

Bridges Group News

Date: 29th September 2024

Sunday: Trinity 18



News from Lower Shuckburgh

Throughout this Season of Creation, we learn of God's wonderful works. How everything was created and the joys and sorrows of the effects that happened during this time and what is happening continually around the world right now

Locally in our groups we pray to strive to help and point each other in a direction which will achieve a good outcome. This in affect will create a greater understanding of our individual needs in each church. For Lower Shuckburgh, praying for engagement with the community to support charities to raise money, in order to help in whatever way we can, hopefully achieving a positive impact for them, whether for hospitals, homes or countryside, prayer is always there.

God is with us whatever we do and this started from the very beginning in Creation

Psalm 104

³³ I will sing to the Lord all my life;

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him,
as I rejoice in the Lord.

Rectory reflection from Rev Andy

If you haven't read the fine historical novels of Robert Harris, you've a treat in store. I've just been re-reading 'Conclave', his gripping story of the lock-down (con-clave – 'with key') and fictional election of a new Pope.

I'm a second-class Christian, myself. I've met people, all through my life, whose faith was absolute and unchanging. Mine veers almost daily, and most often when faced with major life events. It was badly shaken following the loss of our precious eldest son, and lifted by the birth, so late in our lives, of our new grandchild. Like many of us I think, my faith is challenged by the state of the World we are living in.

So I was greatly comforted to be reminded of the reflections of Cardinal Lomeli, the fictional narrator of Conclave. I had almost forgotten them. 'Our faith is a living thing precisely *because* it walks hand in hand with doubt. If there were only certainty, and if there was no doubt, there would be no mystery, and therefore no need for faith'. Even Christ exhibits doubt on the cross 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

Certainty undermines tolerance, diversity and understanding the beliefs of others. It is the enemy of unity. We live in a world where every issue divides: one can support Israel or Gaza, not see the positions of both. One can be sympathetic to single-sex weddings, or oppose them; not understand that others may define love differently from ourselves. We may support the politics of one party, while deriding the beliefs of another. Christianity preaches unity, but in some hands it can be divisive.

John Stringer

Heavenly Father, help us to grow in faith, and also in tolerance and understanding; and to learn from our doubts and questioning.

Amen

Looking ahead...

- Macmillan coffee Afternoon Saturday 28th September 9 2-4pm lower Shuckburgh church
- WI Lavender Service at Stockton Church, 3rd October 2pm
- Treasurers Meeting Monday 7th October
- Stockton PCC 10th October at 4pm
- Napton PCC 21st October at 7pm
- Lower Shuckburgh PCC 22nd October at 7pm

Services this Sunday: 29th September Trinity 18	Services next Sunday: 6th October Trinity 19
10.30am Patronal Festival The Gathering at Stockton Bible readings for the week are: James 5:13-end, Mark 9:38-end	9.00am Morning Worship at Priors Hardwick 10.30am Morning Worship at Priors Marston 10.30am CW Holy Communion at Napton 10.30am Morning Worship, Lay Led at Stockton Bible readings for the week are: Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12, Mark 10:2-16

(For more details of events and diary dates, see our website: www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk or the parish magazines)

Next weeks news to be hosted by Stockton.