

A few words about our readings

Exodus 19:2-8a God makes an astounding offer to the Israelites: if they will choose to abide by his special covenant, they will in turn become something very special – God's own people, *a priestly kingdom, a holy nation*. This special vocation was not to be forced on them but left to their free choice. They readily accept the covenant: *Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do*.

Christ came to complete God's work of salvation and in accepting him into our lives we accept also to do God's will.

Romans 5:1-8 Paul's opening words were used by Luther to underpin his break from the authority of Rome. They are words of assurance for through Christ we are saved even though we are unworthy. Through faith in Christ we are in peace with God and we receive his grace. We also receive hope. Paul stresses God's overwhelming love for us shown in Christ's death upon the cross

Matthew 9:35-10:8 We see Jesus responding in love to those in need because they are *like sheep without a shepherd*. He calls his disciples to minister to his people and *to proclaim the good news*. That ministry remains ours today.

Sending out

Lord, may I know your guidance as I seek to be a faithful disciple in the places to which you send me. Amen. © ROOTS for Churches Ltd 2019

Healing

The ministry of healing prayer goes forward in our own parish with a small group meeting on a regular basis to pray for those who are ill or in any other difficulties. If you are in need of prayer or someone in your family is in need you can contact Janet Vout on 01709 839258 and she will ensure that the name of the person who is ill goes on the list and that prayer is offered.

Justice

The events of the last week surrounding the death of George Floyd present all Christians with the challenge of working for God's justice for all his children. As Christ's disciples we pray that God's kingdom of love and mercy may come on earth.

The Rev. Anesia Cook, Diocese of Sheffield BAME Vocations Champion reminds us of the words of the prophet Micah: *What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God*. (Micah 6:8)

<https://www.sheffield.anglican.org/blog/diocese-of-sheffield/reflection-on-the-death-of-our-brother-george-floyd>

Prayers for 14.06.20

We have enjoyed thinking about our recent festivals in the church calendar and have celebrated them with appropriate prayers. We have now moved in to the part of the church calendar known as 'Ordinary Time', with no specific festivals to celebrate.

We pray for all who are ill or may be sad and lonely, especially those who have lost family and friends recently and for whom life will never be the same again. We pray for the recently departed Jean Mercer, Sheila Baggott and Henry Tompkin and also for William Oswald Cooke whose anniversary occurs this week.

This week I am thinking particularly of the Family Service, which is especially close to my heart, and of the prayer we often say there. I call it 'Prayer as a Five Finger Exercise'. It is a lovely way to pray focusing on our hands as they are clasped in prayer and our fingers, which remind us very much of who to pray for. Those of you who have shared in this prayer in church will know how well it can be opened up to include all sorts of people and events – never more so than at this difficult time of coronavirus. If you haven't used this form of prayer before, may I commend it to you now. We clasp our hands together and:

I start with the Thumb – it's nearest to me so I pray for those who are closest in my affections and thoughts. I lift them before you Lord, please watch over them today and every day.

Next the Forefinger, which points and gives direction. So I pray for those who have authority over my life – teachers, instructors, parents and priests.

Then the Big Finger. Let me pray for those in important positions – the Queen, leaders of the nation, the heads of industry and local government.

And the Fourth Finger. Pianists call this the weak finger, so I remember in my prayers the weak and the vulnerable, the sick in body or mind, elderly neighbours, the bereaved, the homeless and the unemployed.

Last of all comes the Little Finger. That stands for me. Thank you Lord for including me in the circle of your love. You know my needs and I am content to leave them in your care.

Amen