

Open benefice churches from July 12th, 2020.

Little Paxton.

**Sundays: 9.15am Morning Service with readings and prayers.
Open for quiet time/private prayer: Sundays 10.00am to 12 noon.
Wednesdays 2.00pm to 4.00pm.**

Great Paxton.

**Sundays: Public worship at 10.30am for 30 minutes
Then open for quiet time/private prayer from 11.00am to 4.00pm.**

Southoe.

**Open for quiet time/private prayer:
Sundays 11.00am to 4.00pm
There will be public worship on Sunday July 24th at 3.00pm**

Let us Pray.

Jesus the sower, whatever I am today, whatever the mix of path, rock, thorns or soil help me to become good ground for you, for your word and for your presence. Be with those who are struggling this day for any reason who long for the refreshing waters of your healing spirit.

Amen.

*Lord, we would grow with you
In sunshine and rain, in darkness and light
In cold days and summer days, from Springtime to Winter
Lord, we would grow with you
Lord, we would grow with you
And bring forth fruit, that is pleasing to you
Fed by your living water, giving sustenance to others
Lord, we would grow with you.*

A Blessing.
God be with us, God be in us
God be around us; God be behind us.
Sow in our hearts the good seed of love, joy and peace;
That we might be a blessing to people around us.
Amen.

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Sunday July 12th, 2020

**The Benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe
“Keeping in Touch” Edition 16: The Fifth Sunday after Trinity.
Matthew 13 v 1-9 and 18-23: The Parable of the Sower.**



**“Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.
Let anyone with ears listen!”**

This edition of Keeping in Touch comes as always with prayers and good wishes to you all. I hope you are comfortable in your circumstances, but if life for you is challenging or a struggle, I do hope that there are people who you can reach out to.

We continue with restrictions in our lives that some find easier than others to live with, and I know some folk are struggling in all sorts of ways.

A time of prayer, just sitting quietly and asking God to touch us with his healing peace, can be a great help. I listen to services from the Iona Community sometimes online which I find very calming. If you don't use the internet, maybe take a simple prayer or a line from the bible and ask God to speak to you through it.

“Be still and know that I am God” could be one such prayer or simple “arrow” prayers like:

“Lord, help me, show me what to do, be with me, give me courage”

Sometimes we may think our simple prayers for others do not carry much weight; but rather like sowing a small seed that grows into a strong plant, our sincere prayers, in God's grace and in his time, can make a difference.

You will find details of how we are opening our churches on Page 3 and we hope our small efforts as we emerge out of lockdown will be blessed by God.

With love and prayers, Annette.

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PAGE ONE

Gospel Reading Matthew Chapter 13 v 1-9 and 18-23

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!

Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

A Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal

that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The Sower by
Vincent Van Gogh



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Reflections from Annette

Suggestion: sit with the Parable of The Sower for some minutes. Read it through carefully. Maybe read it with someone else. I wonder what thoughts might come to your mind or the mind of the person with you. For me, the passage led me to considering the sower throwing the seed to be our Creator sending out the word. We are like that word; we are the seed he scatters. Think about it – we are planted in different communities, families, marriages, work situations, ministries, vocations. God scatters us and plants us in the midst of a variety of settings. The creator sends us out and longs for us to be as fruitful as we can be. That doesn't mean we have to exhaust ourselves running from the moment we wake up – mentally or physically.

It means that God invites us to immerse ourselves in his presence and let him work in us to produce good fruits of love, and joy and peace. That might result in our creative endeavours to help others.

It might mean prayers which simply offer those for whom we care into God's love and light.

Recently, I have been researching the lives of some of the past vicars of our Paxton churches. I have been wondering what mark they left on their people's hearts. It is impossible to tell their stories now in any depth, especially those who lived a long time ago. But I will leave you with a poem by RS Thomas which gives me a lot of hope that the small acts of kindness we do, really do bear fruit.

The Country Clergy

I see them working in old rectories
By the sun's light, by candlelight,
Venerable men, their black cloth
A little dusty, a little green
With holy mildew. And yet their skulls,
Ripening over so many prayers,
Topped into the same grave
With oafs and yokels. They left no books,
Memorial to their lonely thought
In grey parishes; rather they wrote
On men's hearts and in the minds
Of young children sublime words
Too soon forgotten. God in his time
Or out of time will correct this.

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