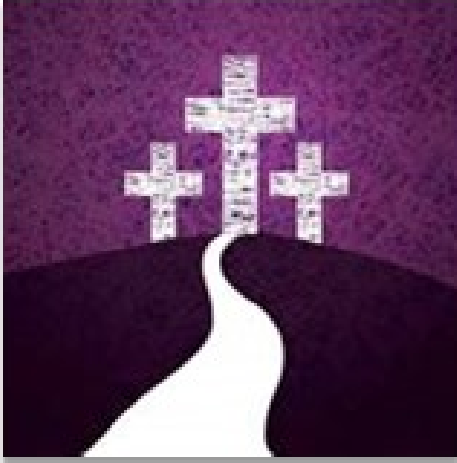


Thoughts and Prayers for the Week

Sunday 12th March 2023



3rd Sunday of Lent

Eternal God,
give us insight
to discern your will for us,
to give up what harms us,
and to seek the perfection
we are promised
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen



Readings this week:

Exodus 17: 1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5: 1-11

John 4: 5-42

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman...

The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman has always been one of my favourites, as when we lived at Fritton we had a well in our sitting room.

Since we don't often drink from wells in this country you might feel this is not a very up-to-date story, but you would be wrong. Because this story is not so much about water as it is about discrimination. We all know from the news today what a problem this still is in our world.

In the Gospel story we find Jesus, hot and tired sitting by the well when a woman arrives all by herself with her water jar. You might think there is nothing unusual in that but normally women came to the well together and certainly not in the heat of the day. As she saw Jesus, she expected nothing from him and she must have been surprised when he spoke. She was a woman and a Samaritan and obviously shunned by her society (she was alone). For a Jewish man to speak to her was amazing, for him to ask for a drink from her was even more amazing.

As Christians we do our best to help people. But occasionally letting someone do something for us can be even more valuable. Jesus made the Samaritan woman feel useful. She may have thought, "He is a stranger; he doesn't know what I am like", but Jesus did know. He began to talk to this lonely woman and then the sad story came out. She had had five husbands and the man she was living with now was not her husband. She was shunned by the other women because she was considered immoral. Shunned by the Jews because she was a Samaritan and looked down upon because she was a woman.



Sadly, even today women are still marginalised, ethnic communities are still persecuted and judgements made about people when we do not have enough knowledge of the situation to be fair.

Jesus offers this woman life-giving water which will be so refreshing that she will never be thirsty again. Jesus is talking of the living water that is the Holy Spirit. When God's living water flowed into her heart it washed away the hurt and the shame and she could go to the well with the other women, she could be part of her community again, she didn't need to be alone. Here is a Jewish man who values her enough to ask for her help. Here is a Jewish man who tells her that God loves and forgives her.

The bible then tells us that she leaves her water jar and rushes into town: this woman - who crept to the well on her own - runs into town telling everyone, "I have met a man, he told me all about myself: can he be the Messiah?"

I don't know how your life is today - only God knows - but so many of us have been hurt, so many of us have sorrows or regrets. I hope today that the living water will sweep through us and heal us and bubble up, overflow and reach out to those around us.

~June Cutting~

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:

Sunday 12th Mar 2023 3rd Sunday of Lent	10:00am Group Eucharist Revd Canon Susanna Gunner, Diocesan Spirituality and Discipleship Advisor	Topcroft Church
Sunday 19th Mar 2023 4th Sunday of Lent Mothering Sunday	10:00am Family Service	Woodton Church
	10:00am Family Service	Morningthorpe Church
	10:00am Family Service	Topcroft Church
	10:00am Family Service	Hempnall Church

This week we pray for:

- ◇ In the morning: the day and its tasks; the world and its needs; the Church and her life
- ◇ Those preparing for baptism and confirmation
- ◇ Those serving through leadership
- ◇ Those looking for forgiveness
- ◇ Those misled by the false gods of this present age
- ◇ All who are hungry
- ◇ 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 2ND APRIL 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

Hempnall: Lesley and family,
Phillip, Sophie, Ross, Claire, David

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

Topcroft: Gerald

LONG TERM CARE:

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



RECENTLY DIED:

Peter Downing, Shelia Clarke, Michael Soanes

Please ring us if you need:

Group Office: Mon-Thurs 9am-12.30pm

01508 498157

Email: hempnallgroup.office@btinternet.com

