



# Pews News

United Benefice of Shenstone & Stonnall



## **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2021** **The Fourth Sunday after Trinity**

Today we welcome a very new priest to our churches - Rev Graham!

The priesting service took place at St Matthews Walsall on Wednesday evening and many of you were able to watch it via Youtube.

Rev Graham will be presiding over Communion today for the first time, please do join us at St John the Baptist Church if you are able to (remember there isn't a service at St Peters today)

Sadly, as restrictions haven't been fully lifted, we're not able to have our celebratory picnic lunch as planned. We will of course have a celebration as soon as we are able. to

Rev Liz

01543 480286

### **Collect for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June**

Gracious Father,  
by the obedience of Jesus  
you brought salvation to our wayward world:  
draw us into harmony with your will,  
that we may find all things restored in him,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen

## June & July Services

### St John the Baptist, Shenstone

Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	10:45 am	Communion service led by Rev Liz and Rev Graham
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Morning Worship led by Rev Graham
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Communion service led by Rev Liz and Di Proctor
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Morning Worship led by Ray Chamberlain
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Communion service led by Rev Liz and Rev John A

### St Peter's Church Stonnall

Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	10.45 am	No service at St Peters Joint service at St John the Baptist
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Communion service led by Rev Liz and Ray Chamberlain
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Morning Worship led by Patsy Toulouse
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Communion service led by Rev Liz and Rev Graham
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> July	10:45 am	Morning Worship led by Rev Graham and Patsy Toulouse

These dates and times are subject to change at short notice should government guidance change. If that should be the case every effort will be made to communicate changes to you as quickly as possible.

We are really pleased to welcome you in church but ask that if you are feeling unwell or showing any symptoms of coronavirus, then please stay at home to keep yourselves and others safe.

Although restrictions have not been lifted as we had all hoped we should give thanks that we are able to worship together.

## **PCC Meetings**

**St John the Baptist - Thursday 1st July 7.30 pm\***

**St Peters - Tuesday 29th June 10.00 am**

These meetings will be via Zoom and not an in person meeting as planned. Rev Liz will send the joining details out over the weekend.

\*Please note the change of date. Rev Liz has been made aware (she would have to have been told otherwise it would pass her by) that England are playing Tuesday evening. Shenstone's PCC was due to be held that evening.

## **Communion in church**

We are really happy to be able to celebrate Communion once more. Communion will be in 'one kind' only, so that means only wafers will be distributed. This is to comply with Church of England instructions still in place. Masks must be worn inside church, singing of hymns is not yet permitted and social distancing restrictions should be complied with. Please be aware that Stage 2 restrictions are still in place until 19<sup>th</sup> July.

## **Our Prayers**

- We pray for all our Government, our Bishops and Clergy.
- We thank you for the Queen and the Royal Family.
- We thank you Lord for all those who are assisting with recording and distributing of recorded services.
- We pray for all those known to us in need of the Lord's comfort and strength; we particularly pray for Jane and Jeremy Cotton and family after the death of Jane's father, for Vera Heard and Betty Hill who have both had falls, and for Cynthia Stokes continued recovery. We also pray for Linda Jenkins nephew, Neil, and for her friend who has asked for our prayers as her family are going through a difficult time.
- We thank you Lord for the earth you have provided for us. We are especially grateful to live in our beautiful villages.
- We pray for those ordinands being ordained Deacon at the cathedral this weekend
- We hold Brenda Butler and her family in prayer following Larry's memorial service held Saturday 26th June.

## **Home Communions**

Home Communions will be starting again in July, depending on social restrictions. If you would like home communion taken out to you or know anyone who would, then can you let Rev Graham know before the end of June.

**Songs for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June** – Abide with me, Just as I am.

## **Bible Readings for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June:**

### **2 Corinthians 8: 7-15**

7 Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you[a]—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.[b]

8 I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the generous act[c] of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. 10 And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something— 11 now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. 12 For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. 13 I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between 14 your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. 15 As it is written,

“The one who had much did not have too much,  
and the one who had little did not have too little.”

## Mark 5: 21-43

### A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

21 When Jesus had crossed again in the boat[a] to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. 22 Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet 23 and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." 24 So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. 25 Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. 26 She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. 27 She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28 for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." 29 Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30 Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" 31 And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" 32 He looked all around to see who had done it. 33 But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. 34 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

35 While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" 36 But overhearing[b] what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." 37 He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. 38 When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 39 When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." 40 And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41 He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" 42 And

immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. 43 He strictly ordered them that no one should know this and told them to give her something to eat.

## **Thoughts for today by Reverend Graham**

From our Gospel reading today, we have two very interesting figures. We have Jairus' daughter, the 12-year-old girl who died and was brought back by Christ, and the woman who suffered from haemorrhages for 12 years, who reached out in faith to Christ and was healed.

I don't think that these two healings can be read separately, they are married together, and Mark intentionally designed this reading with them next to one another. But first, we need to do some groundwork on what made you clean or unclean in Jewish law at this time.

In ancient Jewish law, there were things that made a person unclean, and dead bodies were one of these ritually unclean things that you didn't go near, and if you did then you were unclean. Another thing was sickness, or whenever a person (man or woman) would bleed or leak any kind of bodily fluid due to sickness or disease they were ritually unclean and cast out of mainstream society. Remember, in ancient society there was no understanding of infection or disease control, so the authorities didn't know what could happen because of things such as bleeding or going near corpses, which is why sickness and death were kept away from the community.

To begin, we have these two female characters. One ends up as a corpse, and the other has been haemorrhaging for 12 years. Both of these people, then, are ritually unclean. There are, however, other similarities between them both. The little girl is 12 years old when she died, the bleeding woman was ill for 12 years. They are both referred to as a 'daughter', they are both considered to be unclean until Jesus comes and fixes it, and they both would have been unable to have children, but I'll explain a little about that soon.

The difference though, is class and social status. The girl was 12 years old when she died, just a year before the year of betrothal. So, she would've been a virgin and she was the daughter of a synagogue leader, therefore she would have died ritually clean, and with good social standing. The haemorrhaging woman, however, was a social outcast because of the bleeding. But regardless of their social status in law, they still needed to be healed.

However, what is interesting is the point of these healings. These healings did more than just end a disease or reverse a death. Jesus didn't just fix whatever they were suffering from, walk off, and have it end there, he would've given them the ability to create life. Let me explain. The girl died a year before the age of betrothal, before she could marry and have children. She couldn't create life. The woman who suffered from the bleeding would also not have been able to create life. So, in healing them both, Christ gave them back the ability to give life. It's possible here that Mark intended for these two people to represent something else as well. It has been said that little girl represents the people of Israel who were ritually clean in the law, and that the haemorrhaging woman represents those people of Israel who were unclean in Jewish law. If we see those two figures as representative of Israel, then Mark is saying that God's healing work of Israel will lead to Israel going on to give life to others, in other words to produce good things, to heal and forgive and to love. The same, I think, can be said to us today. We are healed so that we can go out and heal.

I think that overall, this reading tells us two things; Firstly, regardless of how you may feel about yourself, or how society views you. Clean or unclean, of good social standing or not. Regardless of whether you feel too unclean to be near to God, if you reach out in faith or desperation to God, you will not be rejected or denied. God is next to the broken and the unclean. But to do this we need to have the faith of the haemorrhaging woman, not the doubt of the people from the synagogue leader's house, who gave up and said not to bother Jesus, and that it was over.

Secondly, when we receive this generous healing, grace, forgiveness, acceptance, whatever you want to call it, from God, we are in turn to go out and give life and hope to others. When we reach out to God from the

dark, from a place of despair and hopelessness and God gives us life, or hope, or even healing, our challenge is to go out and give the same life, hope and healing to others.

Whenever we encounter God, that encounter is not meant to end with us. Instead that encounter needs to be extended to others through our actions and our words.

Amen.



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