

**ST MATTHEW'S PARISH CHURCH REDHILL**  
**NEWSLETTER FOR SUNDAY 13th September 2020**  
**A CHANGED FORMAT IN CHANGING TIMES**



St Matthew's  
Redhill

*Judith writes...*

Dear Friends,

Have you had an item of clothing that you are particularly fond of that has been ruined by an accident at the dry cleaners or perhaps in your own washing machine? I've never been very good at sorting the clothes into dark and light piles: with four people (including two children) to wash for, my main priority is to get the clothes clean and dry so they can be worn again, so have we quite a few light grey garments that should be white.

Recently, I paid a visit to the dry cleaners with a very precious and delicate item: my dad's Ordination stole (a stole is the long embroidered scarf that clergy wear during some services – see photo below). My dad was ordained Deacon in 1978 when I was seven years old, so this stole has huge sentimental value and has seen over 42 years of his ordained ministry. I was thrilled when Dad said I could wear this stole at my own Ordination service at Southwark Cathedral, which is fast approaching on 19th September.

The lady at the dry cleaners looked at dad's stole carefully. She warned me that she would have a go at removing the stains and marks of wear and tear but could not promise that the garment would come out pristine and that some of the dye might run. She was absolutely right. The stole now has rather large patches of faded yellow where the fabric should be white.

As providence would have it, I am also being brought a beautiful new white stole which is suitable to wear for an Ordination service as well. So I had resigned myself to the fact that I would wear this new stole for my Ordination.

A couple of days ago, on a visit to my parents, I broke the news to them: "I hope the new stole arrives in time for the Ordination," I said, "because I don't think I can wear Dad's old stole. The stains on it are too noticeable."



I showed them and then tried the stole on. We all looked at it and pondered.

“What do you think?” I asked. “I don’t know. Perhaps I should wear it after all?”

They agreed. The stole was not perfect; it was not pristinely clean or beautifully new or unstained. It showed the marks of many years of ministry. I thought of all the services – the Eucharists, the weddings, the funerals, the baptisms – that dad had worn it for. I thought about the tears of sadness and joy that it had witnessed - all the time hanging around my father’s neck – a visible symbol of the yoke of Christ; the yoke of service. A yoke that I am about to take up.

I decided that while the stole was far from perfect, it was just right. Like this old stole, God accepts us just as we are – with all our imperfections; with the marks and stains of sin and trouble. He loves us, not in spite of these imperfections, but all the more because of them. We do not have to present a perfect life, erased of hardship and difficulty to God – we just have to present ourselves, as we are, and with faith in his divine mercy and boundless grace:

*Just as I am - and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I come!  
Amen*



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## DIARY FOR THE WEEK

**TODAY 13 SEPTEMBER TRINITY 14** – services at 8am , 9.30am and 11am

**MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY** – Foodbank is open 12noon – 2pm

**MONDAY 14 SEPTEMBER**—Junior Church Leaders meet via zoom at 8pm

**NEXT SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER – TRINITY 15—ST MATTHEW’S DAY** services at 8am, 9.30am and 11am. At our services at 9.30am and 11am we will be celebrating the Ordination to the Diaconate of our new Curate Judith Brooks, who will have been ordained the previous day at Southwark Cathedral

**The Wednesday morning Communion service** will recommence as from Wednesday October 7th at 10am and the first service will be an opportunity to give thanks for the lives of Pamela Barratt and Daphne Allington - long standing members of our church who have died in recent months . Service will take place in the front half of the main church.

**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING** will now be held on Wednesday 23rd September at 8pm **in the Church** - nearer the date we will be asking people to let us know if they intend coming along - as numbers will be limited . We have 5 places available on the PCC and 5 places available for Deanery Synod representatives. Please have a word with Fr Andrew if you would like to stand.



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So that we can retain social distancing – we are limited to 30 people attending and we need to know in advance that you are coming. So please let Louise Hill know [louise.cedarcornr@btinternet.com](mailto:louise.cedarcornr@btinternet.com)

More people are expressing a wish to return to services at church and it becomes more important than ever to let us know which service you would like to join. Please contact [julia.elfred@gmail.com](mailto:julia.elfred@gmail.com) . Once you have let us know your preference once, you don't need to "rebook" – just come along when you can

We continue to offer "on line" services each Sunday morning and would be grateful for any feedback on the style and format of these so that we can do our best for those who tune in.

**FOODBANK** continues to be in heavy demand and donations are dropping. Any help you can give is greatly appreciated- for the latest needs see the dedicated website at <https://www.redhillfoodbank.org.uk/shopping-list>

The Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus Group are running a webinar on the morning of Saturday 3rd October highlighting the signs of County Lines drug dealing and the actions we all can take if we have concerns. It is so important that we are all aware and can protect our children and young people from the dangers of these drug dealers who operate in our community. Tickets are free of charge and If you would like to take part you can register here <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rasjf-county-lines-webinar-tickets-112006031054>

A poster is also enclosed with the newsletter with full details.

If you don't have access to online resources, the church has set up this free phone resource. You will need to listen to the whole of the introduction before making your choice of what to listen to.

