

End the Week with CME - April 11, 2008

11th Apr 2008

Welcome to End the Week with CME! This weekly email is sent automatically to Clergy and Readers in the diocese (if you don't want to receive it, please send an email to CovEW-unsubscribe@lists.covlec.org) but anyone is welcome to subscribe to the list, and we are especially keen to pass it on to any interested lay people, especially those who may have responsibility for preaching. To subscribe they simply need to email CovEW-subscribe@lists.covlec.org.

Coming Up

Looking at Matthew

This is the year of Matthew, and after Pentecost we have a straight run through his gospel until the Sundays before Advent. This study day will look at the structure of the gospel and some of Matthew's overall themes, together with an opportunity to examine one or two passages in greater depth.

Tuesday 22 April 2008, at Offa House, 10am-3pm with an abbreviated repeat from 7.30-9.30pm. Led by Richard Cooke. Cost: £30 (including lunch) for the daytime course, £12.50 (including coffee and cakes) for the evening. Grants of half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through sarah.palmer@covcofe.org.

Ordination Services - understanding the theology of the liturgy

What is ordination all about? The Common Worship Ordination Services have been in use for a couple of years now and a study edition of the texts was published in 2007. This study day will look at the theology behind the service, how it is reflected in the liturgy, and what it says about a contemporary Anglican understanding of ordained ministry. Weds 14 May 2008, at The Red Hill Christian Centre, Snitterfield, 10am-3pm. Led by Adrian Daffern and Richard Cooke. Cost: £30 (including lunch). Grants for half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through sarah.palmer@covcofe.org.

Women Bishops - but what kind?

A study day for women and men. 10am - 3pm, Monday 9 June 2008 at Offa House.

Legislation for the ordination of women bishops will come before the General Synod in the near future. It is a timely moment to ask what we expect of bishops in general, and what we think women bishops might bring to the role. What kind of leadership is appropriate for the church of the future?

The day will be chaired by Katrina Scott (Diocesan Adviser for Women's Ministry), and there will be input from Rosie Ward (Leadership Development Adviser, CPAS). Cost: £30 (including lunch). Grants for half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through sarah.palmer@covcofe.org.

Vocations 'Taster' Morning

Saturday 26 April 2008, 9.30am - 12.30pm, at Warwick Gates Community Centre, Cressida Close, Warwick Gates, Warwick CV34 6DZ.

Are you interested in finding out more about ministry opportunities within the Church of England, or do you know someone else who is? Ministries covered at the 'Taster' morning will include:

- Church Army
- Reader Ministry
- Ordained Ministry
- Ordained Local Ministry
- Ministry in Secular Employment
- Non-stipendiary Ministry
- Pioneer Ministry

All delegates will be able to attend a choice of two sessions, at which they will learn more about the particular ministry, from someone involved in it. For more details, go to:

<http://www.coventrydiocese.org/upload/file/Vocations%20Taster%20Morning%202008.pdf>

Please let Susan Mileham (Vocations Advisers Team Leader) know if you hope to attend by emailing susan@mileham.net or phoning 01926 426250.

NSM Meeting

There will be a meeting for all NSMs of the diocese, whatever the focus of their ministry, on Wednesday 7 May 2008, 7.30pm at St James' Church, Abbey Road, Whitley, Coventry.

A message from Pam Gould about the get-together:

"It is hoped that we can begin to put together a paper for the new Bishop, highlighting the contribution made to the life and witness of the Church in the Diocese by our large and disparate group. Maybe to look, too, at ways in which this contribution could be more creatively extended, where possible."

For more information, or to indicate you wish to attend the meeting, please email Pam Gould at revpamgould@aol.com.

Unity in Diversity: celebrating the breadth of Reader Ministry

The Central Readers' Council National Conference will be held Friday 12 - Sunday 14 September 2008 at the University of North Wales, Bangor.

The keynote speaker will be Canon Dr Christina Baxter CBE, and the Principal of St Johns College, Nottingham will be leading an exploration of 1 Corinthians 12. There will also be a number of seminars, led by Readers who are involved in different aspects of ministry outside the church, such as prisons, hospices, bereavement, education etc.

A core part of the weekend will be worship and fellowship, and throughout the weekend there will be an exhibition of various resources relevant to Reader Ministry.

Cost: £170 per head if you book before 30 June / £180 per head for bookings after 30 June. (Grants for up to half the cost may be claimed from the CME office, email Sarah.Palmer@CovCofE.org)

For more information, contact Alan Wakely, CRC Secretary, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ, crcsec@c-of-e.org.uk or Susan Salt, Chair of the organising committee, Christ Church Vicarage, Meadows Avenue, Thornton Cleve Leys, Lancashire FY5 2TW, nsalt@waitrose.com.

www.readers.cofe.anglican.org

Mission Training Opportunities Spring 2008 Coventry Cathedral & Hope08

An exciting programme of Mission preaching and teaching opportunities will take place at the Cathedral beginning Sunday 13 April, to help train and enable Christians to engage in Mission during this year of HOPE08. With special guest speakers such as Steven Croft, Sharon Stone and John Drane these are opportunities not to be missed!

For more details, go to:

<http://www.hope08coventry.com/CMS/uploads/842/documents/Mission%20Training%20Spring%2008%20small.pdf>

Notes on the Gospel Readings for Easter 5 (Sunday April 20, 2008) - John 14. 1-14

I've got funerals on my mind at the moment, as we're running the 'Learning Funeral Ministry' course for Readers and other lay people who may be called to this ministry. John 14.1-14 is part of Jesus' farewell to his disciples, as he prepares them for life without him. It's a staple passage for funeral services too, but set here as an Easter reading (part of the great fifty days, not forty as I mistakenly said last week - counting was never my strong point!).

What happens after we die? In general it seems to me that in our culture we have quite a tame idea of what might lie ahead. Someone described the concept of families reunited as a kind of 'eternal Sunday afternoon', thinking back to the Sundays of the fifties, sixties and seventies. (Woody Allen apparently once said that 'Eternity can seem a very long time. Especially towards the end'). And the popularity of Henry Scott Holland's 'Death is nothing at all' (ironically this was originally his description of a view of bereavement that he didn't believe in) encourages people to deny the stark truth of death; death is, in fact, everything. Shelia Hancock wrote her bestselling memoir of her husband, John Thaw, 'The Two of Us', she says, because she wanted to express 'how ghastly death is'. Death is, said Bernard Shaw, 'the ultimate statistic. One out of one dies.'

This is the background to this passage, which declares a much fuller and richer hope. Just a few chapters earlier we have read the story of Lazarus, where it is clear that the miracle consists in Jesus bringing back to life someone who is dead - dead as the proverbial doornail - so dead that the body is stinking (John 11.39).

In John 14, Jesus reassures the disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled'. They must believe that he is one sent from God (v.1), therefore he, alone, is able to bridge the gap between death and new life. Sometimes in funeral visits people have said to me 'But no-one's ever come back, have they?' The Easter message is that Jesus has, and so he is 'the way, the truth and the life' (v.6).

For John, Jesus is the bridge-person, the messenger from heaven. His identity was revealed by the resurrection, and in his gospel, John looks back and recognises that he can now see that Jesus was that

messenger all along. So in this 'farewell discourse', inspired by the Holy Spirit (John 16.13), John draws out Jesus' teaching so that 'his farewell words can be heard as the words of the exalted and living Christ' (A.Lincoln The Gospel according to St John, Continuum, 2005, p.385). Jesus forms the bridge over which his people may cross into the promised land of future life with God, a place beyond our imagining, the land of 'many mansions' (v.2).

And Finally...

(from the Grove Books monthly email - <http://www.grovebooks.co.uk>)

Mental Asylum

During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the Director how to determine whether or not a patient should be institutionalized or admitted in the asylum.

'Well,' said the Director, 'we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub.'

'Oh, I understand,' said the visitor. 'A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup.'

'No.' said the Director, 'A normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?'

That's all folks!

Richard

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