



# FORGIVE?

**Share the oxygen!** The diver is in a bad way. The tank had run low and now they were gasping for breath, their body slow and sluggish, the mind drifting despairingly, but vaguely. Suddenly, another diver comes alongside. A facemask is handed across and wonderful, life saving oxygen is breathed into desperate lungs. Slowly at first and then deep wonderful lungfuls.

Would you share your oxygen? Jesus was very clear on a number of occasions - forgiveness needs to be shared. In the prayer he taught us: 'Forgive us our trespasses (sins), as we forgive those who trespass against us'.

Somehow, forgiveness cannot be kept to ourselves. In fact our forgiveness even depends, in some way, on our forgiveness of others. That is worrying. For we all know it can be difficult to forgive others. Sometimes we know we are struggling to *really* forgive someone. Sometimes it seems impossible. And we may think of situations where we would find it unthinkable.

But Jesus constantly taught that forgiveness needs to be passed on. If we are forgiven, then we must forgive. But perhaps it is like oxygen. We have had new life breathed into us. Costly life bought at a price. But if we just breathe in continually, then we still run out of puff. We need to breathe out. We need to share the oxygen from the tank of life.

Forgiveness changes the atmosphere, and for our sake as well as others, we need to be changed into people who not just are forgiven, but who breathe out forgiveness. And if that is hard, or even impossible, we need to remember that it is not us who provides the oxygen of forgiveness, but Christ does. It is his, and he enables us to give life to others by forgiving them. Only He makes it possible.

Will you pray 'Father forgive them'? Will you share the oxygen?

**With lots of love. Vicar Dave.**

## Collect Prayer This Week - Trinity 14:

Merciful God, your Son came to save us and bore our sins on the cross: may we trust in your mercy and know your love, rejoicing in the righteousness that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*The Government announced this week the 'Rule of 6' where, to restrict the transmission of COVID-19, people are only able to meet with 6 other people. However, places of worship are an exception, as long as, of course, we maintain strict safety measures. Therefore, we are still able to meet together in public worship in our church building - at 8:30am each Sunday, and hopefully at other services as the situation develops. But we know that unfortunately not everyone will be able to join us physically. But spiritually we are still a community. Let's continue to keep in touch and to pray with each other, but just in different locations. If you are on networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp etc. do connect with the Church page and group, and visit our church website. Keep praying. Keep hope alive. God is bigger than all we face.*

## 10am Each Day – let's pause and pray for each other.

Using the [Prayer Sheet](#) if you can. We have physically sent out these sheets to as many church members as possible. You can also download from the [Google Public Folder](#) or the [Church Website](#).

The Vicar will be praying with this sheet at 10am - live-streamed each day on Facebook Live – join us on the Church Facebook page '[St Thomas Parish Church Stopsley](#)' (click this title, or search for it)

After the service (about 11am-ish) the video will be posted on a [Google Public Folder](#) (click this title to find) and soon afterwards on our [YouTube Channel](#), and via our [Church Website](#), You can find our [Church Website](#) by clicking the link or searching 'www.stopsleyparish.org'. You can find the [YouTube Channel](#) by clicking the link or searching 'Stopsley Parish Church'.

## Latest on Services

### Rule of 6?

It is a matter of concern that transmission of the Covid-19 virus appears to be increasing and this means that everyone has to take extra care, and this includes the church. However, places of worship are exempt from the new 'Rule of 6' order. Partly I think this is because it is recognised that we are being very careful in strictly following best practice in keeping one another safe. So this means we will be able to continue to meet in our church building for worship and to carefully consider new developments. And as we do so, we pray for our community and country, for safety and protection for all.

### 8:30am Sundays

'It was lovely to be back in the church building', said one worshipper. I think everyone present agreed the first service went well and we all appreciated the experience. If you are able, and feel ready, come and join us. So we can worship in a safe manner, we need church members to book in advance - please contact the Church Office by Thursday at noon. As demand appears to be increasing, which is wonderful, we are operating a waiting list, with preference given to those who are new returnees. Attendees are seated socially distanced by household/bubbles. Face coverings will need to be worn.

### 10am Wednesdays

We are planning towards restarting a 10am Wednesday communion service from 30th September onwards. This depends on sorting out various practical matters and reviewing the situation and the CofE and government guidance as it develops. Look out for further details.

### Live-Streaming

We will continue to livestream services for those who are unable to attend, and also livestream the daily prayers at 10am each day (including Sunday). Please keep on praying and let us know what you are thinking.

### Harvest

This year we will obviously not be able to hold our usual Harvest Festival and Harvest Supper. But we continue to want to celebrate our many blessings. There will be a harvest theme for our services (in the church building and on the livestream) on both 27th September and 4th October. Luton Churches have organised the next Foodbank collection on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 - the times for the collection are 11.00am till 1.00pm at St Anne's and 12noon till 2pm at

St. Christopher's. For your harvest offering could you take food to these collection points or bring some items to St Thomas's on 27th September if you are coming to the service? Alternatively you could make an offering at one of the Foodbank points in supermarkets.

**Peace Walk 2020** Due to Covid –19 this year's peace walk will be online and different from how we have done it in the past - on 21st Sep 2020 at 6:30pm. This year's Peace Walk is called "Zoom" Peace. The online event is intending to celebrate Luton's faith communities' outstanding work during the Covid-19 pandemic. Contact the Church Office if you would like to take part.

**Accounts Assistant** The Diocesan Office in St Albans is looking for an Accounts Assistant 20 hours per week . Further details are available at [www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/other-vacancies](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/other-vacancies) Closing date: 12 noon – 21st September 2020

**Parish Nurse** Debbie, our Parish Nurse, is now available again for telephone consultations on Wednesday and for safe distance meetings.

**Inspirational Quote:** "We are building lives with an eternal purpose in mind." *Charles Stanley*

### Readings This Week: Trinity 14 – September 13

Romans 14.1-12 ; Psalm 114 ; Matthew 18.21-35

#### Monday

Psalm 22.23-28 ; Philippians 2.6-11 ; John 3.13-17

#### Tuesday

1 Cor 12.12-14, 27-end ; Psalm 100 ; Luke 7.11-17

#### Wednesday

1 Cor 12.31b-13.end ; Psalm 33.1-12 ; Luke 7.31-35

#### Thursday

1 Cor 15.1-11 ; Psalm 118.1-2, 17-20 ; Luke 7.36-end

#### Friday

1 Corinthians 15.12-20 ; Psalm 17.1-8 ; Luke 8.1-3

#### Saturday

1 Cor 15.35-37, 42-49 ; Psalm 30.1-5 ; Luke 8.4-15

### Let us Pray:

#### Please use this prayer list in your prayers.

If you would like to be added to the prayer list, or for items of 'thanks', please let Rev David know.

**The sick, including:** Ann, Colin Alexander, Sam Alexander, Clive, Alan West, Phyll Luck, Lorraine, Veronica, Jeanette Duck, Sue Lynn.

**Those who are grieving for:** Lilian Francis, Gordon Wheeler, Joan Hemmings, Barbara Wood, Carol Richardson, Peter Esser

### CONTACT US:

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**Church Office:** Due to C-Virus closed until further notice, but we may be contacted 01582 729194; [office@stopsleyparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stopsleyparish.org.uk)

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**Churchwarden:** Ian Marshall 07968131997 [ian.marshall125@gmail.com](mailto:ian.marshall125@gmail.com)

Webpage: [www.stopsleyparish.org](http://www.stopsleyparish.org)  Twitter: @stopsleyvicar  Facebook: St Thomas Parish Church Stopsley

**Safeguarding** concerns, please contact Judi Kingham 01582-619432 / 07831 850 886, or Linda Clitheroe 07780 359500

Please join the **Parish Giving Scheme** and **Electoral Roll**. **Bank Account:** Sort Code 20-53-97 Acct. 10792063