

Dear Friends,

This week, as you will know, our Archbishops and Bishops have, in line with guidance from the government, instructed church buildings to close. This means that there are signs on the church building with emergency contact details and I have been praying at home, as I am sure many of you have. That said, the work of the church itself continues as ever, even though all our regular activities have ceased. I do sincerely hope that you all, either through email or in paper form, have received the materials we have produced to help you worship at home. Everyone on our electoral roll should have received a call/message from someone on the PCC/church leadership team simply to let you know the church is here, praying for you and willing to assist you practically if you need help. It is our desire to keep in touch, to continue communication and with that in mind we will continue to produce Signpost and I will do my best to keep developing and identifying resources for you to use at home. As you pray, I do ask that you continue to hold me in prayer, as a parishioner commented to me this week 'you're certainly having a memorable curacy' and I have to agree! *Rev Dan*

## A message from Bishop Peter

A colleague of mine was in the supermarket today and overheard two people saying: 'The problem is that no-one looks you in the eye anymore.' That is a devastatingly sad comment on where we are at the moment. Because of anxiety and fear we feel we must step away from each other, keep to ourselves. While it is the right thing to do in a physical sense, there is a real cost to being isolated, especially for those who are vulnerable or for whom life is already difficult. We are not alone.

There are of course things which we can all do to help keep in touch with our family, friends and neighbours. For those with access to phones or the internet there are many ways in which we can contact people, check they are well and encourage and support those who may be struggling. From my mobile phone I have already 'looked a number of people in the eye' today and it was a joy to share laughter and hear stories of how they are coping. I may not be able to meet with them again face to face for a while, but we can keep in touch. We can also express our concern for others in many practical ways. These might include supporting local foodbanks, avoiding panic buying and sharing our time, our food and our love with other people. Sharing, generosity and trust are the qualities that will get us through these very difficult times.

We need to keep hopeful despite these very dark days which we are now walking through. On Sunday Christians around the country lit a candle in windows, where others could see it, as a reminder of the light of Christ that shines in the darkness of our world and into our lives. I shall continue to do that now and every evening and as I do it, I shall pray for those in need and suffering, for our wonderful NHS and those who work within the caring services, for all those on the front line in the battle against this terrible disease. Prayer is something we can all do.

*Here is a prayer for you:*

*Keep us good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy,  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.*

*Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;*

*that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen*

## COLLECTS AND READINGS

**29<sup>th</sup> March Fifth Sunday of Lent** Ezekiel 37.1-14; Romans 8.6-11; John 11.1-45

**Collect:** Gracious Father, you gave up your Son out of love for the world: lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion, that we may know eternal peace through the shedding of our Saviour's blood, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Post Communion:** Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

**5<sup>th</sup> April Palm Sunday** Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11; Matthew 26.14-end of 27

**Collect:** True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory.

**Post Communion:**

Lord Jesus Christ, you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant, and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation: give us the mind to follow you and to proclaim you as Lord and King, to the glory of God the Father.

## Our Pastoral Prayers



*To include somebody on this prayer list please let Liz in the office know by 8am on Thursday, making sure the person you wish to be included wants their name in print.*

### Marriage

Couples preparing for marriage and those recently married, also for those who have had to make the difficult decision to postpone their special day due to current circumstances.

### Baptisms:

We pray for all parents and godparents, especially for Finley and Aisla whose baptisms have been postponed.

### Those in need of our prayers:

Margaret Moyle, Hazel, Christine Marston, Val & George Crawford, Maureen & Ian Thompson, Gloria and Ken Vivash, Pete, Brenda, Olive, Victoria Yassenko

### For those who have died:

We pray for those who have recently died and their loved ones who grieve their loss.

### Those whose anniversary falls this week:

Patricia Davies, Michael Hockey



## PRAYER FOCUS

### Sunday:

*Remember to light a candle at 7pm today as a sign of solidarity and hope in the light of Christ that can never be extinguished.*

### Monday:

*For all affected by COVID-19, those who have contracted the virus, and medical professionals serving across the world*

### Tuesday:

*For all key workers who are continuing to place themselves at risk in order to serve our community*

### Wednesday:

*For the work of the Foodbank in our community*

### Thursday:

*For all with leadership responsibility during the vacancy*

### Friday:

*For all who are struggling at this time*

### Saturday:

*For anyone feeling isolated or alone at this time*

## Who's Who at St John's:

Vicar: Vacant

Curate: Rev'd Dan Crouch 325194

Churchwarden: Chris Perry 783753

It is with great reluctance and regret that Liz and Shirley have come to the decision that they can no longer continue with Little Angels. **If you feel able to take on this responsibility** then please do speak to Liz, Shirley or Rev Dan. Unfortunately, the final meeting had to be postponed but we are hoping to be able to get Little Angels past and present together in the summer.

To submit an article for the Signpost Weekly please e-mail:

[stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com) by 8am on Thursday

**IN LIGHT OF THE GOVERNMENT DIRECTIVE CONCERNING SOCIAL DISTANCING LIZ WILL BE WORKING FROM HOME.**

Please email

[stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com) or ring Rev Dan on 01278 325194

### COVID-19 PRAYER

Loving God,

We pray for all those who are suffering because of the coronavirus, may they know your healing power.

When we are afraid for ourselves and our loved ones, give us your strength and courage.

When we feel alone and isolated, reassure us with a sense of your presence.

Give wisdom to those in authority and may our community work together for the good of all.

We give thanks for those who care for others and ask you to bless them in all they do.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, healer and physician.

Amen

If you have a prayer request or need other support please contact our curate Rev Dan Crouch  
[revdancrouch@gmail.com](mailto:revdancrouch@gmail.com) or 01278 325194

In line with guidance from the Government and the Church of England, St John's Church building is now CLOSED. The church in Highbridge has always been here to serve the community and we will continue to seek to serve you. Please do be in touch if you need to (see above). We will help where and if we can.



## Everyday Questions

Here are another seven questions from the Bishop's Lent Challenge resource that you could use to generate conversation this Lent.

1. Can science and faith work together?
2. Is it ever acceptable to tell a lie?
3. Should all vehicles be electric?
4. Is there anything that would make God stop loving us?
5. If you won a million pounds what would you do with it?
6. Is there life on other planets or is it just us?
7. Do bad things happen for a reason?

The Bishop of Bath and Wells has produced a ruling allowing PCC's to delay their Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). These now need to be conducted by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

Therefore, our meeting on **21<sup>st</sup> April** is postponed. We will advise you of a **new autumn date** as soon as we are able.