

STOMP BULLETIN EXTRA - 7

Dear Friends,

It has been a while since our last Bulletin Extra went out so now is the time for an update. On Sunday we will celebrate **Pentecost** or Whit Sunday and bring our Easter journey to a close. What a strange Eastertide it has been this year, we have missed our Easter gardens and the joyous celebration with children and their Easter eggs. We have been unable in familiar ways and settings to rejoice and commiserate together, to support one another in our good times and bad. We hope and pray that we are now at the beginning of the recovery phase and that as you read this a gradual relaxing of social distancing guidelines is continuing.

Despite the problem times we are living through we have enjoyed some highlights as a worshipping community; on Ascension day we joined together as a deanery to celebrate the feast through the medium of YouTube. Last Sunday we held our first Zoom service with 33 participant links and – as many couples joined in – we had over 45 worshipers. Yes, the technology was a challenge but it was great to gather, to sing and to share. Sadly, the zoom worship was to mark the conclusion of Revd Caroline's time with us as assistant curate, but more of that later.

Sundays

Caroline and I have continued to send out a talk/thought/sermon with the Bulletin and Readings each week and sometimes these have been accompanied by photos or audio files.

As mentioned above our first zoom service was on 24th May when we said farewell to Caroline and we plan to have the next of these on **Trinity Sunday, 7th June** at 9.30am. Invitations will go out by email soon. If you have a computer connected to the internet and a webcam, then zoom is easy to join; let us know if you need help.

From the Bishops

Some links sent out by Bishop Alan should be accessible from the email that sent you this Bulletin Extra, the Messy Bishop's and Archdeacons are a special entertainment to watch! If you would like to view further messages from the national church or look for other links, then do visit either the Church of England or St Albans Diocese websites.

Church Opening, Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms

It is likely that an announcement will be made today (Friday) or soon after, about reopening churches for private prayer and the occasional offices mid-way through June, with Sunday services possibly resuming on July 5th. For us, the PCC Standing Committee has decided that to allow cleaning and a planned return we will keep our churches shut until 4th July. At St Mary's this will mean that the builders - who have now returned to work - can have unfettered access until then.

Please let us know of your needs or the needs of your neighbours and offers of help!

There has been some wonderful support going on through the good work of individuals and the Pastoral Group keeping in touch at this difficult time. The WhatsApp Group continues to grow and offer a variety of interesting stories, links and support. If you have WhatsApp and want to join, then let us know.

Support for the Foodbank

Many thanks to those with excess tins and those who have shopped specially to enable our deliveries to the Foodbank to continue. They are very grateful at this time of increased need and decreased donations. Their main requirements remain tinned meat and puddings, UHT milk, soups and other non-perishables.

To deliver yourself contact them at the address below otherwise you can drop them off with me or I can make a prearranged collection from your doorstep, send me an email to set that up.

Dacorum Foodbank

*The Hub
Paradise Depot
Paradise
Hemel Hempstead
Herts.
HP2 4TF*

e: office@dacorumfoodbank.org.uk t: 01442 250969

News

Our big news is – of course – the furloughing and farewell of Revd Caroline. I have already sent you an email about the way this decision was made but it is worth reiterating our sadness that Caroline's departure had to be managed in this way. We are determined to give her a proper send off in due course and wish her well for her move to the Diocese of Oxford. Thank you Caroline and Chris for the very special contribution you have both made to parish life.

Scams

Fake emails going out in the name of the clergy and church members continue to happen so do keep your wits about you and talk to us in person before clicking on any dodgy links.

Conclusion

Thanks for your love, prayers and support shared around our worshipping community and parish. It really does make a difference. The clergy, Churchwardens and Pastoral Group will try and cover any needs we hear about but do let us know if we can help you in any other ways as we seem busier than ever.

Bulletin Extra 8 will follow in due course.

Great sayings from a Spiritual Hero

This time some lovely quotations from Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, (Pope St John 23rd);

Whoever has a heart full of love always has something to give.

I want to throw open the windows of the Church so that we can see out and the people can see in.

Do not walk through time without leaving worthy evidence of your passage.

Prayer is the raising of the mind to God. We must always remember this. The actual words matter less.

Never hesitate to hold out your hand; never hesitate to accept the outstretched hand of another.

See everything, overlook a great deal, correct a little.

I live by the mercy of Jesus, to whom I owe everything and from whom I expect everything.

It often happens that I wake up at night and begin to think about a serious problem and decide I must tell the Pope about it. Then I wake up completely and remember that I am the Pope!

The solidarity which binds all men together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist.

With every prayer and blessing,

John

The Revd Canon John Williams