

ST DENYS CORONACLE

April 2021



BIBLE TEXT

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures forever... this is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118.1, 24

EASTER MESSAGE

by The Rev'd Philip Johnson, Vicar of Sleaford

The past twelve months may have felt like the longest Lent ever. If we think of Lent in terms of giving something up, then how do we begin to enumerate everything that has been given up over the past year? With the festival of Easter we are beginning to see (once again) a lessening of the restrictions placed on our lives by the pandemic. Yet we know that the national, not to mention global situation, is still fragile. Many of us have now received the first dose of a vaccine and hopes of a return to normality are beginning to grow, but we are aware of new variants emerging and fresh outbreaks in some European countries. Last year I celebrated the Easter Eucharist in my domestic chapel (also known as the corner of the sitting room!) and a pheasant wandering through the garden stole the show. More people commented on the pheasant than on anything else in the service. This year we will be in church: socially distanced bell-ringers will be ringing some of our bells to herald the feast; the choir will be able to sing for the first time since Christmas. One of the joys of Easter is being able to sing the Gloria again, as it is never sung (or said) in Lent... congregational singing might still not be permitted but there is some greater freedom in what we can do.

At the heart of the Easter message is the idea of new life and new hope rising for the depths of pain, sorrow, and suffering. But that new life was not the same as it had been. A transformation has taken place. Although Jesus appeared to the disciples on a few occasions before his ascension their life was radically different. When I teach curates about funeral ministry and bereavement, I always say that the cliché 'You'll get over it' is fundamentally flawed. We don't get over a loss or bereavement, we come to terms with it, we learn to live with it. We might well have a rich and fulfilling life after a loss or bereavement, but we do so because of this transformation that takes place – new life and hope rising from the depths of pain and sorrow. There has been much that has been lost over the past twelve months. For many it has been painful and difficult. Life cannot, and will not, be the same – a transformation has occurred. The psalm for Easter Day reminds to 'give thanks to the Lord for he is good'... that God made this day for us to be glad in. It is a psalm that refocuses our attention on to all that God has done for us. We might read it as encouraging us to think about the positive things in our lives rather than the negative, and that is a good way to read it. But I would want to go a bit further... when we are laid low with grief and sorrow... feeling isolated, lonely, unloved... we can take comfort from the knowledge that God loves us so much that he gave us his son, who endured the pain of crucifixion that we might have hope in the power of his transforming love through the joy of the resurrection. This is what he has done for us and this is why we give thanks and rejoice. *Fr Philip*

PRAYER

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen

CHURCH WORSHIP

Public worship continues at 10am every Sunday. with a said communion service.

The church will also be open for private prayer every Wednesday, 10am - 12pm. Stewards will be in attendance.

BIBLE READINGS

Easter Day

Acts 10.34-43; Psalm 118
1 Corinthians 15. 1-11; Mark 16.1-8

11th April: 2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 4.32-35, Psalm 133
1 John 1.1-2.2; John 20.19-31

18th April: 3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 3.12-19, Psalm 4
1 John 3.1-7; Luke 24.36-48

25th April: 4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 4.5-12; Psalm 23
1 John 3.16-end, John 10.11-18

2nd May: 5th Sunday of Easter

Acts 8.26-end, Psalm 22
1 John 4.7-end, John 15.1-18

EMBRACE THE MIDDLE EAST

Thank you to all who took Lent Boxes and gave me donations. Please can I remind you that the boxes are due back on Easter Sunday or as soon after as possible. I can collect these from anyone unable to bring them. My number is 01529 304581.

Minyon

THY KINGDOM COME

To cover the period between Ascension and Pentecost we have ordered copies of the Prayer Journal by the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell. They will be available from the back of church from the beginning of May.



CELEBRATE EARTH DAY 2021

BY JOINING US ONLINE FOR A SCREENING OF THE FILM **2040**
ON THURSDAY APRIL 22ND 2021 AT 7.00PM

Now, more than ever, we need positive voices in the ecological crisis. Join us to see director Damon Gameau's 'exercise in fact-based dreaming', **2040**.

Using only the solutions that are available to us today Damon envisions a positive future for our children and planet. The film takes a solutions-based approach to how, using the technology we already have, we can mitigate the enormous global issues we currently face. The main themes/solutions looked at in the film are around:

- ◆ empowerment of women and girls;
- ◆ marine regeneration;
- ◆ regenerative agriculture;
- ◆ renewable energy;
- ◆ and circular economy.

It's a story of hope, and a powerful tool to encourage people to take action. You can watch the [trailer here](#).

Book your FREE tickets [here](#)

This showing is arranged by Global Sleaford with support from Sleaford Climate Action Network and the Faith & the Environment Lincolnshire Group

William Alvey School

Bishop's Visitor update



This week as the children begin their Easter holiday, marks eight years of my involvement with the school as Bishop's Visitor since 2013, a few months before the arrival of Stephen as Head Teacher and Philip as our Vicar. However, this last year has been like none of the others and I have very much missed my normal visits and contacts with everything being “virtual”, as we have learned to call it. I do hope I will be able to visit and see them all again soon.

There has been much in the local press recently of the on-going efforts to restore the WW2 air-raid shelter in the school grounds as a museum and learning resource for the children. Also, more recently the efforts to raise the funds to acquire the WW1 war medals of Charles William Penson, who attended the school, and those of his father, James Ambrose Penson. Charles's name is one of those names on the school's war memorial list as he was in the Royal Naval Air service which later became the Royal Air Force. He was killed in what became known as the R38 Airship Disaster near Hull, aged 23. His grave is in Sleaford Cemetery. His father returned to Sleaford and died in 1928, aged 51, seven years after his son's death. The family lived in Westgate.

The school launched an appeal to raise £800 to buy the medals and with the magnificent support of parents, grandparents, staff, friends, Old Alveyans, local businesses and associations, as of last week the total was approaching nearly £1000. The extra will provide a secure display cabinet for the medals. The medals have now arrived and the Head brought them to show me (on my drive) last week! More publicity was given to the appeal on Radio Lincs when a teacher and some children were interviewed about the story. This year marks 100 years since the Airship Disaster and there is to be a service in Hull Minster on 22nd August at which it is hoped the school will be represented. It is hoped there might also be a service in Sleaford too. Watch this space.

Bishop Nicholas has sent his virtual Easter Letter to the church schools of the Diocese and the Bishop's Visitors also received it. You can watch it on the school's online newsletter, the Wasp, if you are able.

I wish all at the school a very Happy Easter and a safe return next term.
Beryl Risdell

“Are We Being Watched?”

by Douglas Hoare

Are Edward III and Queen Philippa keeping an eye on us? How about the man with his legs over his head? And there are a lion and a pig, and even a skull and crossbones! Even worse is a fat face with an open mouth!

On the outside of St. Denys's, above the windows of the nave, from above the eastern-most window of the south aisle's south wall, past the tower and on to the north side, runs the frieze which, if one accepts a conjectural date of about 1370, is a superb example of medieval sculpture which manages still to survive the ravages of time, weather and air-pollution. The innumerable people who pass by the church probably pay very little attention to it, but, even since St. Denys's mainly remains closed, the frieze is something which we can view, admire and, indeed, enjoy.

Other subjects depicted include crossed oak(?)-twigs, more animal faces, and a variety of botanical carvings. St. Andrew's, Heckington, boasts its own frieze - but [I venture to say!], our carvings are larger and better!

Next time you're passing the church, have a gleg upwards and appreciate the frieze for yourself.

P.S. Once the church is open again, enjoy the medieval sculpture in the nave, not least the fellow over the pulpit pulling a face!

Past, Present and Future

by David Birks

It's remarkable that before European incursions inflicted cultural supremacy over the American Navajo and Australian ethnic peoples, both of these societies regarded (and still hold) that our concept of time is totally alien! For instance, the Aussie aboriginal language abhors past and future tenses altogether. They maintain that comprehensive reality can't be restricted within such 'narrow' boundaries. Of course *historically* we regard it as 'common sense' that concluded events lie firmly in the past, whilst all those yet to come are future matters. Our 'puritan' forefathers firmly promulgating it through the republican era and nascent disciplines of science were still quite certain of it! But were they correct? Many certainties are only assumed as valid within their period and Heisenberg's acknowledged and relatively modern uncertainty principle might now argue against.

Those heritage peoples even now believe that time immemorial exists wholly in the present tense. They hold it to be 'eternally now'; therefore completed as well as future events are pronounced equally as: '*present now, but not physically perceptible, apart from their saved energies*' (energy conservation principle). In short: '**present now, but not discernibly here**'. They call the latter status the 'dreamtime'. This accords with contemporary perceptions as embraced by Einstein and subsequently Quantum Science'. It also coincides with the Orthodox Church's teaching: that whilst we will never apprehend the very essence of God, yet even so we can experience His energies. Therefore by way of those, Our Lord is presenting now. We symbolise this in our religious mass, but won't ever physically see Him there. By allied token, Jesus together with angels and ancestral legions (both known and unknown individuals) co-exist or actively subsist with us in wider (but invisible) reality, this via surviving energies (plus those yet to come within the 'dreamtime'); yet physically they're not regularly discernible.

It's implied that Heaven and Hell aren't situated elsewhere, they're located within the expansive but generally unobservable part of this world's overall reality and it's a feature of their interacting energies which possibly through some awareness, may when judged useful contribute to current circumstances.

It follows therefore that throughout the universe, any totally alien cultures could likely have particular equivalents, but these would probably differ drastically from what we might dub acceptable.

You may fundamentally disagree with much of the foregoing, but it remains a worthwhile matter for contemplation!

SLEAFORD PARISH OFFICE

Sleaford Parish Office will re-open to the public from 12th April on Mondays and Fridays. 9am until 11am.

The Parish Administrator will be working from home at other times and may be contacted by email as below or 01529 488409 (home - office hours only please).

These are Mon-Fri 9am - 12pm.

Note: The Parish Administrator will be on leave the week commencing 5th April. For all enquiries that week, Brenda will be standing in. Please contact the Parish Office (01529 413607) between 9am and 11am or email office.stdenys1@btconnect.com.

LIVESTREAMED / ONLINE SERVICES

To view, either follow the link from the church website www.sleafordparishchurch.co.uk, A Church Near You or search YouTube for Sleaford Parish Church

Alternatively, Daily HOPE is a **free phonenumber** of hymns, reflections and prayers. Ring: 0800 804 8044

FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

The next Coronacle will be published on
7th May 2021

Sleaford Parish Office
01529 413607 / office.stdenys1@btconnect.com

www.sleafordparishchurch.co.uk
Rev'd Philip Johnson - 01529 304348
Twitter: Sleaford Vicar @ VicarSleaford
Facebook: Sleaford Parish Church