



St Michael's Messenger

Easter Blessings !

April 2020

One of my greatest blessings at the moment is to see the wonderful spring flowers in bloom all around us. To see nature opening up , unfolding her leaves and trees coming into blossom , it all gives a lift to the heart.

As Easter approaches we could never have imagined having a Palm Sunday without the palm crosses, a Holy Week without our traditional services , and an Easter Sunday celebrated at home . What very strange times we are in. !



And yet there are good things happening. We hear the best and the worst of human nature. Selfish people who stock pile and fail to observe the directions of those who are trying to curb the impact of the coronavirus, but then the heroic work of all those doctors, nurses , carers , shopkeepers, lorry drivers, banks and building societies to name just a few of the people still at work to keep people fed and able to use the basic necessities of life. Whether they know it or not they are following the directions of Christ to love their neighbour , and God will know them from their deeds. ' Whatever you did for the least of these brothers of mine you did for me ' Matt. 25 .40.

At Easter we celebrate that wonderful sacrifice of Jesus , that he died that we might live.



Whether at home or at church the sacrifice of Christ to give us new life in Him still holds. So let us remember Holy week each day with our prayers and thanksgiving , and may Easter Day be joyful in the knowledge that the same Jesus Yesterday today and forever is with us. ! May God bless us all this Eastertide.

Faith Smith (Reader)

Our congratulations and prayers go to those with Birthdays in April :

Rosemary Lissaman, Leslie Pattison, ,
Stella Nathan Amisah, Margaret Parker

*Please let me know if there are any I don't include or for any news items etc. for the Messenger
faitheron@yahoo.co.uk.*



Tuesday Breakfast !

One of the most popular gatherings at St. Michaels is the Tuesday morning service which is followed by a tea and toast breakfast. This service has taken place every week for decades and shows no sign of declining!

In recent years an annual meal out has been arranged for the Tuesday congregation and invited partners. This year it took place on the last Monday in February and a hungry group gathered at Miller and Carter, Solihull, for fellowship and fine food. Our thanks to Brenda for organising the meal again. Don't forget, if anyone wants to see what goes on each Tuesday morning, just turn up and see for yourselves ! (Photo David Simons)

Paul



Dear All ,

At this present time the Messenger will not be printed off but available on line. If anyone would like to share their experiences of the lockdown or has any tips to help people through , or if anyone could contribute an article , all of it most welcome. Another version of the visit to the farm would be good or any photos taken by yourselves.

I will create another Messenger after Easter , so please think about anything you can contribute to it. It all helps us to keep in touch.

Blessings to all and Happy Easter ! Faith. (faithheron@yahoo.uk)

St. Michael's web site, www.smaaa.church, has the latest details on services and notices from the Diocese about Coronavirus



*An Easter card from us all
to us All !*



A Prayer for all in Isolation or bereaved or anxious ' - from the C of E Website

***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 Day out for the PCC !

Last Autumn the Venerable Paul Taylor (retired Archdeacon) invited the PCC to visit his fathers farm in Redditch to see the new lambs and hear his father, Stan, speak about his experience of farming.

On 7th March 2020 the PCC invited others to join them in this visit. Mr Taylor senior is a remarkable man. In his nineties he keeps eighteen sheep, who have all given birth to new lambs, and a number of chickens, on his small holding in Redditch (Astwood Bank to be more precise.).

We were all made most welcome in the beautiful dormer bungalow for delicious refreshments and a talk outlining Mr Taylors experience over the years. In his working life he had been a Headmaster , keeping bees, chickens , geese, ducks at one time , all of which eventually evolved into keeping sheep. His talk was entertaining and outlined the hard work he and his wife had put in, to produce honey and eggs to sell at his gate. His previous house , a 5 bed-roomed property had become too much for him after the death of his wife , and a move to the dormer bungalow was necessary. He had branched into sheep keeping by this time , and he had sold off the bees and ducks and geese. In what seemed amazing serendipity someone had come along just at the right time to enquire where he could buy bees , then chickens , making a fortuitous opportunity to pass these creatures on to someone wanting to start up!

The sheep are Jacobs breed , a piebald variety with four horns. Most of the sheep had given birth , some lambs only 2 weeks old , and one ewe expecting any time when we were there. We went into the barn with the sheep and even were allowed to hold the lambs. It was wonderful to see them all so close , with Meg the sheepdog watching from above , and a great show of awards all set out above the pens. Two brave souls held the sheep ! Mr Taylor has help from two of his neighbours who come in daily, and of course his son Paul Taylor helps out as well.

After strolling around the garden to see the hens , several different varieties , we went on to Feckenham Church where Paul Taylor celebrated mass for us. A beautiful church in the heart of the countryside.

Some of us then went on to the Rose and Crown for a meal, all of it a most enjoyable day ! We owe a big THANKYOU to the Venerable Paul Taylor and his wonderful Father for making us so welcome and giving us such an enjoyable time.

Faith Smith

In the light of present times this day such a short time ago seems an amazing memory !



Jacobs Sheep with their distinctive piebald markings , and Meg the sheep dog looking on. Meg is a very exuberant dog , bounding around in excitement when we were there. You can see all the ribbons of the awards hanging in the barn.

