

WEDNESDAY SUPPLEMENT

22nd April 2020

Christ is Risen!
He is Risen Indeed!

Welcome to this week's Wednesday Supplement. For this week's devotional suggestion, please see pages 3 and 4.

01229 715259 – stephen@kdbchurches.com

READERS FOR SUNDAY

I thought it would be good this Sunday to have some different voices in our Sunday service and to work toward increasing participation. An easy way to do this would be to have members of the congregation read the scripture. To do this, you will need to be able to create an audio or video recording on a computer or smartphone and then share it with me. I can't promise that the consequent video editing and continuity will be up to BBC standard, but I will do my best. (Some of you have already noted the magic chair and reverse-burning candles which have featured in my recordings.)

If you are able to contribute a recording, please get in touch as soon as possible, so that we can create the video in plenty of time for Sunday.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

For most of us, the lockdown has created additional free time, mostly spent at home. Initially, at least, this may have been unwelcome, created as it was out of time we planned to spend out of the house. Even those, like Charlotte, trying to work full time from home, may have new freedom as they are saved from what would otherwise have been a long journey to work. As the weeks have passed, I hope and pray that we are all finding fulfilling uses for the unlooked-for gift of time. What are you doing with it?

I know from the newspaper that many people are gardening for England, so to speak. Yesterday, in the blazing sun, I grubbed up a mangy low Yew hedge, roots and all, that the dog insisted on chewing. It's hard to know what to do with garden waste at present: its beyond our composter, I think. The jury is still out on a less toxic replacement. I like Box, but there is a blight coming. Lavender doesn't come back from the wood

and I am a lazy pruner, so I wonder about Rosemary? It is always nice to plant something that can be harvested for cooking. Rosemary is apparently good for dogs' digestion and is a natural flea repellent.

If you have been passing my house, you will know that I have been fiddling with the car whenever I have a spare five minutes. As always, I have many projects on the go! I would have done this even if I had not been confined at home, but it is important to find time for the continuity of things that we have always enjoyed.

Indoors, my computer is perpetually switched on, because I so often need it if someone calls. I have therefore revived an old habit, of participating in 'distributed computing' projects. This is where we make our spare computing capacity available to researchers who would otherwise need to construct a supercomputer. At present, like many others across the world, I am participating in the Folding@Home project. Folding@Home is modelling (among other things) the protein folding of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, in an attempt to identify potentially useful drugs:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folding@home>

What new or revived activities are you undertaking?

MEALS ON WHEELS

It's not a complete exaggeration to say that Meals on Wheels is how I came to faith – as a small child it was one of the things my Great Aunt used to take me to do, alongside members of her church and the WRVS. It was the example of this, and other voluntary activities to which I saw her faith lead her, that inspired me.

As part of the community support initiative around the current crisis, a Meals on Wheels service has been established in Broughton and surrounding areas, with support from CGP, coordinated by Selwyn Wright.

The system currently has capacity for 25 clients, who will receive a hot meal delivered every Thursday. There are currently a few spaces available, so if you know anyone who would benefit from this free service, please get in touch.

LITURGY CORNER

Two ‘posture’ questions were sent in by readers this week (they really were!). I hesitated before answering them, because I don’t want to suggest that these are the things that should most concern us when we are worshipping God, or when the world is so full of problems that need solving. The following answers are written in the spirit of Bishop Colin Buchanan’s description of rubrics (the little notes for guidance in the order of service), in that they are provided “*not to straitjacket parish practice but rather to offer coaching and facilitation.*” In other words, to help us to understand and develop our own views and practices, not to impose them on others.

When should I sit, stand or kneel?

One reason among many why Anglicans proverbially fill up church from the rear is surely so that they do not end up at the front, visible to all, not knowing whether to sit, stand or kneel.

Hopefully, we have got past the stage in our church and society where anyone feels frowned upon if they get it wrong. Nevertheless, we all want to be comfortable in order to be free to worship. We also want to honour God by showing respect according to the standards of our day (as indeed St Paul advises his own congregations). Here is a brief guide:



Rule 1 – Physical health takes priority. If you find kneeling impossible or standing for long periods difficult, it is *always* permissible to sit. Anyone who is offended by this (and they should be few and far between) will simply need your forgiveness.

Rule 2 – A simple formula gets you most of the way:

- Sit to listen
- Stand to praise
- Kneel to pray

Naturally, it being England and Church, there are exceptions to prove the rule. We stand for the Gospel reading, rather than sitting as for the other readings and the sermon. We do this out of respect, in a practice recorded since about the third century.

Many churches sit or stand during some parts of the service which are definitely prayer. There we go.

Rule 3 – If you are doing something different from other people, that is not a problem. So, in the second half of the Eucharistic Prayer (after the *sanctus*, “Holy, Holy, Holy ...”), there is a technically a ‘right’ answer,

which is to kneel. The first half of the Eucharistic ‘Prayer’ is praise. The rubric often says something like, “*here the priest praises God for his mighty acts*” and if you think about the seasonal passage there, it makes sense.

The second half, where the words of institution are recited, is prayer (we are very directly asking God to do something for us), but many people and many churches stay standing throughout. That is fine. Uniformity looks good, but if everyone is genuinely worshipping (and, ideally, not worrying about form) does it really matter? Very occasionally, posture may imply belief, but that is rare.

What really helps is an order of service which makes it clear, either in the text or in little figures. (Although it was once pointed out to me that the latter make the order of service “*look like the door of a public convenience*”).

Why do you sometimes bow to the altar and sometimes genuflect?

This is easy. We bow to acknowledge the altar because it is symbolically the place where heaven and other come together. We genuflect in the sacramental presence of Christ, during the consecration, or when there are consecrated elements remaining on the altar (or in an aumbry where one is used).

The practice of genuflection was revived in the Church of England (at least in the ‘high’ parts) during the Oxford Movement (ie. from about 1850). Before that, bowing in acknowledgement (more common in the past, as every costume drama demonstrates) was the only available action.

As a child, I remember people genuflecting either as they entered the church or when entering and leaving their pew. They did this even in quite low churches where there was no reserved sacrament to prompt it. I’m not quite sure why: if you can remember this practice, or still observe it yourself, I would be glad to hear from you.

Does genuflection tell you anything about my doctrinal position or churchmanship? No, not a great deal. As I say, my experience as a child was of members of the congregation genuflecting in a church that otherwise lacked ceremony. True it is, that I served my curacy in an Anglo-Catholic parish, where there was a good deal of ceremony. Short of transubstantiation, however, the Church of England accommodates a wide range of views as to how Christ is really present, and the sacrament really effective, in the Eucharist. At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, so we might legitimately genuflect within a broad range of churchmanship.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

The family and friends of Christine Nuttall RIP, whose funeral will take place at Thorncliffe Crematorium this Friday at 11am.

Sue George and all the family and friends of Graham George RIP, whose burial will take place at Woodland next Monday morning at 11am.

DAILY WORSHIP

For nearly 500 years, it has been Anglican practice to offer Morning and Evening Prayer daily (Matins and Evensong in the Book of Common Prayer). These 'daily offices' derive from the pre-reformation canonical hours of vigil, matins, lauds, prime, terce, sext, nones, vespers and compline. The last of these, compline, or night prayer, found particular popularity during the Oxford Movement of the 19th Century, in which the Church of England rediscovered some of its catholic heritage. An order of service for Compline can be found in *Common Worship*. It is an attractive form of service for late evening. I especially like to use it during seasons such as Advent or Lent.

These daily offices have a very detailed and specific structure which derives from their historic roots. You will have noticed this if you have listened to my audio recordings of Morning Prayer. I find this helpful, because I like ritual and structure. Not everyone will, of course. While serving my curacy I was once joined for Morning Prayer by the two-person church cleaning team for that week. Neither were churchgoers, but they were curious about this thing called Morning Prayer that we said every day.

With two non-churchgoers present, I became acutely conscious of what a whirlwind of scripture, both explicit and contained in the liturgy, Morning Prayer can be. Between the psalm(s), responses, two readings and two canticles, it jumps around all over the place. The *Daily Prayer* app and the Church of England website are so helpful in this regard, because they assemble everything you need in one sequence.

Not everyone wants such a rich and complex diet on a daily basis (the cleaning team didn't, unfortunately), but many people *do* want some structure. A lesser-known provision of *Common Worship Daily Prayer* may come into its own here: namely, Prayer During the Day.

You can find Prayer During the Day in *Common Worship Daily Prayer* at page 19 or online:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/daily-prayer/prayer-during-day>

Don't be surprised if there is more 'guidance' than prayer. This is intended to be flexible and to be filled with whatever the user wants, whether it is a framework for Bible study, a daily offering of prayer, a model for terce, sext and none – or something else.

What is provided is a structure, like this:

- Preparation (including confession if desired)
- Praise: in text, acclamation, or song
- Word: a psalm or other reading(s)
- Response: something printed, or something more diverse and imaginative
- Prayers: intercessions, Collect, Lord's Prayer
- Conclusion

I have reproduced below an order for Prayer During the Day on a fortnightly cycle of psalms, with more detailed guidance notes in italics than would normally be encountered, to help make sense of the form.

PRAYER DURING THE DAY

Preparation

- O God, make speed to save us.*
All *O Lord, make haste to help us.*
My heart tells of your word, 'Seek my face.'
All *Your face, Lord, will I seek.*

(Psalm 27.10)

Praise

Here you might offer a hymn, song, canticle, extempore praise, or simply the following:

We praise you, O God,
we acclaim you as the Lord;
all creation worships you,
the Father everlasting.
To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
the cherubim and seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
(from the Te Deum Laudamus)

The Word of God

Like all the offices, we begin with a psalm. Here is a fortnightly cycle, using the Psalms of Ascent:

Sunday	119.1-32	Sunday	121, 122
Monday	119.33-56	Monday	123, 124
Tuesday	119.57-80	Tuesday	125, 126
Wednesday	119.81-104	Wednesday	127
Thursday	119.105-128	Thursday	128
Friday	119.129-152	Friday	129, 130
Saturday	119.153-end	Saturday	131, 133

Each psalm or group of psalms may end with:

All: 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.**

There follows a short reading from scripture.

The version of *Prayer During the Day* in *Common Worship Daily Prayer* and on the *Church of England website* has a different form for each day of the week, with appropriate psalms and readings suggested.

Another option is to use one of the following, for a week at a time:

Genesis 1.1-5
2 Corinthians 5.17-19a
John 5.15-18
Revelation 21.1-4

Alternatively, one of the *Lectionary readings* for the day may be used. These can be found in the printed *lectionary*, or from the *Church of England's Lectionary app*, available for *iOS* and *Android*. You could also use a reading from *Morning Prayer* (via the *Daily Prayer app* or the *C of E website*).

Finally, as *Prayer During the Day* is intended as a structure around which other activities may be built, it would be equally appropriate to use at this point whatever Bible passage is to be the subject of study, discussion or meditation in the 'Response' section which follows.

Response

The concept of *Response* makes *Prayer During the Day* a useful format for lockdown worship, in which remote participation (over the telephone, or by video conference) can be used to share with one or more others.

This section of service may consist of silence, discussion, study or song. Words from scripture may also be used, perhaps as conclusion:

Jesus said:

I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

All Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever.

(John 6.51a)

Prayers

Intercessory prayers may include these concerns:

- The universal Church
- The leaders of the nations
- The natural world and the resources of the earth
- All who are in any kind of need

The *Collect of the day* (available from the *Lectionary app*), or the following prayer is said:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

All Amen.

(from *St Patrick's Breastplate*)

Finally, the *Lord's Prayer* is said.

Conclusion

May God who made both heaven and earth bless us.

All Amen.

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