

Sunday 2 May

PRAYER FOR TODAY

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

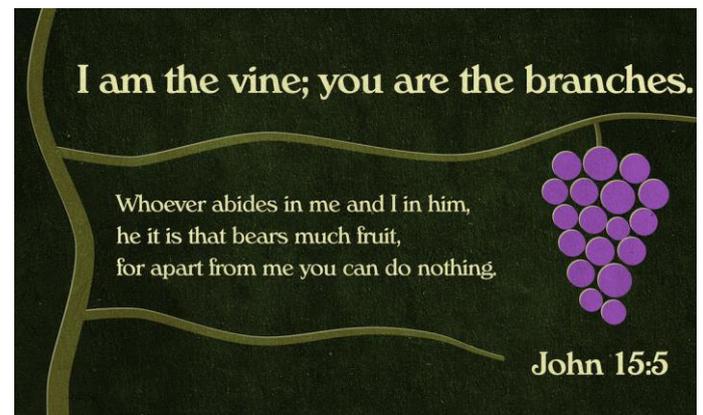
READINGS

1 John 4: v7-end - God Is Love

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

John 15: v1-11 - Jesus the True Vine

¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. ⁹As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.



Please pray for:-

- PMC Team: Susie Filkins, Chris Todd, Andrew Morrison, Barbara Day & David Lockley
- Robin Finlay (NSP)
- For the continuing alterations on the interior of St Philip and St James to proceed smoothly
- Residents in Frome Road, Rode (from prayer rota).

Coming Up...

5th Sunday of Easter
2 May 2021

Inspired by the love of Jesus to love God and to love others

Please take this leaflet home with you

PRAYER

God of deep soil
and luxuriant growth;
you call us from
our shallow selves
to find our depth in you:
may we abide in him alone
who can teach us who we are;
through Jesus Christ, the true vine.
Amen

NOTICES

Saturday 8 May Churchyard Tidy Up –
further details from Duncan Barley Tel: 834127.

Sunday 9 May Services

9.30 am – 10.00 am – Mini Breakfast Church
(contact Caroline for a Zoom invitation).

10.30 am Holy Communion in St Philip & St
James, NSP.

Thursday 13 May - Ascension Day Service
9.00 am, St Philip and St James church, NSP.

Online Services – all our online services from the
beginning of lockdown (March 2020) continue to
be available from our website (services/virtual
worship).

Electronic Pew Sheets! - if you would like to be
added to the circulation list to receive a weekly
pew sheet via email, please contact Ros
(admin@hardingtonvale.org.uk).

www.hardingtonvale.org.uk

Hardington Vale News Sheet

REFLECTION

Church, fruitfulness and love!

A few days ago I spent some time in Norton St Philip church, sawing slices of insulation material amongst sunken beams and trenches, dust and packing cases. As I sawed I wondered... what exactly is church about? Hardington Vale is blessed with several fine church buildings, but clearly – if we read what the gospels say! – Church is not a building.

In John's gospel we read that church is a vine. Jesus describes Himself as a vine. We, as church members, are branches! We are called to abide in Christ the vine, to abide in His love. But how do we 21st century citizens of the world understand love? The 1 John passage calls us to love one another – how can we do that? We are called to honour one another, to be loyal to one another, to count one another as better than ourselves – to make sacrifices for one another? Jesus' supreme act of love was an act of sacrifice.

We as branches of the vine are also called to bear fruit. We have a little crab apple tree in our garden, that we bought two years ago soon after we moved in. In its first months with us that young tree, covered in its first fruits, snapped completely in a high wind and became a stump. But it has grown back, on a strong new shoot from the stump, bigger than before and today covered in beautiful pink blossom.

Jesus wants us to be fruitful ... we each have a purpose in life. Whatever we go through, whatever mistakes we make, Jesus, in His love for us, can renew and refine us. And through that refining we become more fruitful.

Michael Harrison
Reader