan 5. 1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28 and Luke 21. 12-19.

Sunday 28th November

8:00am BCP Holy Communion at St Mary's

9:30am Holy Communion at St Thomas'

11:15am Mattins at St Mary's

11:15am Holy Communion at St Andrew's

4:00pm Advent Carol service at St Thomas'

For those who are not able to join us in church on Sunday morning it is our hope that you will be able to take time to stop, find a special place, switch off all distractions, light a candle perhaps, and join in spirit, and by God's Spirit worship and be built up together.

This is the day which the Lord has made....

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

*The Lord is here, **His Spirit is with us.***

Lord Jesus, lead us as we come before you now.

The Collect (*please see above*)

Psalm 93

1 The Lord is king and has put on glorious apparel;
the Lord has put on his glory

and girded himself with strength.

2 He has made the whole world so sure
that it cannot be moved.

3 Your throne has been established from of old;
you are from everlasting.

4 The floods have lifted up, O Lord,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their pounding waves.
5 Mightier than the thunder of many waters,
mightier than the breakers of the sea,
the Lord on high is mightier.
6 Your testimonies are very sure;
holiness adorns your house, O Lord, for ever.

Readings

Our readings on Sunday are Rev. 1: 4b-8, Ps. 93 and John 18: 33-37.

Clive Windebank has written a reflection on the reading from John:

This weekend, we celebrate “Christ The King” Sunday. It is the last Sunday in the Church calendar and there may be no better way to sum up the cycle of church events through the preceding year than to dedicate it to Christ as King. It was introduced by Pope Pius XI after the brutality of clashing Kingdoms in the First World War to make the point that true peace can only be found under the kingship of Christ as “Prince of Peace”. Other denominations rapidly adopted it.

However, nowadays, the idea of an absolute monarch is associated in our minds with an antiquated past. It may be a romantic past or it may be a tyrannical past but it certainly does not fit with contemporary ideas of equality and meritocracy. Someone having absolute authority over us because of their birth offends our individualism, our respect for democracy and human dignity. A “constitutional monarchy” such as we have in Britain is ceremonial with no real authority; it is a symbol and focus of the nation that has grown naturally out of our long history. Power resides with those we elect. They, in turn, are subject to restraints such as the rule of law and freedom of speech, so no human beings can arrogate to themselves absolute power over other human lives. We rightly disparage the extravagant cults of adulation and unquestioning obedience that dictators in some countries seek to engender.

It is utterly different with Jesus.

The world in which Pilate said to Jesus “You are a king, then” treated human kingship as completely normal. For us, the title “King” applied to Jesus denotes a completely different type of authority. When Jesus called Simon and Andrew to leave their nets and follow him, their immediate sequence of

call and response as reported by the Gospels is of crucial importance. They are reporting it like this to show the absolute and direct authority of “King” Jesus because he is “the Son of God”. Because “King” Jesus is the Christ, he has the authority to call and demand obedience to his word. “Jesus summons men to follow him, not as a teacher or a pattern of the good life, but as the Christ, the Son of God” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer).

So “King” is the right title to give Jesus: from that first calling of his first disciples to that notice above his head on the Cross “This is the King of the Jews”. The Kingdom of God, of which Jesus is King, is not a democracy. Jesus was not “elected by the people”. There is no referendum on God’s will. The majority vote is not how it works. The obedience and adulation that is absolutely wrong to give to any other human being is absolutely right to give to Jesus.

In the Lord’s Prayer, we pray: “Thy Kingdom come”, and the Gospels are full of parables that begin “the Kingdom of God is like...”. Of course, there is a vast difference between political and spiritual power, but when we become a genuine disciple of Jesus, we travel metaphorically into another Kingdom. We have crossed over a frontier into a realm where values are utterly different.

There can be no other interpretation of the numerous stark statements in St. Paul’s letters as he describes the time when you first put your faith totally in Jesus. “You died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). “We died to sin: how can we live in it any longer?” (Romans). “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20). “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17). This is colourful language, exaggerating to make the point, but it is a radical description of how “the sovereignty of self” is displaced by the absolute authority of “King” Jesus. There can be no more powerful metaphor than the contrast of life and death to describe the crossing over a frontier. These are examples of many chapters in the epistles with the same message. We still obey the laws of the land and the customs of society, but the authority that we ultimately follow is that of our King in Heaven.

This King is not dressed in purple finery, sitting on a golden throne, with a jewel encrusted crown. Instead, he is the loving servant of all, who, in his life on earth, wore a crown of thorns, hanging naked on a cross of shame and humiliation; for our sakes.

Hymn

1 Thy kingdom come, O God, Thy rule, O Christ, begin; Break with thine iron rod The tyrannies of sin.	2 Where is thy reign of peace And purity and love? When shall all hatred cease, As in the realms above?
3 When comes the promised time That war shall be no more, And lust, oppression, crime Shall flee thy face before?	4 We pray thee, Lord, arise, And come in thy great might; Revive our longing eyes, Which languish for thy sight.
5 O'er lands both near and far Thick darkness broodeth yet: Arise, O Morning Star, Arise, and never set!	

Prayers for this week

Thank you to Sally Horton for this week's prayers based on those by David Adam.

You are the King of Glory, O Christ, you are the everlasting Son of the Father. We give you our love and offer you our lives.

Come, Lord, and rule in our hearts, until your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Come, Christ our King, and reign over us, as you reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit one God for ever. **Amen**

Christ, our King, keep us calm and faithful in all troubles; let us not be afraid, for you rule over all and your kingdom will come.

Give strength and direction to all who seek to do your will, to all who strive for peace, all who work for righteousness.

Guide all who proclaim your coming and your kingdom.

And especially we pray for Steve and Lindsey Poulson, who are visiting today, for their ministry in Honduras and all who they work with there.

Lord your kingdom come in us, **as it is in heaven.**

Christ, our King, may we know you are ever present in all life, you are there at the centre of power, where decisions are made; may there be a continuation of the work started at COP 26, remembering you are with the weak and the humble whom no one notices.

We pray for all who seek justice and maintain order, for all rulers and people in authority.

Lord, your kingdom come in us, **as it is in heaven.**

Christ, our King, rule in our hearts and in our homes.
May love, peace and forgiveness be known among us;
may we seek to show we belong to you and you love us.
We pray for broken homes and broken-hearted people,
for all who have been deserted by loved ones.
Lord, your kingdom come in us, **as it is in heaven.**

Christ, our King, give hope and vision to the suffering,
let them be aware of your love and your kingdom.
Keep, O Lord, in your grasp all who are losing their grip on life,
enfold in your love all who are fearful and anxious.
We pray for the troubled in body, mind or spirit;
we remember before you all who are ill.
Lord, your kingdom come in us, **as it is in heaven.**

We give thanks that you are Lord of all, your kingdom cannot fail, death has no dominion over us.

We give thanks that your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and our loved departed ones are with you in glory.

We pray for our friends and loved ones departed.

Lord, your kingdom come in us, **as it is in heaven.**

Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen

Daily readings for the coming week

Monday am:	Ps 96	Isa. 14. 3-20	Matt. 9. 18-34	pm: Ps 80	Rev. 14. 1-13
Tuesday am:	Ps 97	Isa. ch. 17	Matt. 9.35-10.15	pm: Ps 101	Rev. 14.14-15.end
Wednesday am:	Ps 112	Isa. ch. 19	Matt. 10. 16-33	pm: Ps 122	Rev. 16. 1-11
Thursday am:	Ps 125	Isa. 21. 1-12	Matt. 10.34-11.1	pm: Ps 133	Rev. 16. 12-end
Friday am:	Ps 139	Isa. 22. 1-14	Matt. 11. 2-19	pm: Ps 146	Rev. ch. 17
Saturday am:	Ps 145	Isa. ch. 24	Matt. 11. 20-end	pm: Ps 150	Rev. ch. 18

For further information please check www.thomandmary.org.uk