

The Lighthouse



Scripture Reading: John chapter 15 verses 1–8

Bent Donkeys

Dear Friends,

We will leave the preacher today to handle the set reading or whatever is chosen, while I reflect with you that this is the weekend when this series of ‘Line of Duty’ concludes. I assume you have been watching it. So many cul-de-sacs – a fantastic script – it is so hard to keep with the plot. We are still left with the question, ‘Who is H?’ The highlight from last week, during the intense questioning of DCI Jo Davidson, was Superintendent Hasting’s throwaway comment about the ‘wee donkey’.

This got me thinking about donkeys in the Bible. Donkeys are mentioned in early Old Testament text. Abraham got up early one morning to saddle his donkey – a small act – yet one of obedience to the Lord in order to offer Isaac up to God [Genesis 22 v3]. Further early references to donkeys include Genesis 32 v5, 42 v26 and Exodus 4 v20.

The donkey is also one of the two animals that the Lord enabled to verbally speak in the Bible. The first animal was the serpent in the Garden of Eden, controlled by the Devil, which deceived Eve to disobey God. The second example of a speaking animal in the Bible is Balaam’s donkey. To find who Balaam was, and what the donkey said, please read Numbers chapter 22. May I hasten to add that I have never preached on this passage, and on reflection I cannot think of anyone else who has either!!

The donkey has two main qualities. One, it is noted for its ability to carry burdens: it is known as the ‘beast of burden’, able to carry people or equipment. The second quality of a donkey is the awareness to sense danger and to stop immediately. Whenever we see a donkey who will not move forward, rather than think how stubborn it is, remember – it is working out the best way past a problem.

So how should I conclude? We need ‘donkey quality’ as Christians. We are to share burdens. A listening ear can lift a weight of worry for someone. A problem shared is a problem halved, and never more so than with prayer.

Maybe we need to learn to stop and wait, and through scripture, prayer and fellowship discover God’s safe way forward for us.

It was a donkey that took Mary and her unborn child to Bethlehem, and a donkey that took Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. In both journeys we see humility with a purpose, and all part of fulfilling God’s will.



Working out the best way past a problem ...

With every blessing, Derek the cleric.

Hands – Face – Space – Fresh air

Ideas for prayer

- + all those affected by coronavirus, and especially countries where the virus is out of control
- + our NHS workers, care workers and care home residents
- + key workers and those who provide essential services
- + our GPs, surgeries and staff tasked with caring for us and rolling out the vaccines
- + people waiting to be called for a job and those going for their jobs
- + for co-operation among nations in dealing with the pandemic
- + our teachers and school staff
- + our collective health and welfare
- + our nation and community life; our Government and its advisors
- + for wisdom and patience as we deal with changes to our ways of life
- + our children and young people, their parents and caregivers
- + our young adults; our elderly neighbours and family members
- + our Armed Forces serving here and abroad
- + all who are worried about, or who have lost, jobs, livelihoods and businesses
- + all who are homeless
- + all who are suffering any injustice – racial, social, economic
- + anyone facing illness, hospitalisation or medical treatment
- + all who feel isolated and those who cannot be with their families
- + those who have died
- + all who make our worship services possible and all who attend online and in-person
- + all who are visiting the church via our Facebook pages
- + families bereaved at this time and those not able to use the church as they would wish to
- + for wisdom and safety in easing restrictions in the months ahead
- + hope, encouragement and peace in all circumstances

Services

9:30am each week at Dersingham Village Centre, and next week Holy Communion at 11am at St Nicholas Church, Dersingham. If you plan to attend, please remember to book in advance and to wear a face mask.

See last page for a list of all services in May.

Contact: secretary@stnicholasdersingham.org.uk

Hybrid Worship – 16th May

As I have previously shared, we are working hard behind the scenes to transition the online worship to the next stage.

Over the next two weeks we are transitioning to a hybrid form of worship, which means that the online service will be live from the church at 11am.

There will be livestreamed worship at 11am this Sunday 2nd May and Sunday 9th May as well as the pre-recorded online worship, but then, from the 16th May, worship will transition to in-person services or livestreamed.

There are some adaptations we will be making to the livestream this week, which should improve things further. Please ask Pauline for the access codes. As mentioned before, there is a lot being done behind the scenes to make this come to fruition. We continue to value your steadfast prayers for this and the Ministry here serving The Lord.

Thank you.
Rev Mark

Lighthouse News

Lighthouse takes a break this week. We'll be back on Sunday, 16th May.

Bible Readings

Sunday, 9th May – Sixth Sunday of Easter

First reading – Acts 10:44–48
Second reading – John 15:9–17

Sunday, 16th May – Sunday after Ascension Day

First reading – Acts 1:1–11
Second reading – Luke 24:44–53



We pray for all Christians in countries where they are persecuted for their faith.

ALGERIA

Population 43.3 million. 129,000 Christians

The majority of Christians in Algeria are converts from Islam. They are most at risk of persecution, not just from their family and extended family but from the wider community. This can involve harassment, beatings, threats and imprisonment, as well as pressure to adhere to Islamic customs. Those living in the rural and religiously more conservative parts of Algeria – which acted as a stronghold for Islamist insurgents in the fight against the government in the 1990s – are particularly exposed to pressure and danger.

Prayer points

- Pray that all recently closed churches will re-open, and the 2006 law regulating worship will be repealed.
- Pray that converts will be connected to a community of Christians to support and build them up.
- Pray for improved relationships between Christians and local leaders, which will inspire greater respect among communities towards Christianity.

If you'd like to know more about the situation for Christians in Algeria, do take a look at Open Doors' website and watch list: [Serving Persecuted Christians Worldwide - Algeria - Open Doors UK & Ireland](#)

A prayer for Algeria from Open Doors

Heavenly Father, grant Your people favour with the authorities and move their hearts to reopen all closed churches and repeal the 2006 law regulating worship. Strengthen Your people in the face of enormous pressure; may they stand firm, shine brightly for You, and be kept from harm. Establish and build strategic relationships between Christians and local leaders of influence, which can be used to quell the hostility that many Christians experience. Amen.

Thanks to Rev Adrian for providing these prayers for the persecuted church.

Bible Reading Rota



Now that we are having regular services again in Church, there is an opportunity for you to volunteer to read at the 11.00 am Service.

If you would like to be part of this important Ministry, could you please contact me on 01485 542244 so that I can include you on the list of readers in Church.

Thank you.
Rev Adrian

Wordsearch – The Vine and the Branches

Thanks to Carol for this week's puzzle. All the words can be found in John chapter 15 verses 1 to 8.

I	R	R	G	L	O	R	Y	I	I	D	L	W	A
D	H	N	E	A	P	A	U	E	E	I	E	R	M
R	E	H	N	S	P	P	T	R	E	S	N	S	E
N	D	N	N	O	I	A	R	I	V	C	S	A	E
I	F	I	R	O	T	G	R	I	I	E	G	T	
T	R	T	R	U	N	H	N	T	G	P	U	E	R
I	U	I	E	B	B	E	I	F	G	L	B	N	R
I	I	H	T	R	D	E	T	N	A	E	I	I	E
R	T	B	A	A	R	G	I	I	G	S	R	A	N
D	R	H	W	N	D	S	R	R	Y	N	N	M	E
D	G	G	L	C	A	S	U	I	N	R	T	E	D
R	E	N	R	H	A	P	E	N	T	S	R	R	R
N	N	M	F	G	H	I	L	R	R	T	U	R	A
I	R	I	O	S	R	E	H	T	I	W	E	I	G

NOTHING
DISCIPLES
GLORY
BRANCH
BURNED
APART
GARDENER
REMAIN
TRUE
FRUIT
WITHERS
VINE

Stopwatch: how quickly can you solve these anagrams?

REV SING
TEN AISLES
AS IF MILE
HEARS ETC
GOT MERE NUANCE

(All are words found in Ideas for Prayer on page 2. Answers, page 5.)

Ascension Day

This year Ascension Day is on Thursday, 13th May. It celebrates Jesus' ascension to heaven following the time he spent on earth ministering to his disciples after his resurrection.

The Church of England's *Common Worship* offers the following Collect for this day:

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ
to have ascended into the heavens,
so we in heart and mind may also ascend
and with him continually dwell;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Online Giving

The online giving links are a convenient way to make an offering for the church's ministry and mission. Online giving is managed by the Diocese of Norwich and all gifts will be attributed to the respective local church. Here are the links for our benefice:

St Nicholas, Dersingham –
<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=1888>

St Mary the Virgin, Anmer –
<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=1621>

St Michael and All Angels, Ingoldisthorpe –
<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=2154>

St Peter and St Paul's, Shernborne –
<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=2462>

If you prefer to give via standing order or direct debit, please contact benefice church secretary Pauline Martin, at 01485 544561 or secretary@stnicholasdersingham.org.uk, who will be able to direct you to the corresponding church treasurer. Please don't forget Gift Aid, as this means we can claim the tax back from HMRC where appropriate.

Hopefully, these options for giving will make it easier and more convenient for us to support the work of God's church.

Thank you for your support.

With my prayers,
Rev Mark

We give thanks for:

- + the beauty of springtime and God's creation
- + God's grace, love and forgiveness and his help for our lives
- + our church community, our families and friendships
- + progress being made in understanding and treating the coronavirus
- + the successful uptake of vaccines across our nation
- + our scientists, medics and care workers
- + our teachers, key workers and all people providing essential services
- + the arts, music and creativity
- + acts of kindness, courage and selflessness
- + the comfort and reassurance of the Holy Spirit
- + that we can take our concerns to Jesus in prayer

Vacancy: Diocesan Papua New Guinea Link Group

The Diocesan Papua New Guinea Link Group is keen to recruit a new member(s) to join this enthusiastic and proactive team that promotes linked activities between the Diocese of Norwich and the Anglican Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG).

This link has existed since the Reverend David Hand, who was born, grew up and ordained in Norwich Diocese, became the first Anglican Archbishop of PNG in 1946.

Link activities include visits and pilgrimages from Norwich Diocese to PNG and hosting brothers and sisters from PNG visiting here. In even-numbered years the Norwich Diocesan Lent Project is also usually focussed on this link and we have in recent years supported projects to provide classrooms for a school in Port Moresby Diocese, ministry resources for ordinands at Newton Theological College in Popondetta Diocese and, most recently, a 4x4 vehicle to enable transport around Dogura Diocese.

The Link Group usually meets three or four times a year and is particularly keen to recruit new lay members.

Further details can be obtained from:

Reverend Phil Charlesworth
Executive Officer and Acting Chair, PNG Link Group
Mobile: 07545 968435
Email: revdphilcharlesworth@gmail.com

Anagrams:

*servicing, essential, families,
teachers, encouragement*

With help from: anagrammaker.com

Services in May

2nd May

9:30 The Gathering Contemporary Worship at Dersingham Village Centre

11:00 Traditional Worship – Holy Communion at St Nicholas Dersingham

9th May

9:30 The Gathering Contemporary Worship at Dersingham Village Centre

11:00 Traditional Worship – Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion at St Nicholas Dersingham

16th May

9:30 Holy Communion at The Gathering Contemporary Worship – Dersingham Village Centre

11:00 Traditional Worship – Morning Prayer at St Nicholas Dersingham

23rd May

9:30 The Gathering Contemporary Worship at Dersingham Village Centre

11:00 At St Michael and All Angels Ingoldisthorpe – Traditional Worship – Holy Communion

30th May

9:30 The Gathering Contemporary Worship at Dersingham Village Centre

11:00 Traditional Worship – Holy Communion at St Nicholas Dersingham

*This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit,
showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

– John 15:8



www.stnicholasdersingham.org.uk
dersinghamonlineworship.com

