

Open benefice churches from July 5th, 2020.

Little Paxton:

Open for quiet time/private prayer:

Sundays 10.00am to 12noon.

Wednesdays 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

Look out for details of public worship opportunities coming up in July

Great Paxton:

Public worship on Sunday at 10.30am for 30 minutes

For private prayer/quiet time:

Church open on Sundays from 11.00am to 12noon

Southoe:

Open for quiet time/private prayer:

Sundays 11.00am to 4.00pm

There will be public worship later in July.

Diddington:

Remaining closed for the time being.

Let us Pray.

Thank you, God, for opportunity. Here is a new day, untouched by my hand, but held in yours. I need you and you have chosen to need me. Together we can bring to fruition some of life's endless possibilities. Thank you, God.

Amen

Start with a time for you to be with your own prayer concerns whether for yourself and your loved ones.

Offer your thoughts and any burdens which trouble you to Jesus.

Lord, quieten us down, as we place into your hands those for whom we want to pray. We know that you love them with a greater love than we could ever imagine. In the stillness we are here, with you, for them. Amen.

You are the peace of all things calm

You are the place to hide from harm

You are the light that shines in dark

You are the heart's eternal spark

You are the door that's open wide

You are the guest who waits inside

You are my Lord and with me still

You are my love, keep me from ill

You are the light, the truth, the way

You are my Saviour this very day.

(Celtic oral tradition - 1st millennium)

PAGE FOUR

Sunday July 5th, 2020

The Benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe
“Keeping in Touch” Edition 15: The Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

Matthew 11 v 16-19, 25-30

Come to me, all who are weary and whose load is heavy;
I will give you rest”

Greetings everyone!



For those of you who watch the Sunday Paxtons Benefice You Tube service videos, you will see that this week the service begins with the hymn “Be still for the presence of the Lord, the holy one is here” with the backdrop of the lovely rainbow scene as above.

The picture was taken by Glen Doick from Little Paxton when he was on a recent holiday in, as he puts it, the wilderness of Scotland.

With all the restrictions that we have had to adjust to since March and to some extent still have to contend with, many of us will have had holidays or family visits curtailed and found we have been more home based. Whilst some folk have had to completely shield, others have been able to get out and enjoy the therapeutic effects of sunshine and fresh air. I very much hope that over the next few weeks it will be possible for even those with underlying health issues to enjoy the countryside and sunshine. Looking after ourselves is so important and nature can help us to get things into perspective and keep well. Spiritually, this week's gospel reading from Matthew Chapter 11 is awesome! Jesus is saying to us all (and imagine him saying it with open arms) – ‘come to me, all who are laid low by troubles and I will give you rest’. Let's think more about that on **Page Two.**

It may feel a bit of a burden to organise, but churches can now think about re-opening for public services. With many guidelines to adhere to, a lot of time is going into keeping people safe as they return to public worship. On **Page Four** you will find the current situation with all of our four churches and when they will be open. Keep well and keep safe; with love and prayers, Annette. 01480 211048.

PAGE ONE

The Gospel Reading for Today.

Matthew Chapter 11: 16 - 19, 25 - 30

At that time Jesus said, 'To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn."

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.

I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' *NRSV*

A Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

John Bunyan wrote Pilgrim's Progress in nearby Bedford. His story is told the world over of how Pilgrim journeyed and found his burden lifted. In our reading today from Matthew we read the passage of scripture from Matthew in which Jesus spoke of lifting our burdens. We often think of religion as being something which makes us feel guilty. Jesus speaks in a way which shows that is not God's intention. Jesus came that we might have freedom from guilt and a release from those things which bring fear. Jesus came to bring peace to all the souls who put their trust in him.

From the "thisischurch.com" website

Reflections from Annette

Jesus says that he has a yoke.

No, he isn't eating eggs rather, he is using the picture of something that the people around him would have been very familiar with.

He turns their minds to the curved piece of wood that would have been put across the neck of animals, often oxen, pulling a plough on a farm or a heavy cart; in this way the animal can carry a burden.

How clever to use that image!

As an animal can carry a heavy weight, so Jesus invites us to give him the things that feel burdensome, oppressive and stressful in our lives – so we can be free of them.

It's the difference between carrying weights on our feet as we walk or being bare footed and free.

Come to me, says Jesus, you will find rest for your souls.

Think about those words!

Reflect on them, even if you can only find a few minutes peace in a busy day. Let them feed your soul, ease your mind, allow you to take rest, time off without feeling guilty.

Offer to Jesus all the things that may have got you down with lockdown and now the complex easing of lockdown.

Offer him memories from the past which still may entrap you in anxiety or resentment. Offer him worries about the future and the daily concerns that greet us when we wake up.

The religious leaders of Jesus' day made it so hard to follow all the laws and directions their faith required – it was like having a heavy yoke around the hearts of faithful people. In contrast, Jesus said his yoke was easy, his burden light. All we have to do is invite him into our lives and ask him to fill us with his deep peace; he will give us rest.

