

## DIOCESAN STRATEGY PRAYER

Living God, Jesus calls his followers to seek first your Kingdom.

**Renew** us as we make your love known;

**Release** us to share freely together in mission;

**Rejuvenate** us to be fruitful in your service.

Give us courage, wisdom and compassion,

That strengthened with the grace of the Holy Spirit,

We may, as the Diocese of Sheffield,

Both flourish and grow through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Anyone wishing to book weddings and baptisms, please contact the Vicar.

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### **Churchwardens:**

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We have a hearing loop; please switch your hearing aid to the 'T' setting

If you would like to speak to someone or for someone to pray with you, please speak to the Clergy.

All are welcome to share bread and wine at Communion or a blessing at the altar rail.

For the toilets, go through the Lady Chapel, across the vestry and into the St James' Room corridor

Please join us for refreshments after the 10.30a.m. service.

### **COLLECT for Easter 4**

Risen Christ,

faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:

teach us to hear your voice

and to follow your command,

that all your people may be gathered into one flock,

to the glory of God the Father.

*Amen*

### **New Testament Reading Acts 9 v 36 - end**

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. <sup>37</sup> About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. <sup>38</sup> Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

<sup>39</sup> Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him

the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

<sup>40</sup> Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, “Tabitha, get up.” She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. <sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. <sup>42</sup> This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup> Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

### **Gospel Reading John 10 v 22 - 30**

Then came the Festival of Dedication<sup>[b]</sup> at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. <sup>24</sup> The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all<sup>[c]</sup>; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”

### **2 Corinthians Ch 5 verse 8**

*be present with the Lord*

*absent from the body, and to*

Even Christians have a tendency to be rooted on earth, and in all the things that we as humans find the need to spend time in doing. In the first part of this chapter, in his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul uses the imagery of the body as a tent or house. But sees that what is within the dwelling is what is important, as the dwelling is temporal but the life within is eternal with God. So that in death all we are is, *‘absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord’*.

There have been numerous discussions over the years as to whether humans are tripartite or bipartite, in essence whether we are body, soul and spirit, or body & soul/spirit refers to the same entity. Reams have been written and argued over, with the one constant point of agreement being the temporal nature of the body. Verses 2 – 4 of this passage refer to us having new bodies as this present body is *‘swallowed up by life’*, which is an interesting phrase to refer to death by!

What we can be certain of is that this ‘tent’ of ours that ages, gets ill, causes us pain, and bears the marks of its time on this earth, will cease to live. We shall then inhabit new bodies and be *‘present with the Lord’*.

Dear Lord Jesus, please give us an eternal perspective on this life. Help us to see the temporal nature of all that we inhabit and see around us, and to place you at the centre of all our hopes.

Amen