

## From the Chaplain...

It was the seventeenth-century bishop Lancelot Andrewes who once observed of the Church of England that 'one canon reduced to writing by God himself, two testaments, three creeds, four general councils, five centuries, and the series of Fathers in that period...determine the boundary of our faith'. Andrewes was one of a constellation of learned clergy known as the 'Caroline divines', who, among other pursuits, made a particular study of the Fathers of the Early Church. Not least among these was Athanasius of Alexandria (c.296–373), whose feast day we celebrated yesterday. Having attended the Council of Nicaea in 325 (from which the Nicene Creed derives), Athanasius was a fierce opponent of the heretical movement known as Arianism, which denied the divinity of Christ. As Patriarch of Alexandria, he became a champion of the doctrine of the Trinity, which in turn led to his deposition and exile by rivals on several occasions. He is now remembered as a bulwark of orthodox Christian belief during a time of upheaval and uncertainty in the development of the Church. As Lancelot Andrewes recognised in his own day, so we likewise are indebted to Athanasius and others for conferring upon us doctrines that have served, in the words of Rowan Williams, as 'a minimum recipe for sane and resourceful Christian speech'.

Next Thursday, 9 May, is Ascension Day, when we celebrate the ascent of Christ into heaven forty days after Easter. In marking this important day, we will be joined by the Choir and congregation of St Alfege Church for a Choral Eucharist at 8.00pm in the Chapel. Please join us if you can.

Yours faithfully,  
Robert

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