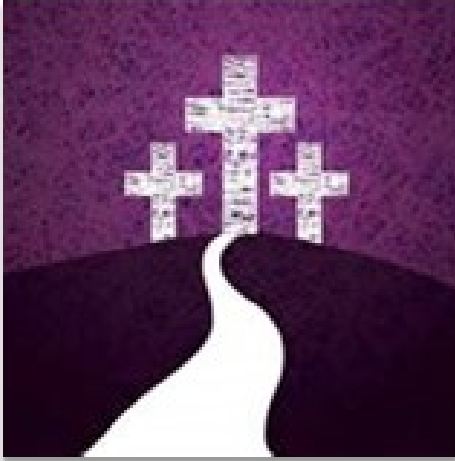


# Thoughts and Prayers for the Week

## Sunday 26th February 2023



### 1st Sunday of Lent

Heavenly Father,  
your Son battled with  
the powers of darkness,  
and grew closer to you in the desert:  
help us to use these days to grow in  
wisdom and prayer  
that we may witness to  
your saving love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen



### Readings this week:

Genesis 2: 15-17

& Genesis 3: 1-7

Psalms 32

Romans 5: 12-19

Matthew 4: 1-11

## Are we listening?

Last week, in leading our service at Hempnall, Bishop David (former Bishop of Bolton and now Honorary Assistant Bishop in our Diocese) included in his sermon a reminder about how important it is to **listen** to God.

As we move into Lent, traditionally a time of Christian reflection, 'talk less and listen more' is useful advice.

Listening is not always easy. And although both Biblical Hebrew and Greek had a single word for 'listening' and 'hearing', in English we differentiate. I may ask someone 'Can you hear me?'. But I mean something different if I ask, 'Are you listening to me?'. Listening suggests something more.

This is illustrated by an often-told story about Franklin D Roosevelt (President of the USA from 1933-45) who – tired of the tedium of exchanging pleasantries in the long receiving lines at White House receptions – decided on one occasion to test whether anyone actually listened to what he said. So, as each person shook his hand, he smiled and said, 'Good evening, I murdered my Grandmother this morning.' People would automatically respond with comments like, 'O, how wonderful' and 'Keep up the good work'. It was not until the end of the line that one ambassador (said to be from Bolivia) replied differently. 'Well,' he whispered, 'I'm sure she had it coming.'

Whether true or not, the tale serves to make the point that 'listening' involves more than just hearing someone speak. It needs us to concentrate, to pay attention, to be alert and perceptive.

These are the attributes we should bring when listening – really listening – to God. And Lent is a good opportunity for all of us to try to apply and develop our 'listening - to - God' skills.



Here is a poem about listening by the late American nun, Carol Bialock:

*Today I Was a Little More Deliberate*

*Today I was a little more deliberate.*

*I breathed into bitterness.*

*I was spacious inside.*

*I listened.*

*So I heard the turtle expanding in her shell:*

*I felt the earthworm and the lily bulbs embrace,  
waiting for the spring.*

May we learn to listen well.

~Liam Pilgrim~

This piece draws on a retreat talk by Trevor Miller, *Listening to God*, published online by the Northumbria Community: <<https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/articles/listening-to-god/>>. Carol Bialock's poem is in her book *Coral Castles* (Newberg, Oregon; Fernwood Press, 2019), p.31.

**Let us continue to support and strengthen each other**

- ◇ Daily, by saying The Lord’s Prayer together, morning and evening
- ◇ Lighting a candle at home 10.00am on Sunday if we are unable to come to church

**Our Services:**

<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	<b>10:00am   Morning Prayer in the Methodist Tradition</b>	<b>Woodton Church</b>
	<b>6:00pm   An Evening Service for Lent</b> <b>Join Zoom Meeting:</b> <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84989034174?pwd=eWxPY0JrYW1Seml6Ym5JOFkldDFzQT09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84989034174?pwd=eWxPY0JrYW1Seml6Ym5JOFkldDFzQT09</a> < <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84989034174?pwd=eWxPY0JrYW1Seml6Ym5JOFkldDFzQT09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84989034174?pwd=eWxPY0JrYW1Seml6Ym5JOFkldDFzQT09</a> > <b>Meeting ID:</b> 849 8903 4174   <b>Passcode:</b> 489915	<b>Via Zoom</b>
<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Mar 2023</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	<b>10:00am   Group Morning Prayer Service in the Celtic Tradition</b>	<b>Fritton Church</b>
	<b>4:00pm   Family Praise</b>	<b>Hempnall Church</b>

**This week we pray for:**

- ◇ In the morning: the day and its tasks; the world and its needs; the Church and her life
- ◇ All who are sick in body, mind or spirit
- ◇ Those in the midst of famine or disaster
- ◇ Victims of abuse and violence, intolerance and prejudice
- ◇ Those who are bereaved
- ◇ all who work in the medical and healing professions
- ◇ In the evening: peace; individuals and their needs

**FOOD BANK**

Items for our Food Bank are still needed; we are very grateful to all who continue to contribute during this difficult time.

Our next collections will be on:

**Sunday 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023 Any items can be left at Hempnall Church Office Mon-Thu, 9am-12:30pm. Please phone before arrival - 01508 498157**

**URGENTLY NEEDED FOOD ITEMS**

CUP-A-SOUP, TINNED VEGETABLES, INSTANT MASH, INSTANT NOODLES (NOT POTS), TINNED FRUIT, TINNED POTATOES, MICROWAVE PUDDING/CAKES  
NO PEANUT BUTTER PLEASE  
 HYGIENE—MALE & FEMALE DEODORANT  
 ANIMALS—DOG, RABBIT & GUINEA PIG FOOD (NOT CAT)

**WE REMEMBER:**

Martin, Molly, Ian, Pat

**Hempnall:** Lesley and family,  
 Phillip, Sophie, Ross

**Bedingham/Woodton:**  
 Sheila, Hilary, Peter, Liz, Anne, Chris, Barrie,  
 Carolyn, Kath, Bruce, Pat, Basil, Anthea

**Topcroft:** Gerald

**LONG TERM CARE:**

**Bedingham /Woodton:**  
 Dennis, Shirley, Jacob, Myrtle, Rudolph  
**Fritton/Morningthorpe:** Beryl



**RECENTLY DIED:**

Peter Downing, Shelia Clarke

**Please ring us if you need:**

**Group Office: Mon-Thurs 9am-12.30pm**

**01508 498157**

**Email: [hempnallgroup.office@btinternet.com](mailto:hempnallgroup.office@btinternet.com)**

