



## **St Martin of Tours Chelsfield**

*St Martin's worships and serves a loving God,  
reaching out to the community in the name of Jesus Christ.*

**Sunday 2 May 2021**

**THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

As we give thanks for Revd John's ministry with us over the past seven years, we wish him and Janet a smooth transition to the next phase of their lives and all health and happiness in their Shropshire home.

We will see them once more on 4 July for their official farewell celebration, when John, at Revd Susan's invitation, will preside and preach at Family Communion.

We also pray for Revd Susan as she prepares to lead our new benefice.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who prayed for your disciples that they might be one, even as you are one with the Father, draw us to yourself, that in common love and obedience to you we in this benefice may be united to one another, in the fellowship of the one Spirit, that the world may believe that you are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

(Archbishop William Temple, adapted)

*You are invited to spend a quiet time with these prayers,  
readings and reflection.*

*Prayers for the week*

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, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

[The Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Easter]

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

[Post Communion for the Fifth Sunday of Easter]

## **Philip and James, Apostles**

1 May

Almighty Father, whom truly to know is eternal life: teach us to know your Son Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, and the life; that we may follow the steps of your holy apostles Philip and James, and walk steadfastly in the way that leads to your glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

*Today's psalm and readings*

*Psalm 22:25-end*

*Praise to the Lord*

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;  
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.  
May your hearts live for ever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember  
and turn to the Lord;  
and all the families of the nations  
shall worship before him.  
For dominion belongs to the Lord,  
and he rules over the nations.

To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow  
down;

before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,  
and I shall live for him.

Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord,  
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying that he has done it.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

## *The Acts of the Apostles 8:26-end*

### *Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch*

<sup>26</sup> Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) <sup>27</sup> So he got up and went.

Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup> and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' <sup>30</sup> So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' <sup>31</sup> He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup> In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth.'

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?'

<sup>35</sup> Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup> As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' <sup>38</sup> He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. <sup>40</sup> But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

## *The First Letter of John 4:7-end*

### *God Is Love*

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. <sup>15</sup> God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. <sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup> The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

*The Gospel according to John 15:1-8*

*Jesus the True Vine*

Jesus said:

<sup>1</sup> 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. <sup>2</sup> He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

*Prayers for all those affected by coronavirus*

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy.  
Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
Amen.

God of compassion,  
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross,  
but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*A family prayer*

Loving God, you know us and all that we are facing.  
We thank you that we can come to you as we are – with  
all our fears and concerns, our difficulties and challenges.  
Please draw close to each of us and those we remember  
before you now.  
Bring to us your peace and comfort.  
And fill us with your Spirit that we may be bearers of your  
grace and hope to others.  
As a country protect us, encourage us and keep us. In  
the name of your Son Jesus, we pray.  
Amen.

### ***Scriptural Comfort***

**'Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand'**

***(Isaiah 41:10)***

**'Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'**

***(Philippians 4:6,7)***

**'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.'**

***(John 3:16)***

***As we do not know how long this situation will last it is important that we look out for one another.***

***Please let Revd Susan know of anyone who is ill or in distress.***

***Or if you need prayer or spiritual support,  
or are lonely and just need a short chat please phone***

Revd Susan Atkinson-Jones  
01689 857763 revsus@smasch.org

## **Services at St Martin's**

**Sundays: Family Communion at 10.00am**

**Wednesdays: Holy Communion (BCP) at 9.30am**

If you are attending a service at St.Martin's we do need to continue to be vigilant and to observe the following guidelines to ensure Covid safety.

- **DO NOT COME TO CHURCH** - if you have any symptoms, are shielding, or are worried about your health and safety.
- **DO NOT FEEL YOU HAVE TO ATTEND** – On-line worship, watching on TV, or listening to a radio broadcast is perfectly acceptable as 'church attendance' during this crisis.
- Ensure you bring a **FACE MASK** to church with you, and wear it throughout the service and in the churchyard and car park.
- Maintain a 2m minimum spacing and follow the instructions on the board in the porch and the directions of our service stewards. We've now changed the seating plan so that there is an empty pew between each occupied pew. Whilst this reduces capacity, it increases distancing for our safety.
- Though restrictions on meetings are being eased please **DO NOT socialise** in Church.
- Do not arrive too early, and leave as soon as you can after the service is over.
- In the Churchyard and car park please take care to observe guidelines to maintain safe distances and size of groups, and have a regard for the needs of others.
- The Churchyard Car Park gates will remain open for those attending services or visiting graves from 9.00am - 5.00pm Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Please contact the Rector if you require special access at any other times.

Worship from St Martin's continues to be available online:

- A recording of the Sunday service
- Daily prayer on Facebook at 8.15am on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Please let Revd Susan know of any urgent prayer requests or of people in particular need.

**Please note that to accommodate pastoral offices or with any changes to Diocesan or Government guidelines these arrangements are subject to change at any time.**

For more information on St Martin's please visit our web site and Facebook page:

[www.stmartinchelsfield.org.uk](http://www.stmartinchelsfield.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/ChelsfieldStMartins](https://www.facebook.com/ChelsfieldStMartins)

## Online links and resources

**Daily HOPE** is a national, free phonenumber from the Church of England on **0800 804 8044**.

The line is available 24 hours a day and offers music, prayers and reflections, as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone.

For today's online Sunday service from the Church of England visit:

[www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online)

Prayer for the nation:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/call-prayer-nation>

For other Church of England resources please visit:

[www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources)

## Acknowledgements

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