



ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'CATCH UP CHURCH' NEWSLETTER

Sunday 18th April 2021

NEWS UPDATE



Junior Church

It has been a delight to welcome the children back to Junior Church this week, with the added bonus that the dry weather has made the outside space usable for them.

We will be offering the Junior Church each Sunday going forward. The leaders have identified in their risk assessment the maximum safe capacity of the back room to be 15 people, which includes children and adults. We would therefore ask that parents book their place in advance by contacting Louise Walton. This



can be done by emailing youngpeople@stchristopherslea.org, or by sending a message through the church Facebook page.

Parents whose children are under the age of six can request that they attend with their child; however, in this instance bear in mind that the inclusion of another adult may prevent another child from attending. Children age six and over must be dropped off by the parent.

Church Warden's Update letter

Please see the additional update from the churchwardens this week, which contains some good news. We are nearly there with the roof appeal.

St. Christopher's Annual Meeting 25th April

This will take place next Sunday at 10.30am. There will be a few minutes breather between the end of the church service and the start of the AGM. This year the church reports are being presented in video form. There is much to reflect on after a rather unusual and difficult year. I hope a good number will be able to join us.



BIBLE READING – Acts 3: 1-19

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, 'Look at us.' And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, 'I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk.' And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made

strong. Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. All the people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished. When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, 'You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

'And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.'

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE – Written by Peter

When we need to hear the difficult truth

Have there been moments in your life when someone has told you a difficult truth? The people who really care about us will tell us what we need to hear even if it's a tough thing to say, because they know it is in our best interest.



I think of an occasion in my early twenties when I was working for Lancashire Music Service, and I arrived late one morning for a workshop I was involved with. I had stayed up late with a friend the night before, rolled out of bed, and drifted into work half asleep. I hadn't understood that I was meant to be involved with leading the activities with the young people (I had probably not been listening when the event was organised), and consequently I made a right pig's ear of it. To make matters worse, at certain moments when I didn't know what I was doing I made a few comments that laid blame with other staff.

As you can imagine I was given a straight talking by my boss when the workshop was finished. He delivered some harsh home truths. To this day I know that he did me a favour, though I may not have enjoyed it at the time. Had he not told me what I needed to hear, I would not have learned from the experience. I might still be rolling out of bed at the last minute, and trying to blag my way through everything!

‘You killed the Author of life’

When you look at Peter’s speech to the crowd at Solomon’s Portico, he has to tell them a difficult truth.

“But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life...”

This can’t have been an easy thing to hear. None of us is perfect, and everyone makes mistakes, but killing the Author of life... that’s pretty serious. Peter delivers this hard message graciously, stating that *“I know you acted in ignorance.”* Sins committed in ignorance are more excusable than those we commit deliberately; and yet nevertheless it needed to be said, and there needed to be a response. *“Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.”*

**Repent And Turn Back
So That Your Sins
May Be Wiped Out,**
Acts 3:19

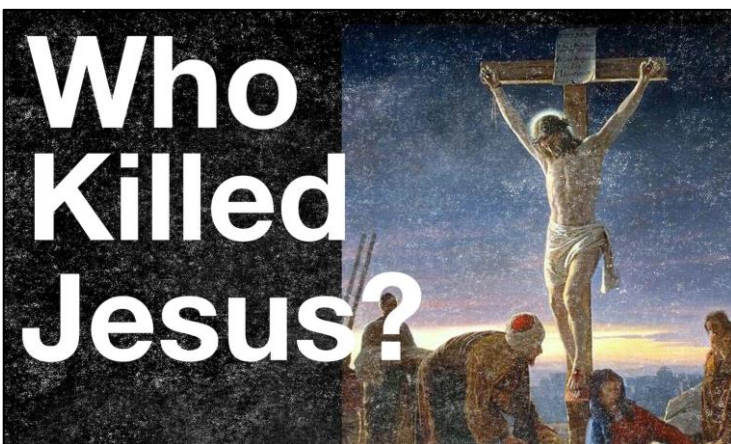


Who killed Jesus?

You might be thinking, ‘thank goodness I wasn’t there when Jesus was wrongly put to death. I am glad I wasn’t part of that.’ If we look at it this way, then we misunderstand what really happened on Good Friday. Blaming the Jews for Jesus’ crucifixion has been the source of much anti-Semitism over the centuries, and it misses the point. Christ died to take the punishment for the sins of the whole world, to make atonement for those who lived before him, those who lived at the time, and those who would come after him – which includes us. The death and resurrection of Jesus was an eternal, cosmic moment that affects the whole of history.

“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God.”

(1 Peter 3:18)



So who killed Jesus? All of us. Every time we reject Jesus, we join with the crowds who shouted ‘crucify!’ Every time we choose selfishness, greed, malice, or envy, we join with others in banging the nails into his hands.

Is this a difficult truth to hear? Yes, it is, and it should lead us, like them, to respond with humility. Peter’s message to the crowd that day is

a message for us too, that we can repent and have our sins wiped out. This, Peter explains, was God’s purpose all along foretold by the prophets, that the Messiah should suffer and die for the salvation of the world. It is in reality good news, because God knew that we could not free ourselves from the consequences of our sin – its pollution, its power, its penalty, and the partition that sin creates between humanity and a

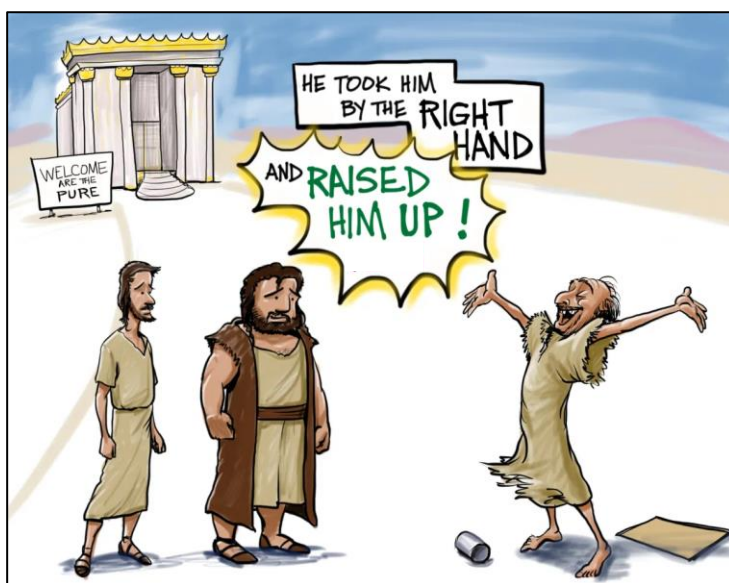
holy God. God had to intervene, and He has done! The way to eternal life has been revealed on the cross, and we can receive this eternal life through repentance and faith – starting now.

Do we care enough to tell others?

It was true in my life that I was lost in my sins until I found the One who could set me free from them. And I know that many people today are still lost. The question is, do we care enough about them to tell them God's message? Will we, like the apostle Peter, declare certain truths about ourselves, God, and Jesus?

You might say, 'but people don't want to listen.'

This is certainly true much of the time. Peter and John had the advantage in Acts chapter three that they got people's attention through a wonderful healing miracle. We need to be attracting a bit of attention too (for the right reasons). We may not feel that we have the kind of faith that can make a lame man walk; but the principle remains, that if we are demonstrating the love of God in some tangible ways then it will attract interest. It will create more openness to the Gospel message.



Speaking the truth about Jesus therefore begins with the way we live our lives. If we are consistently loving, compassionate, generous, and people of integrity, then opportunities will arise. If we pray for God to act, and he does marvellous things, this will get noticed. And if we really care for our world – a world where many are lost and broken – then we will dare to proclaim the truth in love when we are given the opportunity. The message we have contains a difficult side to it, but it is also a beautiful message of forgiveness, peace, wholeness, and freedom.

**For God so
loved the world,
that he gave his
only Son, that
whoever believes
in him should not
perish but have
*eternal life.***

-John 3:16

We have a Gospel to proclaim.





Prayers – Written by Jim Cam

Heavenly Father, draw near to us as we draw near to you.

Open our hearts to receive all that you have to give to us,
And help us to know that you are one, who is near and not far off,
Whose love is all around us and who knows our every need.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church, for its ministry and its mission to the world.

We pray, O God, for your church throughout the world,
that Christians everywhere may respond wholeheartedly to your love by committing themselves to the
service of your kingdom, with faith strengthened by a living experience of the risen Christ's presence, and
with the freedom and courage to follow where Christ leads.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

We pray for our churches in Plungington and in Lea.

Dear Lord Jesus, help us as we begin to emerge from the Coronavirus restrictions,
to re-emerge strengthened by our faith in you as our Living Lord.

We give you thanks as we prepare to welcome among us our new assistant curate Mike Clayton, who is
joining our vicar Peter Hamborg. May we be enriched and strengthened through their ministry together as
we seek to serve you here in Preston, learning to follow where you would lead us, to be faithful in witness,
service and love, so that you may be glorified to the praise and glory of the Father.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Sovereign Lord, we pray for all those who carry the responsibility of leadership in our nation. We pray
especially at this time for our Sovereign Queen Elizabeth as she mourns the loss of her husband Prince
Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. We give thanks for their loyal service to our nation and for her Majesty's own
undoubted Christian faith. Although she is our Monarch, we are mindful that she is also a human being.

So we pray that her faith in you will sustain and comfort her in her loss at this time and be a source of
positive encouragement, help, and inspiration to her family.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we commend to your love and care all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit.

We pray for any known to us who are ill at this time.....

Uphold them and bless all that is being done for their good

And surround them with your healing love.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

We thank you Lord that because of Easter our gospel is about the mystery of death and life.

May those who face death at this time, know that through Christ's death and resurrection, he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believe in him.

We pray for any known to us who are bereaved.....

Look, Lord, upon the distress of those who mourn and bring them your comfort,
that even in the midst of death's bitterness and darkness they may know your presence,
your light and the hope only you can give.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Living Lord Jesus,

May we live in faith,

Walk in love,

Be renewed in hope

And our lives be so filled with your love and power

That the world may see and believe

To the praise and glory of God the Father.

Merciful Father; **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**



Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses, to grow leaders and inspire children and young people. Give us eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen