

The Parish of Forton, Saint John the Evangelist

# SOFA SPIRITUALITY

Issue 13: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Following the guidelines from the Government and the Church of England,  
St John's Church building is closed until further notice.

But the Church - the community of the faithful - is still very much alive!

Please do continue to pray in your own home  
for the local community, the country and the world.

If you can, please use the Sunday Worship prayers at 10:00 am.

If you have internet access, you'll find livestreams on our Facebook page @fortonchurch.

You do not need to have a Facebook account to access it.

The videos will also be uploaded to our YouTube channel (Forton Church)  
and our website [www.fortonchurch.org](http://www.fortonchurch.org) shortly afterwards.

If you need anything at all, especially if you are self-isolating or ill,  
please do get in touch by:

Text, Call or WhatsApp: 07866 703 378

Email: [fortonchurch@gmail.com](mailto:fortonchurch@gmail.com)

Message via the website: [www.fortonchurch.org](http://www.fortonchurch.org)

Post: The Vicarage, 10 Spring Garden Lane, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 1HY  
(all these methods are confidential, and will only be seen by Mother Carrie)

*Dear Friends,*

*In this week's Gospel, Jesus says that the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. I don't think this supposed to be a comment on the British fruit-picking fiasco!*

*Elsewhere, the Bible tells us that the fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control. Now, that's a harvest worth gathering.*

*How could you work to grow and harvest those qualities in your own life, and in the life of your family and community?*

*Remember: Jesus says that the harvest is already plentiful. It's up to us to commit to be workers for Christ, finding and gathering the fruits which God has already grown.*

*Mother Carrie*

## ST JOHN'S CHURCH BUILDING

You may have seen in the news that places of worship are now open for individual prayer. Unfortunately, this is not quite as simple as the headlines would suggest!

The measures for infection control are (rightly) very stringent, and churches are only able to open if they can meet those conditions.

Like many other churches in the area, we are not currently able to do that, so the Church will remain closed for now.

### Keyholders:

I know it's tempting to pop in, but it is extremely important that you do not enter the building. This will help everyone get back in sooner.

Thank you for your understanding.

# The Parish of Forton, Saint John the Evangelist

## PASTORAL REORGANISATION

Dear Friends,

As you know, the Pastoral Scheme comes into effect on 13<sup>th</sup> July, at which point Forton will cease to be a Parish, and the area will become part of a new benefice encompassing the current Parishes of Forton, Gosport Christchurch and Gosport Holy Trinity. I am now able to share with you some more details with regard to the structure and staffing of the new benefice:

- The Team Rector will be The Revd. Alex Wood, who is the Priest in charge of Harbour Church, a large Evangelical church plant in the city of Portsmouth. Fr Alex will take on the Gosport benefice as an “oversight role” while remaining in his current role at Harbour Church.
- There will be two stipendiary Team Vicars: a “Church Growth Anglo-Catholic Traditional Team Vicar” based at Holy Trinity, and a “Church Planting Team Vicar” based at Christchurch. The Bishop has someone in mind to fill the Church Planting role, a Priest who comes from the same network which planted Harbour Church. He will be appointed as an Interim Minister from September, with the intention of interviewing for the permanent role in due course.
- There are no plans to provide a Priest or lay minister at Forton, either for the existing Church community or for the proposed new mission initiatives. At some point in the future it is hoped to appoint a lay “pioneer worker” (community worker or similar) to be based at Forton, plus an operations manager to work across the whole Benefice.

Those of you who have been following this process for the last 2 years will see this is a far cry from what was discussed between the Forton reps and the Diocese during the negotiations. Those agreements included: to make St John’s Church an Extra-Parochial Place; to provide a Bishop’s Mission Order for Forton’s ministry to young adults across the whole town of Gosport; to employ a Pioneer Minister based at Forton; and to support the existing congregations here, including the provision of Sunday services and the preservation of our inclusive Anglo-Catholic tradition. We took those agreements from the Diocese on good faith, and I am baffled and extremely saddened to discover that they will now not be honoured.

As you will recall, there were also indications of a substantial funding injection for Forton to redevelop the church hall into a community café, with a particular emphasis on young adults. There has been no mention of these plans in recent weeks, so I cannot confirm whether or not they will be going ahead.

My role as Vicar of Forton comes to an end when the new Scheme is made, i.e 13<sup>th</sup> July. You may be aware that in Elson, where a Scheme has already been made, special provision has been made for Mother Karen to stay on during the lockdown to provide ministry during these unusual circumstances. There was some indication that a similar arrangement might be applied to me at Forton; but, despite repeated requests, the Diocese seems unwilling to discuss this. It therefore seems likely that my final Sunday here will be 12<sup>th</sup> July. After this date, sadly, there is no provision being made for Sunday or weekday services at Forton, either in the church or online. At this point, it is uncertain whether regular services will ever resume at Forton.

*(continued on next page)*

# The Parish of Forton, Saint John the Evangelist

## PASTORAL REORGANISATION

*(continued)*

This is, of course, not the outcome we wanted or were led to expect, and I know it will provoke much pain, grief and anger. Throughout this process, I have always tried my hardest to fight for Forton, and done what I thought was best to ensure the survival and protection of our community. I am sorry that I have failed you. I love this Parish and its people very deeply, and it is immensely painful to be leaving under these circumstances.

It is uncertain at present whether Church buildings will be open for corporate worship by 12<sup>th</sup> July. Even if they are, those of you who are over 70 or are medically vulnerable would be advised not to attend. It would go against everything we believe in Forton to hold a service from which some of our community would be excluded, and it is therefore likely that we won't be able to meet for worship in Church before the Scheme comes into effect. Depending on the lockdown restrictions (and the weather!), we may try to organise some sort of outdoor gathering on the afternoon of 12<sup>th</sup> July. Do keep the date free, and I will let you know more details when I can.

In the meantime: I know everything looks bleak right now, and you will be worried for the future. I can't offer much in the way of practical reassurance, but I can tell you that God is faithful. Even through the darkest times, God will never leave you or forsake you. So, keep hoping, keep praying, keep loving one another, and keep the faith.

*Mother Carrie*

## THIS WEEK ON TV AND RADIO

### WORSHIP ON THE TV

Sunday Worship  
BBC1, Sunday at 10:45 am  
*A service of hymns and readings  
from Holy Trinity Platt Church, Manchester*

Songs of Praise  
BBC1, Sunday at 1:15 pm  
*exploring worship in the great outdoors*

### WORSHIP ON THE RADIO

Tim Daykin  
(religious music and discussion)  
BBC Radio Solent, Sundays 6:00 - 9:00 am

Sunday Worship  
BBC Radio 4, Sundays at 8:10 am

Daily Service  
BBC Radio 4, every morning at 9:45 am

Choral Evensong  
BBC Radio 3, Wednesdays at 3:30 pm,  
repeated Sundays at 3:00 pm



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

This phone line from the Church of England  
offers recorded prayers and hymns,  
plus daily prayers.

You can choose what you want to listen to  
by pushing the buttons on your phone.

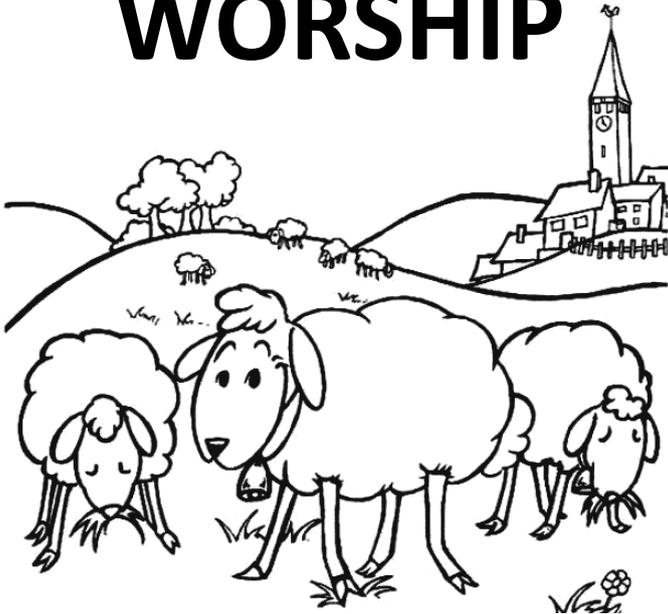
You might find it particularly useful  
if you don't have internet access.

It's free to call,  
and available 24 hours a day.

Why not give it a try?

*The First Sunday after Trinity*  
*The Thirteenth Sunday in Coronatide*

# SUNDAY WORSHIP



## GREETING

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:  
**And blessed be God's Kingdom forever.**  
Amen

## COLLECT

O God,  
the strength of all those  
who put their trust in you,  
mercifully accept our prayers  
and, because through the weakness  
of our mortal nature  
we can do no good thing without you,  
grant us the help of your grace,  
that in the keeping of your commandments  
we may please you both in will and deed;  
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 forever. **Amen**

## HYMN



1. All people that on earth do dwell,  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.  
Him serve with fear, his praise forthtell;  
Come ye before him and rejoice!
2. The Lord, ye know, is God indeed,  
Without our aid he did us make;  
We are his folk, he doth us feed,  
And for his sheep he doth us take.
3. O enter then his gates with praise,  
Approach with joy his courts unto.  
Praise, laud and bless his Name always,  
For it is seemly so to do.
4. For why? the Lord our God is good:  
His mercy is forever sure;  
His truth at all times firmly stood,  
And shall from age to age endure.
5. To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
The God whom heaven and earth adore,  
From men and from the Angel-host,  
Be praise and glory evermore. Amen

*ALL PEOPLE THAT ON EARTH DO DWELL:*  
*William Kethe (based on Psalm 100)*  
*Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH,*  
*Genevan Psalter, attr. Louis Bourgeois*

## SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus went about all the cities and villages,  
teaching in their synagogues,  
and proclaiming the good news  
of the Kingdom,  
and curing every disease  
and every sickness.

When he saw the crowds,  
he had compassion for them,  
because they were harassed and helpless,  
like sheep without a shepherd.

Then he said to his disciples,  
'The harvest is plentiful,  
but the workers are few;  
therefore ask the Lord of the harvest  
to send out workers into his harvest.'

This is the word of the Lord:

**Thanks be to God**

### PRAYERS



1

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;  
He makes me lie in pastures green;  
He leads me by the still, still waters;  
His goodness restores my soul.  
*And I will trust in you alone,  
And I will trust in you alone,  
For your endless mercy follows me,  
Your goodness will lead me home.*

2

He guides my way in righteousness,  
And he anoints my head with oil;  
And my cup, it overflows with joy,  
I feast on his pure delights.  
*And I will trust in you alone ...*

3

And though I walk the darkest path,  
I will not fear the evil one,  
For you are with me, and your rod and staff  
Are the comfort I need to know.  
*And I will trust in you alone ...*

*Stuart Townend, based on Psalm 23*

*Tune: Stuart Townend*

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father,  
who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name.  
Thy Kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen**

### THE PEACE

We are all one in Christ Jesus.  
We belong to him through faith,  
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

### THE BLESSING

Christ the good shepherd,  
who laid down his life for the sheep,  
draw you and all who hear his voice,  
to be one flock within one fold;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you  
and all those you love  
and for whom you pray,  
this day and forever. **Amen**

# HYMN

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of 14 staves of music. The first two staves are the main melody. The third and fourth staves are a variation of the melody. The fifth and sixth staves are a variation of the melody. The seventh and eighth staves are a variation of the melody. The ninth and tenth staves are a variation of the melody. The eleventh and twelfth staves are a variation of the melody. The thirteenth and fourteenth staves are a variation of the melody. The lyrics are: 'I'll go (I'll go!) I'll go in the strength, I'll go in the strength of the Lord. I'll go (I'll go!) I'll go in the strength, I'll go in the strength of the Lord.'



1

I'll go in the strength of the Lord,  
In paths he has marked for my feet;  
I'll follow the light of his word,  
Nor shrink from the dangers I meet.  
His presence my steps shall attend,  
His fullness my wants shall supply;  
On him, till my journey shall end,  
My unwavering faith shall rely.  
*I'll go (I'll go!), I'll go in the strength,  
I'll go in the strength of the Lord,  
I'll go (I'll go!), I'll go in the strength,  
I'll go in the strength of the Lord.*

2

I'll go in the strength of the Lord  
To work he appoints me to do;  
In joy which his smile doth afford  
My soul shall her vigour renew.  
His wisdom shall guard me from harm,  
His power my sufficiency prove;  
I'll trust his omnipotent arm,  
And prove his unchangeable love.  
*I'll go ...*

3

I'll go in the strength of the Lord  
To conflicts which faith will require,  
His grace as my shield and reward,  
My courage and zeal shall inspire.  
Since he gives the word of command,  
To meet and encounter the foe,  
With his sword of truth in my hand,  
To suffer and triumph I'll go.  
*I'll go ...*

*Words: Edward Turney*

*Tune: IN THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD, Ivor Bosanko*

*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England,  
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*It may be distributed freely.*

# PRAYERS FOR THE WEEK

## A PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

God of truth,  
help us to keep your law of love  
and to walk in ways of wisdom,  
that we may find true life  
in Jesus Christ your Son.

**Amen**

## REFLECTION

We cannot do everything,  
and there is a sense of liberation  
in realising that.

This enables us to do something,  
and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete,  
but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
an opportunity for the Lord's grace  
to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,  
but that is the difference  
between the master builder  
and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders,  
ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

*from a prayer by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw*



## *Weekly Intercessions*

### **The Sick and Those in Need:**

Isa, Donna, Liz, Jeremy

### **Anniversaries of Death:**

Jack Peacock {16} Joy Armstrong {16}

*Of your charity, pray for the sick  
and all in need, amongst them:*

Tricia, Ann, Dawn, Shane, Dianne, Isa,  
Donna, Liz, Jeremy, Peter, Barbara, Darren,  
Charlie, Linda, Angela, Judy, Alan, Steve,  
Jassy, Michael, Karen, Jeff, Barry, Barb,  
Linda, Matt, George, Emily, Adam, Josiah,  
Lisa, Paul, Dave, Charlie, Julie, Robin

and all who have no-one else to pray for them.

## CREATIVE PRAYER:

### UFOs

No, not Martians: UnFinished Objects.  
We've all got a half-done piece of knitting,  
an abandoned DIY project or a book we  
never quite got round to reading.

In today's Gospel, Jesus calls workers to the  
harvest: not to start or finish a project, but  
to join in half-way through.

This week, find one of your UFOs and get  
working on it again. Consider how it could  
become part of your work for God. Could  
you pray while doing it, teach the skill to  
someone else, or even finish the project  
and give to someone in Christ's Name?

## PRAYER FOR KIDS

**(or the young at heart!)**

What job would you like to do  
when you are older?

Draw or write it here:

Jesus calls us to be workers for him.  
There are lots of ways we can do that:  
we can talk or sing about him,  
we can be kind and fair to other people,  
we can look after animals and nature,  
we can draw posters or write letters  
to make the world better.

What work could you do for Jesus  
this week?

Draw or write it here:

# BEING NOURISHED BY CHRIST

## (WHEN WE CAN'T SHARE IN THE SACRAMENT)

### LECTIO DIVINA (FEASTING ON THE WORD)

*This is an ancient practice for meditating on (or 'chewing over') the words of Scripture, used in many monastic traditions. This particular pattern is based on the writings of St Clare of Assisi.*

#### LOOK:

*Read the passage aloud slowly.*

#### CONSIDER:

*Sit in silence for 1 or 2 minutes. Don't try to analyse the meaning, just notice which words or phrases particularly resonate with you. Read the passage again if you need to.*

#### CONTEMPLATE:

*Let your mind focus in on the word or phrase which feels most important. You might find that words come for prayer. You might find that you want to repeat a word or phrase from the passage. You might be drawn into silence. All of those things are fine.*

#### IMITATE:

*Ask yourself:*

*What has this prayer time taught me?  
How can I live this out in my daily life?*

### THIS WEEK'S PASSAGE

Suffering produces endurance,  
and endurance produces character,  
and character produces hope,  
and hope does not disappoint us,  
because God's love  
has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit  
that has been given to us.

*(Romans 5:3-5)*

### MAKING A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

*Although we cannot physically receive Jesus in Holy Communion at the moment, the Church teaches that we may still 'truly eat and drink of the Body and Blood of Christ' by making an act of Spiritual Communion.*

✠ In the Name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

*Spend a moment reflecting on your day  
and on your relationships:*  
- *what has been good?*  
- *where have you fallen short?*  
- *what could you do better tomorrow?*

Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

*Read this Scripture (John 6:35):*  
Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.  
Whoever comes to me  
will never be hungry,  
and whoever believes in me  
will never thirst.'

*Pray:*

My Jesus,  
I believe that you are present  
in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love you above all things,  
and I desire to receive you into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive you sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you as if you were already there,  
and unite myself wholly to you.  
Never permit me to be separated from you.  
Amen



Be joyful

in hope,

patient in

affliction,

faithful

in prayer.

Romans 12:12