

A Prayer for Father's Day
From the re: Worship website.

Loving God, whom we call Father,

We give you thanks for the people who have been our earthly fathers in this life, and we pray for all sorts and conditions of Fathers.

For fathers who work hard to balance the needs of everyday life, not least in these weeks of pandemic.

For fathers who may have lacked a good role model when young but have become brilliant fathers to their children.

For fathers who by their own account were not always there for their children but who offer those now grown children their love and support.

For fathers who have been wounded by the neglect or hostility of their children.

For fathers, who as stepfathers, freely choose fatherhood and earn the respect of their stepchildren.

For fathers who have lost a child to death and continue to hold that child in their hearts.

For men who do not have children but cherish the next generation as if they were their own.

For those who have fathered us in their role as mentors and guides through life.

For men about to become fathers: may they openly delight in their children.

And for those whose fathers have died, but live on in their memory

And whose love continues to nurture us.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, who is both father and mother to us all.

Amen.

The Blessing

May our Lord Jesus Christ

And God our Father

Give us eternal encouragement and good hope;
encourage our hearts and strengthen us in every good deed
now and always.

Amen.

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Sunday June 21st, 2020
The benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe
“Keeping in Touch” Edition 13
The Second Sunday after Trinity.
Father's Day at Midsummer.

Greetings everyone!

As I write, we have just heard that Dame Vera Lynn has passed away at the grand age of 103 years. There are fulsome tributes to her on TV, radio and social media and I am old enough to remember listening to her singing on my grandmother's Bakelite radio as I sat perched on her knee in front of an open fire. The song that tends to be associated with her most is “We'll Meet Again” though “White Cliffs of Dover” comes a close second. Truly a national treasure, she is a lady who will never be forgotten.

“We'll meet again” is a phrase that must have kept many people going over the past weeks as they have been separated literally from loved ones and I do hope that some of you have been able to visit family or friends again this week in a safe “bubble”. It was very special seeing my youngest granddaughter Kitty again this week in Coventry after a gap of five months and let's hope that soon it will be possible to spend more time with all of our loved ones.

Our churches are opening too for private prayer – another step towards seeing each other, though in a very controlled way to start with.

St James Church at Little Paxton will be open on Sundays from 10.00am to 12.00pm. Mary Parnham will ring a bell at 10.00am to announce the start of the opening on June 21st.

St Leonards Church at Southoe will be open on Sundays from 11.00am to 4.00pm. Dick Saw will ring a bell at 11.00am to likewise announce the start of the opening on June 21st.

Holy Trinity Church at Great Paxton needs a good clean before we re-open after the organ project's completion on Sunday July 5th. More details next week.

St Laurence Church at Diddington will remain closed for the time being.

This Sunday we are thinking about Father's Day which comes at midsummer. Turn over to see Jimmy bear with his dad Zebedee!

With love and prayers, Annette. 01480 211048.

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Little Jimmy Bear has become somewhat of a media star as he appears on our weekly benefice You Tube Sunday services. Named after St James, the patron saint of Little Paxton Church, he now has his father Zebedee to keep him company. Here is Jimmy treating his dad to a Father's Day tea, part of Anita's backdrop to this week's service.

The Gospel reading for today is taken from Matthew Chapter 6.

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

This, then, is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

The Collect for the Second Sunday after Trinity.

**Faithful Creator
Whose mercy never fails:
Deepen our faithfulness to you
And to your living word,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Reflections for Today from Annette.

'Well, I didn't know that Father's Day was in the Church's year as a set festival!'

So said someone to me recently – but, of course, it isn't. Unlike Mothering Sunday which falls mid-way through Lent, Father's Day is not in the Christian Calendar. But what are its origins?

Some think that honouring fathers at midsummer goes right back to pre-Christian times when the ancient tradition of sun worship in some cultures saw the sun as the father of the universe. The sun was at its strongest it seemed at the summer solstice, so father sun was celebrated at midsummer.

Then again, in the middle ages the Catholic Church celebrated St Joseph's Day on March 19th and at the same time a nod was given to fathers for the important role they played.

But it was in the USA that Father's Day became a set time to honour and celebrate fathers. Search on google for Father's Day and you will find a lady called Sonora Smart Dodd who felt it important to have a day to honour fathers as well as mothers. The first Father's Day was celebrated in June 1910 and most countries across the world now have a special day for fathers – even if it isn't in June.

Sonora apparently had a wonderful father who looked after her and her siblings after their mother died, and her love for him made her more determined to set a special day for all fathers.

Not everyone has or has had a good relationship with their father or father figures so for them today may be a day to sidestep. But most of us hopefully have enjoyed a good relationship with our father, or a grandfather, or father figure and we can think about them and give thanks for all that they have done and been for us.

Here is a poem from our service backdrop for today.

What is a Dad?

**A dad is someone who wants to catch you when you fall
but instead picks you up, brushes you off, and lets you try again.**

**A dad is someone who wants to keep you from making mistakes
but instead lets you find your own way, even though his heart breaks in silence
when you get hurt.**

**A dad is someone who holds you when you cry, corrects you when you break
the rules, shines with pride when you succeed, and has faith in you even when
you fail.**

