



Draycote & Leam Valley Benefice

Messenger for October and November 2023

And so here we are in October. October is the month of the year that holds what I think is possibly the most underrated celebration in the Christian calendar. October 31st is an important feast day, that doesn't always get the respect that it deserves. I am, of course, talking about 'Reformation Day.' I appreciate that this is probably one of my more niche hobby horses, but please indulge me because I think there is something really important that we can all learn from the life of Martin Luther (who we remember on Reformation Day).

Martin Luther was a very complex individual who lived in Germany in the 16th Century where he gave up a promising career as a lawyer to become a monk. Luther had an awful lot of emotional baggage that he carried around with him. He was particularly troubled by feelings of guilt and shame. He was terrified of dying because he thought he would go to Hell as he was very aware of the fact that he was sinful and did things wrong. Young Martin Luther was a bit of a tragic character who was constantly struggling with his mental health as he was always feeling judged and inadequate.

However, as a monk Luther spent time in his monk's cell reading the Bible. The more time he spent reading it, the more it started to make sense and speak to him. During those hours spent reading the Bible Luther came to realise that he didn't need to earn God's favour because God loved him, just because. He also came to understand that he didn't need to be fearful of Hell because Jesus had died on the cross to save him from Hell. He also realised that he didn't need to beat himself up for being a sinner because that's not how God sees him.

Through his time reading the Bible, Luther realised the lies that lay in the oppressive ideas that he had picked up about God, himself and the world. With this newfound understanding of who he was and who God was, Luther set about spreading the good news that he had discovered and, in the process, became the figurehead of the reformation.

Martin Luther was by no means a faultless individual (Google 'Lutheran Insulter' for a complete guide on how not to win friends and influence people), but he came to understand that because of Jesus we can be confident that

we are loved, accepted and forgiven by God, no matter what other voices in the world around us might be saying.

The world that we live in today is very different to the world of Martin Luther. The pressure and influences on us may at first glance seem a million miles away from the things that led young Martin Luther to that dark place over 500 years ago. But there are still ideas that we encounter that can take us to a dark place if we encounter them and let them take hold in us.

- If like me you spend a lot of time on social media there is a very real danger that you start comparing your life to the perfect lives that are presented by everyone else on social media and start feeling a sense of shame that you don't have it together anywhere near as much as all your online friends.
- If you enjoy sitting with your feet up and watching TV, you may have noticed lots of adverts trying to sell you things to fix the things that you didn't even know were wrong with your life before your saw the advert
- Maybe as you do the school run, go to the golf club or commute into work you look around you and see people who are better dressed, more attractive and seem to have it much more together than you. We look at those people and start to think that we are so rubbish in comparison.

The message that Martin Luther has for us today is that we need to cut through all the noise, all the voices saying 'you are a failure', 'you are useless' and 'you aren't worthy'. Those are not healthy voices and their message is empathically not what God wants to say to you. If we compare those voices to what the Bible says, we will see that God says you are special, that you were created in his image and that you are loved. The whole point of the Christian faith is that God loves you so much he was willing to die simply to have a relationship with you. As Jesus puts it:

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:17).

That's the starting point of the Christian faith and that is what we celebrate in Church every Sunday. If this is something you haven't heard before, I'd love to explore it with you. Just drop me an e-mail or grab me at church some time.

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Benefice Notices and News

Harvest

- **Flecknoe** are holding a Harvest Thanksgiving Service at 5.00 pm on **Sunday 1st October** which will be followed by a Harvest Supper at 6.00pm. Supper will be followed by an auction of harvest produce. Tickets are available from Sara Jolley, Jane Lee or Clare Grant: £12.50 for adults and £6.00 for children. Please bring harvest produce to the church to be displayed and blessed at our Thanksgiving Service.
- After last month's successful launch of our new 3Ts service (which we run with our friends at the Methodist church) we will be holding a **3Ts Harvest service** on **Sunday 15th October** at **4.30pm** at the **Church of the Good Shepherd in Broadwell**.

Remembering

We will be holding our annual Remembering services on **29th October**. These are special services to remember and mourn those we love but see no more. The services will be at **4.00 pm** at **Grandborough** and at **6.00 pm** at **Stretton**. If you would like the name of a loved one read out as part of that service, please e-mail revphilprice@outlook.com.

Remembrance

We have a number of activities and services planned across the Benefice to mark Remembrance Day and Remembrance Sunday

- Remembrance Day service at **Frankton** on 11th November at 10.50 am.
- 1940's Afternoon Tea party at **Willoughby Village Hall** on Saturday 11th November from 2.30 to 4.30 pm. Adults £5, children £3. All money to British Legion.
- Remembrance Sunday service at **Birdingbury** on **12th November** at **10.15 am**.
- Remembrance Sunday service at **Grandborough** on **12th November** at **10.30 am**
- Remembrance Sunday service at **Leamington Hastings** on **12th November** at **10.30 am**.
- Remembrance Sunday service at **Stretton** on **12th November** at **10.45am**
- Interactive Remembrance event at **Willoughby Church** on Sunday **12th November** at **4.00 pm**.

Sunday Services for October and November 2023				
	9.00 am BCP	9.00 am Celtic	11.00 am Communion	11.00 am Allsorts
1.10.23	Frankton	Grandborough	Birdingbury	Leamington Hastings
8.10.23	Flecknoe	Bourton	Willoughby	Stretton
15.10.23	Frankton	Grandborough	Leamington Hastings	Birdingbury
22.10.23	Bourton	Flecknoe	Stretton	Willoughby
29.10.23	11.00 am Birdingbury		9.00 am Grandborough	
5.11.23	Frankton	Grandborough	Birdingbury	Leamington Hastings
12.11.23	Remembrance Day services. See page 3 for times			
19.11.23	Frankton	Grandborough	Leamington Hastings	Birdingbury
26.11.23	Bourton	Flecknoe	Stretton	Willoughby

Regular Activities

- **Morning Prayer:** 9.30 am every Wednesday in Birdingbury.
- **Stretton Coffee Stop:** Every Thursday between 10.00 am and 12 noon in the Stretton Village Hall.
- **Bible Book Club:** 2.00 pm every Friday in the St Cuthberts room at Knightlow Primary school.
- **Saturday Morning Prayers:** Every Saturday at 9.30 am at Stretton.
- **Zoom Services:** Every Sunday evening at 9.00 pm and Tuesday morning at 9.00 am. (Meeting ID: 439 317 8703 and Passcode: 4835679).
- **Farmers' Market:** 10.30 am - 12.30 pm at Grandborough on 5th October and 2nd November.
- **Messy Church:** 4.30 pm - 6.30 pm at Grandborough on 5th October and 2nd November. Suggested donation £1.
- **Soup and Social:** 12.00 - 2.00 pm in Willoughby Village Hall on 21st October and 18th November. £5 donation for homemade soup and puddings.