



Newsletter of St John's Johnstone & St Margarets Renfrew

June-July 2020 - COVID-19 edition

www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk



Dear friends of St Johns & St Margarets,

On Sunday we are celebrating Trinity Sunday – *Community Sunday* as it was called by an old priest friend of mine – when we are reminded of the 3-fold nature of God as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Our isolation, and the gradual lifting



which will come in the further phases which will be announced in due course, has been a real test for us all of how we maintain community when we are physically distanced. The desire to touch one another is part of our humanity and the coming months will be a challenge to us as



the social distancing requirements will impact on our opened church life as we reach those stages in the weeks and months to come.

If you are like me in anyway you will have been saddened, angered, heartbroken and appalled by some of the scenes we have witnessed in America as people of colour have been voicing their angst. Many decades of my ministry have been spend working in black congregations and sharing the trials of racism which impacted on lives: whether through health access, education opportunities, work promotions, or housing needs. Some of you reading this will know and will have witnessed these in your lives at work, home and in the streets. The *Black Lives Matter* campaign will not go away, and it reminds us in the Trinity season of the voice that the churches can use in calling for the equal recognition of all God's people before each other.

Whether or not we have any non-white people in our congregations we can still show our support to those seeking social justice for themselves and their families as the Christian faith has always taught us to do. We can also pray for more equality for the work and lives of people of colour in our nation here in Scotland.

This newsletter is to keep our community bonds together as we look to being out of our Church buildings for the next few months still.

Worship is a whole item in this newsletter with the options available to you now online and on the telephone which the SEC has made available to us. Everyone can now join in a Sunday Service at home.

Thank you for your kind words as Stephen, George and I have endeavoured to make meaningful and uplifting services to share with you online. Do let us know how you have found the experience of praying together at home.

With Trinity Season blessings as we are the community of the Church physically together and physically apart.

Rev Reuben Preston – Rector

A new Bishop for the diocese on 1 July 2020

Message from Bishop Kevin to the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all well and that this lockdown is not too difficult for you, your families, and friends.

I am very disappointed and sad that the pandemic means that Elspeth and I have not been able to move to Glasgow and Galloway in May as was planned. As you know, the enthronement service at the cathedral was arranged for 4 July and that too has had to be postponed. I will however take over as Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway as planned on 1 July and we will move to Glasgow as soon as we possibly can. We are so sorry not to be able to meet you all face to face at the moment, and we are very much looking

forward to the time when we can do so, and to visiting you all in your churches. I would like to thank everyone in the Diocese who has been so helpful and supportive thus far, especially all the office staff, the Synod Clerk, and the Diocesan Secretary, Treasurer and Surveyor.

I have often been asked what my Strategy for the Diocese and my Mission Plan is. I attach my reflections and thoughts as I move towards the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway.

After years of putting magazines together for congregations. After years of writing the Rector's letter and being told my efforts were worthy but a little dull. After years of finding theological articles of real depth and historical articles of real interest. After years I realised as I was leaving my last congregation what the choir really wanted came under the generic heading – Gossip. So here it is...

Having been born and brought up in the North East of England, Sunderland to be precise, I came to Edinburgh Theological College in 1976. My first degree was in History at Leeds and the attraction of Edinburgh was partly to come North properly, having gone south for my first degree.

During my time at Coates Hall I did get to know a former Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, Francis Moncrieff, who was later a part of my reason for coming back to exercise ministry in Scotland. After College and the University of Edinburgh, I returned to the Diocese of Durham to serve my curacy in a mining village called Horden, at that time in the middle of the extensive Durham coalfields. I am the only member of the current College of Bishops to have been trained in and by the SEC.

Towards the end of my curacy, I was invited to become Chaplain to the University of Leeds, where one of my next-door neighbours was David Jenkins. As I was beginning to explore returning to a congregational ministry, + Richard Holloway asked me to come to Edinburgh to rescue St Salvador's Stenhouse, opposite the prison and in the middle of a social housing scheme. The congregation and building had been established by Francis Moncrieff for whom + Richard and myself had enormous respect. Time is too short for me to tell you of the



burglaries, bricks through the windows, youth drugs project and endless efforts to raise money through jumble sales, tombolas and fetes. It was all great fun and the Holy Spirit moved among us.

During my time there, I met and married Elspeth at St Salvador's. We often thank God that the congregation just allowed us to be ourselves and were never intrusive while being totally supportive, the SEC at its best.

At that time, I also became part time Diocesan Director of Ordinands for Edinburgh and then Provincial Director of Ordinands, appointed by the Primus + George Henderson. To illustrate how things have changed, I can tell you that the Primus's advice was not to put too much effort into selection and recruitment because the SEC 'is finished'. He was part of a generation who had lost confidence in the church. The situation is now the opposite as many of us realise just how rich the sacramental life of our churches is. We have confidence that God is with us, that the Holy Spirit is moving among us and we are saying by our faithfulness – we have an experience of the living God. That confidence is what I personally know, and experience and it is a confidence shared by the present College of Bishops and I believe, the Province.

Despite being Provincial Director of Ordinands and doing some, what would now be called, transitional ministry, I decided I wanted to return to having my own congregation and so I moved to St Michael and All Saints, Edinburgh. My intention always was to give up the vocational discernment work, but the Vestry were paid for my PDO time and so who would turn down a new Rector with a dowry?

Faithfulness is often interpreted as preservation, as keeping things as they always have been. My first years in the new charge were not always easy as we sought to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit in changing patterns and gender of ministry. I was probably the last Rector in SEC to have to deal with protests in the street. Fortunately, the worst was during an outdoor procession and so we just sang louder!

God is with us in so many ways we do not always realise. The years in Edinburgh, on reflection, were full of interference by the Holy Spirit. Students who were musicians came to sing with us, then found faith with us, made their home with us. Students came from the Theological Institute, spent time with us – I often wonder what happened to Kelvin Holdsworth.....

When I arrived in the congregation there seemed a lot of elderly people and when I left sixteen years later, there seemed a lot of elderly people and a lot of younger people and children.

And I was still trying to give up vocational discernment work. The regular meetings I had with the College of Bishops on vocation, meant I gained an invaluable sense of the Province and its potential through the Bishops and visiting every Diocese. The visiting was curtailed when I became Dean of Edinburgh but that brought new challenges and new insights into Diocesan and Provincial life.

Then on to Argyll and the Isles. Fortunately, I love the sea and have enjoyed rough crossings in choppy waters. That could be the subject of many a sermon, but it has just been a fact of life for the past decade. It has been such an exciting time working with the Diocesan officers, the clergy and all the people to make real the building of the kingdom of God with limited resources, small scattered congregations, and vast distances. This we did together because of the commitment, energy, enthusiasm and faithfulness of the clergy and laity who recognise and know that God is with us.

Having limited resources I knitted our own Mission programmes: 'Building the Vision' was like sending out a knitting pattern for a balaclava, and when we met at the Diocesan Conference Day it was inspirational and great fun seeing what could be done with a balaclava. It is a great privilege to be a bishop and to be a small part of so many congregations where the Holy Spirit moves and encourages and blesses our efforts and vision.

The privilege of being Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway is indeed a challenge, but God is with us. I ask you all to pray for me and for Elspeth as we prepare to move. If you were to ask me what I need most as I become Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, I would say I stand most in need of God's gift of Wisdom. Please pray that God will grant me Wisdom.

May God bless and keep you

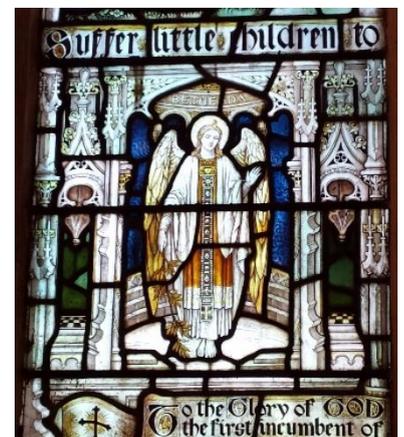
+ Kevin

From Reuben "Don't say I didn't tell you anything about the new bishop!"

Sunday Services to join in...

"Finding Jesus with George Productions"

Now that Stephen is getting ready to return to work I cannot make the services at home by myself so I shall be using my weekly trips to check on the church buildings to record footage to make a service. I am planning that there will be one a month from each Charge Church building and the other Sundays we join in the Provincial Services and the Cathedrals services.



Sunday 7 June – Provincial Service at <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>
(Or on the telephone for people with no internet at all, number 0800 260 5801
Meeting ID: 817 1523 4515 followed by # from 1045am)

St Mary's Cathedral Service at <https://thecathedral.org.uk/worship/>

Sunday 14 June – Our service from St Johns at www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk

Sunday 21 June – Provincial Service at <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>
(Or on the telephone for people with no internet at all, number 0800 260 5801
Meeting ID: 817 1523 4515 followed by # from 1045am)

St Mary's Cathedral Service at <https://thecathedral.org.uk/worship/>

Sunday 28 June – Our service from St Margarets at www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk

Sunday 5 July – Provincial Service at <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>
(Or on the telephone for people with no internet at all, number 0800 260 5801
Meeting ID: 817 1523 4515 followed by # from 1045am)

St Mary's Cathedral Service at <https://thecathedral.org.uk/worship/>

Sunday 12 July – Our service from St Johns at www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk

Sunday 19 July – Provincial Service at <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>
(Or on the telephone for people with no internet at all, number 0800 260 5801
Meeting ID: 817 1523 4515 followed by # from 1045am)

St Mary's Cathedral Service at <https://thecathedral.org.uk/worship/>

Sunday 26 July – Our service from St Margarets at www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk

The Readings for the Sunday Services are on the **Pewsheets** each week and can be downloaded along with the **Weekly Intercession** leaflet and the **Sunday Reflection**. If you don't have access to the website and would like one posted to you please let me know and I'll gladly send you a printed one.

Midweek Services to join in...

Wednesday 17 June 7pm on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88149371244?pwd=RjB2LzU3a0hvR3M4amJESjJBSDR6dz09>

Meeting ID: 881 4937 1244 Password: 157229

Wednesday 15 July 7pm on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83104115640?pwd=NjY2ajg0MnE5b3FXZHc5Y1N2UTdHQOT09>

Meeting ID: 831 0411 5640 Password: 077538



Services on DVD

Reuben has been sending out a few DVDs to people who cannot access the internet at all. These DVDs will continue to be sent out while we are making our own services. Please use the Freephone line (detailed above) to join in the Provincial Services if you do not have internet access at all. **Please do not use this number if you can watch online** it costs the SEC for each person using the number.



Lent & EASTER APPEAL 2020



Glasgow City Mission – Thank you for the donations sent in we do not have a final figure yet because some people still have collecting boxes to return to church when we are able to receive them

but at the moment between the two Charges we have raised over £600. Do send further donations to the Rector to be sent off.

Pioneering in Renfrewshire

As we start to think about, and hope for, a return to our church buildings in the coming months – the perspective of our church life will inevitably be changed. We can use these weeks of preparation to think about how we might BE church in a new environment. What are we doing well during COVID19? What could we think about doing? What do we need to develop? Where do we discern God calling us to be? And how?



What would you like to see St Margarets & St Johns doing in the community?

What would you value happening in our building?

What have you always thought it would be good to do?

Do you perceive in your prayer a prompting from God at this time for us?

Coronavirus and opening our churches – Currently the **College of Bishops** are working with other **Faith Leaders** in Scotland and the **Scottish Government** to develop a way of opening our buildings in the coming months. Guidance will be issued in due course and each Vestry will need to demonstrate that we can maintain the social distancing requirements that will be issued and then the Vestry of each Church will need to ask the Bishop to open again. This will all take time. In the meantime people have been asking about the situation with funerals. Answer: Church Funerals are not permitted. **As Rector I can conduct Funerals at the Crematoriums** following local authority guidelines and **I can conduct Burials at the Graveside**. The number of mourners is extremely limited. Please call Reuben if you want to talk about any issues raised by the guidance as the regulations change from time to time.

Social Events

to help keep us together

The following Social events have been organized on Zoom for members of both Charges to come along to. *If you are feeling self-conscious about the length of your hair you can still attend with your webcam turned off!*

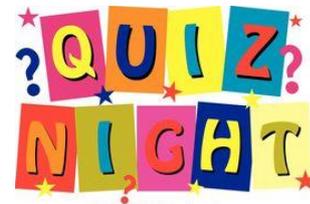


Each event will start at 7pm and finish by 830pm come for as long as you are able. All social events have the same Zoom access link details...

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89907787098?pwd=MHZQNENjUDJrUDhCbY5S2xRU1Rqdz09>

Meeting ID: 899 0778 7098 Password: 784907

Wednesday 10 June QUIZ NIGHT a selection of questions with 3 rounds, play alone or with others in your household – a bit of fun and something different!



Wednesday 24 June Images of Trinity – looking and talking about the images we have used to present the *Community of God: Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier*

Wednesday 8 July Favourite COVID19 cartoons & funnies – what are we learning about ourselves? Reflections, conversation and chat



Wednesday 22 July Let's talk about being Church in COVID19 – how has it been for you? What do you enjoy? What do you miss? How do you feel?



Bp Kevin is married to **Elspeth** and she writes this to us...

I am looking forward very much to meeting you all, to joining you in worship and to visiting your churches. I am very sad that the Covid-19 restrictions have delayed our move to Glasgow and Galloway. I hope it will not be too long before we can move house and meet you all, even if we have to keep two metres apart! I am also looking forward to being back in Glasgow again and to getting to know the Diocese better. I lived and worked in Glasgow for four years after finishing my PhD degree, and again for two years later in my career, and I have very happy memories of my time there. My mother was born and brought up in Helensburgh and throughout my childhood we often visited my Scottish Granny there. It will be good to be back in the West.

I was born and brought up in Durham and then went to University in Edinburgh for my first degree in Planning and my PhD which focussed on the Economic Development of the Scottish Highlands and Islands and on strategic planning. My first job was in Strategic Planning with the City of Glasgow Council. I then moved to the Scottish Development Agency and had several roles with them, first in Glasgow in Corporate planning in Bothwell Street, then in Edinburgh in Business, setting up a regional office in the Borders and then back to Glasgow as Head of Rural Development. When I met and married Kevin, I moved to be Head of Economic Development for the City of Edinburgh Council.

I then had a big career shift as I wanted to use the skills and experience, I had

gained in another area that mattered to me more personally. I was Macmillan Cancer Support's Director for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for 10 years. I then moved to my present role as Chief Operating Officer for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh.

As we begin to meet you all: two quirky things to tell you. Firstly, we decided I would keep my own name when I married Kevin so don't be confused if you hear someone asking who Dr Atkinson is. Secondly, I have been a vegetarian since I was a student, but Kevin is most definitely not!

I very much hope that we can meet soon. Elspeth

Daily Prayer

Our YouTube channel is hosting our Live Streamed Offices of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

9am Morning Prayer & 5.30pm Evening Prayer

live from St Gabriel's Oratory (*aka Reuben's attic!*)

Monday to Friday each week.

How to join in... **follow the link on www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk**

You can find the words of the service at

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices/>



To Join in: please say the words in **BOLD and the **Gloria** and the **Even numbered verses of the Psalms and Canticles****

The service lasts 15-25mins depending upon the day – we use the Weekly Intercessions leaflet and Pewsheets prayers

Prayer Requests:- At the Daily Offices the prayer requests sent in are held before God. Please send your prayer requests by email Rector@SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk or by txt 07971 895897 or voicemail, post them to 29 Gleniffer Road, Renfrew PA4 ORD



Telling our story of Coronavirus Church 2020

At the Provincial Mission Board earlier in the month we were discussing how we 'remember' the Coronavirus experience for future generations. How did we cope? What did our churches do? How did we do ministry? How did we look after each other? What happened around our communities? What did we pray? What did we think and feel and worry about.....?

Reuben is receiving any contributions you are happy to offer for a 'book' of our Charges experiences of the COVID19 happening we are living through. Please send you words, or audio recordings, or photos and images or video blogs and we can put them together in a 'book' of how we have faced this extra-ordinary once in a lifetime happening. To talk about what you might like to contribute feel free to contact Reuben and have a chat about your ideas. How has it been, is it being for you?

Looking to the Future with Bp Kevin

Reflections/My Manifesto for the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway

Dear Friends,

I believe in God.

I believe in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

I believe in the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway.

And that is why I have responded to what I believe to be God's call discerned with and through the College of Bishops, to come to the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway.



Faithfulness is my strategic plan as I move to the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway. Faithfulness is an old fashioned word but at the electoral synod meeting, attended by the whole College of Bishops, during the group work it was the word faithfulness, that summarised my experience of that group and the whole electoral process in Glasgow and Galloway.

Faithfulness of the people who turned out for electoral meetings on a Saturday. Faithfulness they described in how, often, small congregations meet on Sundays for worship. Faithfulness they described as their experience of God. Faithfulness of God shown in their yearning to be better disciples of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to live ever more closely with Him. Faithfulness to share their real experience of knowing, feeling, God is with us.

God's faithfulness to us we see in the life, death, and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. **They** crucified Jesus, all that is worst in human nature, jealousy, anger, revenge, certainty, **they** combined to kill Jesus who showed the full potential of the love in which we recognise the image of God in and with us. The women laid Jesus in the tomb, the place of darkness, failure, disappointment, to prove God is with us in love in our darkest places, whether we recognise that fact or not, even when we feel God is absent and ask "Where is love?". God is with us in the question, the doubt. Whatever faith is, it is not certainty. Paradoxically, faithfulness teaches us to embrace the questions and the doubts, to have faith in those questions and doubts.

Faithfulness is expressed in our life together as the Scottish Episcopal Church. We have a rich experience of prayer, worship, the sacramental life, intellectual rigour and debate, fearless engagement with culture. Faithfulness has been our experience during the COVID pandemic. The faithfulness of our clergy and laity who have worked so hard to sustain worship, the sacramental life, to prove God is with us, through computers, and tablets, and phones.

Faithfulness to love, to God who is love, as it was in love that we closed the doors of our churches, not in fear of the virus. God is with us, we continue to pray. And as someone famous said, our streets are not empty, they are full of love in small acts of kindness, consideration, generosity and faithfulness.

Perhaps the pandemic has brought us resurrection, we can leave behind the tomb of cynicism. We now recognise that there are nurses and carers who cherish their patients, knowing that their touch may be the last. Doctors who carry their patients in their hearts. Teachers who want their pupils not only to learn but to flourish. Priests who say their prayers and serve others, because they are faithful. The people on the check-outs in our local supermarket faithfully, patiently, explaining that it is not rationing, we are simply being asked to make sure there is enough for all. That is the front line, it is dangerous.

The cynic is the person who is determined never to be disappointed again. Jesus' resurrection proves God is with us in the tomb of fear, disappointment and loneliness and love bursts out of the tomb of cynicism.

God is with us in Faithfulness. God's faithfulness to us, which is my experience of God. And **our** faithfulness to God which is my experience of Glasgow and Galloway.

Faithfulness which I pray I may show to God and to the Diocese through:

- **Encouragement**, energy and enthusiasm: Faith is so exciting; faithfulness is the Diocesan hallmark, let us encourage each other as I visit congregations and clergy.
- **Experience**: let us look at our strengths, how do we, have we, will we, experience God. Let us move nearer to God together in faithfulness to God and one another.
- **Effecting**: Building the Kingdom of God through faithfulness is our aim and our purpose. That means we do not focus on age, numbers of people in church, money, or lack of it. We will build the Kingdom of God, who is love, through faithfulness. We will build and grow because God is with us. We will all be able to say when asked why we go to church, faithfulness will say: **"Because there I have an experience of the living God."**

+ Kevin

To support the life and ministry of our churches you can send your donations using online banking or telephone banking using these details

For a Reference give your name

St Johns Scottish Episcopal Church
Bank of Scotland
Sort code 80-16-53
Account Number 00356544

St Margarets Episcopal Church
Royal Bank of Scotland
Sort Code 83-26-22
Account Number 00196266

Remember the needs of the Church and the world in your Giving

Please continue to send your giving to St Johns or St Margarets to the Rector Rev'd Reuben Preston, 29 Gleniffer Road, Renfrew PA4 ORD and Reuben will ensure your cheques are banked If you

would like to give directly please use these details.

or you can give via PayPal at www.paypal.me/reubenjamespreston and put *St Johns/Margarets* in the message box.



Sunday Worship Ministry

Rota in church suspended

please join in the online Services if you can

Sunday 7 June **Trinity Sunday**

Readings are: Gen 1.1-2.4a Psalm 8 2 Corinthians 13.11-13 Matthew 28.16-20
we are following the Provincial Service or the St Marys Cathedral Service

Sunday 14 June **Pentecost 2**

Readings are: Gen 18.1-15 Psalm 116.1,10-17 Rom 5.1-8 Matthew 9.35-10.8
945am online Service for St Johns & St Margarets recorded in St Johns

Sunday 21 June **Pentecost 3**

Readings are: Gen 21.8-21 Psalm 86.1-10,16-17 Rom 6.1-11 Matthew 10.24-39
we are following the Provincial Service or the St Marys Cathedral Service

Sunday 28 June **Pentecost 4**

Readings are: Gen 22.1-14 Psalm 13 Rom 6.12-23 Matthew 10.40-42
945am online Service for St Johns & St Margarets recorded in St Margarets

Sunday 5 July **Pentecost 5**

Readings are: Gen 24.34-38,42-49,58-67 Psalm 45.11-18 Rom 7.15-25 Matthew 11.16-19,25-30
we are following the Provincial Service or the St Marys Cathedral Service

Sunday 12 July **Pentecost 6**

Readings are: Gen 25.19-34 Psalm 119.105-112 Rom 8.1-11 Matthew 13.1-9,18-23
945am online Service for St Johns & St Margarets recorded in St Johns

Sunday 19 July **Pentecost 7**

Readings are: Gen 28.10-19 Psalm 139.1-11,22-23 Rom 8.12-25 Matthew 13.24-30,36-43
we are following the Provincial Service or the St Marys Cathedral Service

Sunday 26 July **Pentecost 8**

Readings are: Gen 29.15-28 Psalm 105.1-11 Rom 8.26-39 Matthew 13.31-33,44-52
945am online Service for St Johns & St Margarets recorded in St Margarets

Available from Saturday are : the **Pewsheets for the week**, the **Intercessions Sheet for the week** and the **Reflection for the Sunday Service**

All our ONLINE Service are on the website www.SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk

St Marys Cathedral Online Worship is available at
www.thecathedral.org.uk

And you can watch the National SEC Services from
<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>



We say thank you to our Pastoral Assistants Wilma & John (and Vanessa) as they have kept in touch with us all by phone and helped Reuben to connect with people in need of assistance with the services online.

Keep an eye out on the Diocesan website and the Facebook pages as Rt Rev Kevin Pearson, our Bishop-Elect, who will take over as the 15th Bishop of the United Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway on the 1st July 2020.

www.glasgow.anglican.org **Facebook @GGEpiscopal**

From the GG Diocese Facebook page **"We stand in solidarity with the people suffering and dying at the hands of racism throughout the world. The events in America are not confined to those shores or to this time, the history of slavery and racism blights our world, but we can build a better future.**

We pray for forgiveness, for those ways in which we have benefited from the subjugation of others and the atrocities of the slave trade through all aspects of our society.

We commit ourselves to fight and eradicate injustice in all its forms, to work for radical reconciliation, and to lift up God's children as we seek to bring in the Kingdom."

"What does love look like? Surely not one man's knee on another man's neck, crushing the God-given life out of him. Such callous disregard for another human being's life, to snuff it out so violently and brutally even as the unarmed victim pleads for mercy – that is not what love looks like."

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 

The next Newsletter will be produced as we know more about how the land lies re COVID-19 but will be in July 2020 with more information of where we are heading together

Contact: Rector@SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk

Mob: 07971 895897