

Songs of Praise for St Swithuns' Day

Name:

Address:

Telephone number OR e-mail contact:.....

Your chosen hymn:

Use this box to give your reasons for choosing this hymn, what it means to you OR who you would like to remember. If you need more space, please continue on a separate sheet.

Please tick if you would like a CD of the Service to listen to as I cannot watch on-line.



from
**St Swithuns,
Cheswardine**



United Benefice of
Cheswardine
Child's Ercall
Hales
Hinstock
Sambrook and
Stoke-on-Tern

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Rev Becky Richards
01630 661204
Churchwardens
Harold Lewis -
Cheswardine
01630 661329

The Vicar Writes

This morning I joined a couple of our wonderful 'cleaning volunteers' to get the church ready for re-opening from this weekend, but only for private prayer. We hope that some services will be allowed as the weeks go by but understand it will be far from 'business as usual.' I will unlock the main door around 9am and leave it open until I go in to pray at 5pm. There will be hand sanitizer and wipes available in the lobby area and instructions for those using the building. I do hope that you may find it helpful to come in and sit for a while in this space where generations have prayed and sought meaning in the uncertainties of life.

I, for one have been reflecting on the significance of these strange times. What is God trying to tell or show us... as individuals... as a community ...as a nation and as a globe? Or, for those who struggle with theological language, 'What am I learning or observing about myself and about the world? For a few weeks, time almost 'stood still', we all pressed the pause button on our busy lives and allowed ourselves and creation to breathe a bit. Perhaps this is the 'Sabbath rest' which Creation and humanity need to live well and in greater harmony with one another. Do let me know your thoughts too. May I recommend, that before the pressures of 'life as usual' crowd in, you take time to record what you feel you will take away from the experience of 'Spring in Lockdown.' If anyone wishes to share their musings, my e-mail is: beckyrichards@hotmail.co.uk.

Speaking of 'time standing still', I am very conscious that our clock is still awaiting repair. It really needs a big overhaul and possibly electrification of the chiming mechanism, but the PCC realise that in the current financial climate this is hardly a priority. We will therefore use the donations we have received and the money we have put aside to repair the pendulum and get it striking as soon as the specialist clock mechanics can get to us. Those of us who live and sleep near the tower will need once again to readjust to its marking of time!

Finally, as I write this we are once again experiencing thunder and heavy rain which is a fitting introduction to our St Swithuns Day celebration. St Swithun was Bishop of Winchester 852-862 AD. Upon his death they buried him, according to his wishes, in the churchyard 'where rain and the steps of passersby might fall on his grave'. According to legend, when on 15th July 971 they removed his bones to place them inside the Cathedral, a great storm ensued. And so developed the tradition:

***“St Swithun’s day if thou dost rain. For forty days it will remain.
St Swithun’s day if thou be fair. For forty days ‘twill rain nae mare”***

I wonder what 15th July 2020 will bring? Whatever the weather, we plan to mark it together.

St Swithun’s Day Celebrations – 15th July 2020

Sadly, although we may be able to hold a small service by then, there is unlikely to be singing or refreshments allowed in church. We are therefore planning to celebrate in two ways:

Competition to design a new altar frontal

We would like to make a new altar frontal on a white backing for St Katherine’s chapel. This is to commemorate the Covid Pandemic of Easter 2020; to record it in fabric. The white altar frontals are used at Christmas, Easter and special occasions. Their designs are usually simple but striking and represent something of the meaning of that season, for example the cross speaks of sacrifice, but also hope. Please remember that designs must be simple enough to translate into fabric.

The dimensions are: 200cm long by 93cm deep and designs should be drawn out on a sheet of A4 white paper and labelled (on the reverse) with your name and contact details (telephone or e-mail address). There will be a separate category for children’s designs; please put the child’s age on the back of the entry.

They can be left at the Community Shop or posted through my letterbox (3, High Street).

The closing date for entries is Wednesday 8th July.

All designs will be displayed in the church over the weekend of **July 11th/12th** and you will have the opportunity to vote on your favourite.

The Winner will be announced in our special On-line Village Songs of Praise.



Community Songs of Praise for St Swithun’s Day

It may be some time before we can all gather in church to sing hymns, but we would like you to choose your favourite, tell us the reason why and we will put together an ‘On-line Cheswardine Songs of Praise’ to go live on Wednesday 15th July. We hope you will be willing to film yourself with a mobile phone, giving your reasons for choosing the hymn... or perhaps dedicating it to someone special. We will try to include a good selection of the hymns chosen and represent a good cross-section of our Community. It would help us to plan this service (and record the contributors) if you can reply as soon as possible by filling out the form overleaf and returning it to the box in the Community Shop or posting it through my letterbox (3, High Street) before Sunday 5th July. If you can’t access the internet but would like to listen, please let us know and we will record it onto a CD for you to listen to.

