

John 5:1-9

The Healing at the Pool

5 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ^[4] ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

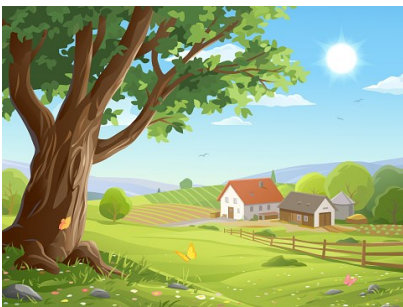
⁷ “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” ⁹ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath. NIV

Benefice Rogation Sunday Service

To be held at Fishleigh Farm, Black Torrington EX21 5QQ
By kind invitation of Shirley and Penny Richmond

Sunday 22nd May at 4.30 pm



Service/Walk/Tea
Tea will be provided

ALL WELCOME
Sorry, NO dogs

St Mary's Church, Black Torrington

A big thank you to all who donated black bags of clothes for Bags 2 School.
We raised £132 for church funds.

*The United Benefice of Ashwater, Beaworthy, Black Torrington,
Clawton, Halwill, Highampton and Tetcott*

Sunday 22nd May 2022

Rogation Sunday

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

9.30 am Morning Service, Ashwater

11.00 am Holy Communion, Beaworthy

4.30 pm Rogation Service/Walk/Tea, Fishleigh Farm, Black Torrington

6.30 pm Evening Service, Highampton

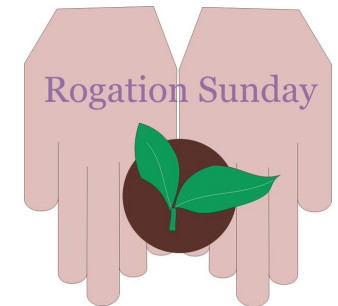
Readings

Acts 16: 9-15

Psalm 47

Revelation 21: 10, 22-22:5

John 5: 1-9



Collect

Almighty God,
whose will it is that the earth and the sea
should bear fruit in due season:
bless the labours of those who work on land and sea,
grant us a good harvest
and the grace always to rejoice in your fatherly care;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever Amen.

Interim Priest-in-Charge (part time)

Revd Stephen Skinner

sjmskinners@btinternet.com

07554 142264

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

The Mission Community: for all who live and work in our Mission Community

Rest in peace all who have recently died including Tony Hunt (Highampton)

All who are mourning the death of a loved one including the family and friends of Barbara Pett, Sue West and Tony Hunt

Those who are ill or in any kind of need and those who are vulnerable due to underlying health conditions, including Mavis Watson, Jenny Hyslop, Stephen Bowness

For our Benefice Schools, all staff, pupils and parents

For all those suffering with Covid and the long term effects of the virus.

We pray for farmers and all those who rely on the land for their livelihood, that they would be blessed with strength, wisdom and peace. We remember in our prayers the farmers in Ukraine.

Dates for your diary

Monday 23rd May	7.00 pm	Clawton Church PCC Meeting
Tuesday 24th May	11.00 am	ZOOM Bible Study
	4.15 pm	Handbell Ringing Black Torrington Church
Wednesday 25th May	10.00 am	Morning Prayer, Black Torrington Church
	10.30 am	Black Torrington Church PCC Meeting
Thursday 26th May	8.00 pm	ZOOM Ascension Day Compline
Sunday 29th May	4.00 pm	Benefice Open Air Service and Tea, Clawton Church



ZOOM MEETING
Meeting ID: 317 183 8102
Passcode: 848984

Thought for Sunday 22nd May 2022
6th Sunday of Easter
Rogation Sunday

“THE STORY OF LYDIA” ACTS 16: 9 – 15

Lydia is one of the outstanding women of the New Testament. Did you know that Luke gives cameo stories of five important women in the early Christian Church? In addition to Lydia there are also: Tabitha, Priscilla, Philip’s daughters, and the mother of John Mark. It is really good that women were highly regarded in both the ministry of Jesus and amongst the Apostles – more than many realise.

Lydia was particularly special:

- A business woman who was a respected trader in purple fabric; the colour of nobility;
- A leader within the female open-air synagogue that met regularly at a creek near Philippi;
- A relatively wealthy lady ‘of means’ who owned a spacious property;
- A widow (in all probability) who was head of a multi-generational household;
- A God-fearing and prayerful lady who was open to the Holy Spirit.

Whenever Paul visited a new town for his missionary preaching he always tried to locate Gentile or Jewish ‘God fearers’, because he knew that they would be more open to the new and controversial message that he was commissioned by God to bring. Presumably he did his research and found a possible ‘bridgehead’ into the community through this ladies’ prayer group, and so went off to meet them for conversation. It was a highly successful venture of faith, and it led to the baptism of the whole of Lydia’s household, complimentary ‘board and lodging’ for the apostles, and a future leader of a new House Church in Philippi! Paul must have been chuffed – until he ran into a slave girl possessed by a demon, and then imprisonment! Chapter 16 is a fast-moving and exciting story!

There is a lot for all of us to learn from this great story – partially in relation to Paul’s method of evangelism – going out bravely to where people were already gathering with spiritual openness. I think we need to be prepared to go out beyond our safe church walls to share the Good News of God’s love – especially because so few are coming into our buildings for worship!

But we can also learn a lot from the example of Lydia. The Eastern Orthodox Church regard her as a true saint, with a ‘feast day’ on 20th May. There are many icons of her to aid veneration. Interestingly she is also a hero for many evangelical charismatics. There is an international organisation called “The Lydia Fellowship” which supports women who meet each other regularly in twos or threes for intercessory prayer, bible study and meditation. I first came across it in my curacy church 40 years ago! They hold Conferences around the world and share news through their website.

So the name of Lydia lives on, and not just through actresses, shrubs, coins and Nordic Warriors!

Stephen