



**More guidance, information and prayers can be found on the Church of England website.**

- ◆ All the Key Workers who will be continuing to maintain services during this unprecedented time, that they are able to get the resources and support they need to work and help others.
- ◆ All those who are being taken ill, that they recover from their illness and do not pass it on.
- ◆ The children who are not at school, that they are able to find new and novel ways to maintain their learning and take the time to learn new skills such as cooking, craft and gardening.
- ◆ All those who are concerned about their jobs, income and food supply. The children worried about their exams and future.
- ◆ The leaders of our country and communities, that they are able to provide the strong and credible leadership needed and to make sure that the people they are serving feel reassured by their decisions.

Edna Parr, Janet Bailey, Elizabeth Cockerton, Sheila Phillips, Beatrice Ballard, Susan Newman, Christopher Payne and Walter Farbrother.

**For the present services scheduled to be held at Austen Court, The Hawthorns and Cavendish Park have been cancelled as a precaution against Coronavirus. As soon as the services have**

- ◆ Ezekiel 37: 1-14
- ◆ Psalm 130
- ◆ Romans 8: 6-11
- ◆ John 11: 1-45

Our first coffee morning of 2020 held at the home of Emma Kearsey raised £206-75p. Our thanks to Emma and Anika for hosting this for us.

The Church Path has been resurfaced.

The repairs and restoration of the clock faces on Hampton Church have been completed and once the scaffolding has been removed you will be able to see the wonderful job that has been done by Time Assured. Thank you to all involved and Evesham Town Council



Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy.  
Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate  
us from your love



St Andrew's is fitted with a loop system. To use this please switch hearing aids to 'T'

**Gluten free Communion breads** are available in all of our churches. If you require one, please mention this to the 'welcomers' or one of the Churchwardens.

**Tel: 01386 446381**

**Email:** [asumsouth.office@hamptonchurch.org.uk](mailto:asumsouth.office@hamptonchurch.org.uk)

### COLLECT

Merciful Lord,  
absolve your people from their offences,  
that through your bountiful goodness  
we may all be delivered from the chains of those  
sins  
which by our frailty we have committed;  
grant this, heavenly Father,  
for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and  
Saviour,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### FIRST READING

**1 Samuel 16:1-13**

*A reading from the first book of Samuel.*

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought David in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

### PSALM Psalm 23

**R** *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

The Lord is my shepherd;  
therefore can I lack nothing.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters. **R**

He shall refresh my soul  
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for  
his name's sake.  
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow  
of death, I will fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me. **R**  
You spread a table before me  
in the presence of those who trouble me;  
you have anointed my head with oil  
and my cup shall be full.  
Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow  
me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for  
ever. **R**

### SECOND READING

**Ephesians 5:8-14**

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.*

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light – for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

### GOSPEL John 9

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.*

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner

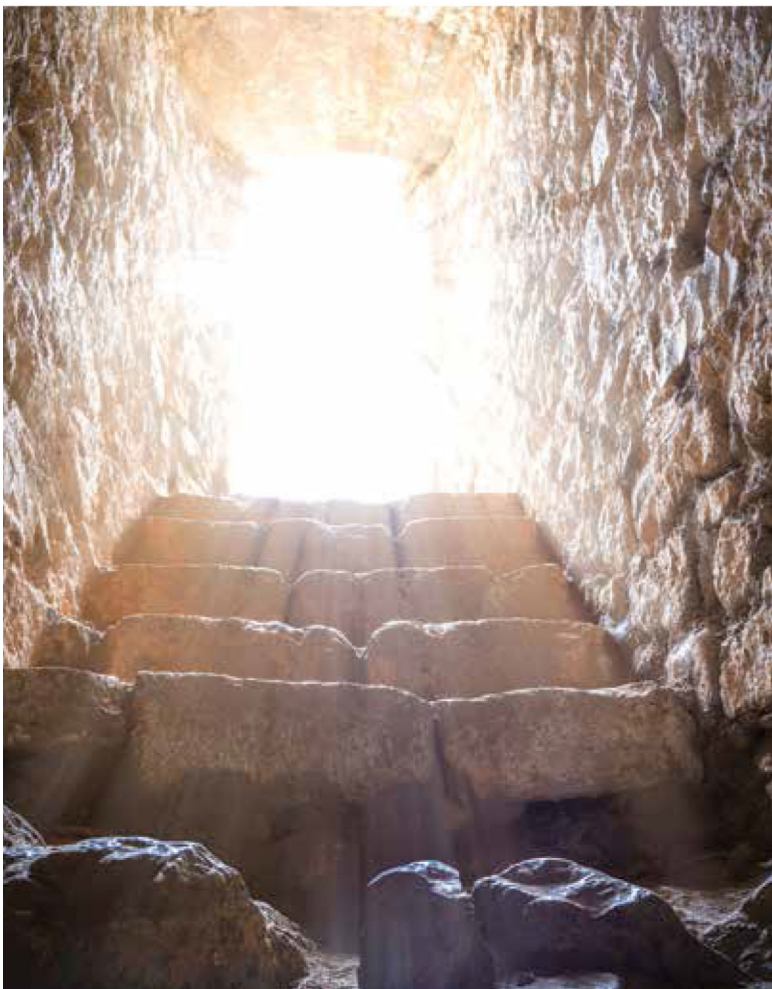
perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshipped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

### POST COMMUNION

Lord God,  
whose blessed Son our Saviour  
gave his back to the smiters  
and did not hide his face from shame:  
give us grace to endure the sufferings of this  
present time  
with sure confidence in the glory that shall be  
revealed;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.







# A door bursts open

Heather Smith *reflects on* 1 Samuel 16:1-13

**W**e may have a clear vision of what God wants for us, planted in our hearts and minds by God, but sometimes it takes so long to become reality that we wonder if we have understood correctly and we feel frustration at everything that stands in our way. Worse, we may not have thought any of it was a good idea anyway.

What must the young shepherd David have made of Samuel's actions? They were completely unexpected and must have seemed completely inappropriate. Surely, even as a respected prophet of God, you can't go around anointing someone king when there is already a king on the throne? And to choose an unknown, unremarkable boy must have seemed perverse.

Perhaps Samuel had lost his connection to God, or lost his mind? Samuel himself clearly felt something similar. None of this was what he expected, either.

Having anointed David, Samuel left, and nothing much happened except that a little later David was asked to play the lyre for Saul. He may have moved into the palace, but it wasn't in the way he could have expected as an anointed king.

When we believe God is calling us to do something it is very tempting to try to force it to happen. But all we need to do is tentatively push at every door we encounter, just to check, until suddenly, at the right time, one of them bursts open. 🙏

Lord, make us wise to discern your will, perseverant in seeking to carry it out, and patient as we wait for it to come to fruition. Amen.

## Leap into Lent

*Ricarda Witcombe continues her Lenten series.*

Today Lent collides with Mothering Sunday. It is a day of mixture – difficult for some, lovely for others. Mothering Sunday encourages us to ponder with gratitude those who have cared for us, whoever they are, and who have helped us find the foundation to our lives.

Lent encourages us to continue to ponder with searing honesty

the way our lives have grown. What is it that gives us stability? And where are we heading? Like a tree, we need to grow down and up at the same time, attending to both our inner and our outer life.

The poet John O'Donohue described how a tree "reaches for the sky and it reaches for the source, all in one seamless kind of movement". This week, take some time to observe the trees in your neighbourhood or garden, and imagine them as a symbol of your own life. What will you notice? 🌳

“May your prayer of listening deepen enough to hear in the depths the laughter of God.

John O'Donohue (1956-2008), Irish poet, author, priest and philosopher

## World Water Day

by Christine Clark

Today is World Water Day. We take the provision of fresh, clean water for granted. Even when our supply is metered many of us don't think twice about running the tap, taking a shower or using the garden hose in dry weather. Yet around the world many people have to walk miles to fetch water which may be dirty or contaminated.

The right to safe and hygienic sanitation goes hand in hand with being able to access fresh water, yet this is something sorely neglected in many countries.

World Water Day highlights the need for clean water and safe sanitation. It also campaigns to raise money for water projects. Each year a theme is chosen, which this year is climate change and its impact on the provision of water for humans, animals and vegetation. Rising sea levels, changes in rainfall and temperature, are just some of the impending issues we need to address. 🌍