

**Christ the King,
Sunday, 22nd November 2020**



***'This is my commandment, that you love one another,
as I have loved you.'***

***'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down
his life for his friends.'***

***'You are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command
you.'***

(John 15: 12-14)

Dear All,

Having 'persuaded' Revd Jax to take the annual leave, which has been booked in her diary for this week from the beginning of the year – and having run off with her laptop to ensure she doesn't 'cheat' on herself! – I have asked Colin Sheath to allow me to use his Reflection prepared for Tuesday's Benefice Morning Prayer Zoom service in lieu of Revd Jax' regular letter, to which he has very kindly agreed.

Duty Called

“On the 11th of November we remembered the unknown warrior and the many who gave up their today for our tomorrow and under normal times many would have gathered around the Cenotaph as part of our national remembrance, recognising what so many did and what so many gave up in the defence of what was held so dear.

The commemoration to the unknown soldier is one most will recognise and what they gave up and why they were proud to do what was needed at the time to protect what was so dear to them.

Many named and unnamed felt that Duty called, they did their duty and its clear so many were prepared to do whatever it took for them to be part of the core of our nation and they did what was asked and what was expected of them.

So, as we think of what so many have done and what so many have given up, let us think of the words of Jesus, “Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends”.

Today we are in unknown territory fighting a foe that is threatening our Nation and the World, this Pandemic of Covid 19 means that we are all called to do what is asked of us for the greater good, we are asked to give up things and to make sacrifices.

So, like all those we remembered on the 11th it's worth thinking about the fact that just as then, today we are being asked to do our duty.

The soldier Captain Noel Chavasse, awarded the double Victoria Cross, who died in the Great War, sent a message to his fiancée from his death bed saying 'duty called and called me to obey'.

So, having paused to think of the unknown soldier may we reflect on the crisis that is our today and think about what the call of duty means for us.

It's not what happens that counts it's the way we respond to what happens that counts.

So how we respond to this Pandemic and this second lockdown may well determine the outcome and the way we are remembered."

Colin Sheath.



'A New Normal' by Lilian Darmono

Psalm 46

- 1** God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
- 2** Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
- 3** though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
- 4** There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
- 5** God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
- 6** Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
- 7** The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
- 8** Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
- 9** He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
- 10** He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
- 11** The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Schedule of Services

All previously scheduled services are cancelled until further notice.

Churches Open for Private Prayer

Whilst Government guidelines prohibit our holding Sunday services during this Autumn Lockdown, our churches are currently allowed to be open for individual prayer at the following times:

St Mary the Less, Chilbolton	9am – 4pm, Sundays
St Mary's, Crawley	10am – 4pm, Weds & Sundays
St Catherine's, Littleton	10am-4pm, Weds & Saturdays
St Stephen's, Sparsholt	10am-4pm, Weds & Sundays
St Peter & Holy Cross, Wherwell	10am-4pm, Sundays

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued a call for a **Month of Prayer** in response to the Lockdown, and across the diocese we will be answering their call to pray for our nation and to serve our communities. You can find resources and information about the diocesan response to the call for prayer on our Benefice website.

Please also see our website for updates and more prayer and service resources at: <http://downsbenefice.org/>



Collect Prayer for Christ the King

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.



'Christ The King' Painting, by Mary Fuhrmann

This was a common idea in medieval times. Known as "Christ in Majesty," it was often found on portals of Cathedrals, stained glass windows and in paintings such as the Book of Kells. In 1925 the idea became a feast day known as "Christ the King."

The close of the church year shows Christ the King dressed in royal purple, hand held in the gesture of teacher and as the fulfilment of the Law. He is enthroned over a rainbow, symbol of the old covenant, and the world is His footstool.

Christ is surrounded by the four canonical gospels symbolized by four living creatures that surround God's throne as described in Ezekiel 1: 1-15 and Revelation 4:7.

- Matthew: a winged man; starts with the genealogy of Jesus and His participation in humanity;
- Mark: a winged lion; starts with John the Baptist crying in the wilderness pointing to Christ as courageous and royal;
- Luke: a winged ox or bull; a figure of sacrifice, bearer of burdens, service and strength;
- John: eagle; soaring, mystical, connected more with the Ascension and heaven.

The bottom scene depicts the Last Judgment. The King is also a shepherd/ King of mercy and love. Each of us is irreplaceable and non-transferable. The door to faith is open to join the sheep.

Matthew 25:31-end - The Judgement of the Nations

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you

welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, ^[a] you did it to me.' ⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."