

## Dates for your diary

5<sup>th</sup> Thursday 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

8<sup>th</sup> Second Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

12<sup>th</sup> Thursday 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

14<sup>th</sup> 10am Joint Vestries meeting in Hall.

15<sup>th</sup> Third Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

19<sup>th</sup> Thursday 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

22<sup>nd</sup> Fourth Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

26<sup>th</sup> Thursday 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

29<sup>th</sup> Fifth Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion at St. John's.

Richard Gillings 01479 831365

Jenny Jones 01540 673532

Alison Hart 01479 841614

Tony Sparham 01479 481151

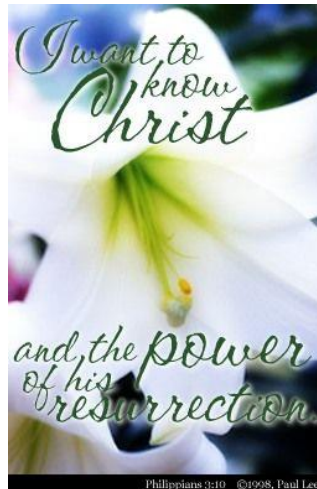
### Advance Notice

Thy Kingdom Come –

The Archbishop of Canterbury's  
prayer initiative  
is taking place from 10<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>

May.

More details later.



## April 2018

*From the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby:*

‘Prayer is one of the most intimate and beautiful activities in which human beings can engage, whether alone or with others.



We are changed, and the world is changed, as God allows us, through prayer, to share in his making of the world. We are his partners in making the world, in prayer.

Jean Vanier, who founded the L'Arche communities, said: “To pray is essentially to come to Jesus and to drink.”

Prayer begins with an encounter with a person: an opening of ourselves to be with the person who is three persons in one: God, who comes to be with us, through Jesus by his Spirit, and being with us changes us.

Too often, in the way that we all talk of prayer, and especially in the way we teach about prayer, we become mechanical and manipulative. It's as though there is a technique that makes a difference: press the buttons in the right order and everything will work.

But just as we can't manoeuvre our way into friendships, it's the same with prayer. Prayer has at its centre a relationship with God in Jesus Christ. We are not praying to placate or please God: we're praying to relish and rejoice in Him. Relationships are not built on process, but on partnerships. Prayer is about sharing every part of yourself and your life with God.

So the good news, in one sense, is that you don't have to do something to get there. God doesn't say, 'press these buttons in the right order' and live a suitably good life. He just says, 'come and be with me'. It's an invitation.

Partnership with Jesus Christ in prayer is risky because it's deeply costly. When we accept the invitation of Jesus to be with him, it will mean putting ourselves in places that are tough. Pushing ourselves to limits that are very demanding. So prayer is apparently, looking at it from outside, a fearful thing, and deeply risky.

The reality, of course, is that the risk is nothing: it's a zero. To cast yourself into the hands of one who loves you immeasurably and perfectly is fairly obviously not much of a risk. Not to do so is really the risk. But it feels like a risk because in prayer that is a partnership with God, everything is on the table – we hold nothing back.



There has never been a renewal of the spiritual life of the church – which means all Christians, you and me – without a renewal of prayer. That's why I've made it the highest priority of my ministry.'

*(Abridged from the Church of England website)*

**Lord, teach me to pray .....**

## what's happening

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 7.30pm**

**Discovering New Hymns**

at Stuart and Cathy's home – Ochilbrae.

A warm welcome to all. Hymn books provided!

Please come so that we can extend our repertoire of hymns at St. John's

**Joint Vestries Meeting**

St. John's and St. Columba's

**Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> 10am – 12.30am**

**St. John's Hall**

**An opportunity for general discussion on matters of common interest. Canon Tony Sparham will also talk on Lay Ministry Teams**

**The Bishop's Lent Appeal**

**The 'Barefoot College.'**

This is a charity which works in 1300 villages in more than 70 countries. It connects rural communities and enables them to access solar power, clean water, education etc. Please put donations in an envelope marked 'Lent Appeal' and place in the offertory plate before the end of April. Many thanks. Check its website for lots more detail:

[www.barefootcollege.org](http://www.barefootcollege.org)