

Dear friends,

I cannot believe that another week has gone by – am I the only one who feels that time seems to pass more quickly since we have been confined (largely) to our homes? I suppose this is due to the more constant routine each day of lockdown and the fact that each day seems much the same as the previous one! But - I fully accept that those of you who are still able to go to work may not feel the same...

I hope you are all still in good health and able to enjoy the fantastic weather. Putting aside the awful consequences to many of the virus, some of us are truly blessed with the conditions under which we have to endure the lockdown restrictions.

I start as usual with mentioning our ABE parish services and church news for this coming Sunday 24 May (7th Sunday of Easter):

St Mary's Aldingbourne

Morning Prayer: Fr Tony will lead his usual on-line service of Morning Prayer at 10am. All members of the parish are invited to join this service via Zoom, please contact Sarah Nichol to access if you are not already on her 'attendance' list.

Coffee Mornings: A 'virtual' coffee gathering and chat is held every Thursday at 10.30am via Zoom, again organised by Sarah.

For details about joining either of these events, and to receive the link to both, please email Sarah on nicholsarah8@gmail.com.

St Mary's Barnham

St Mary's continues its Easter celebrations with two recorded Masses on Sunday, celebrated by Fr Graham at 9.30am and 11.15am. The 9.30am service will follow the order of the Book of Common Prayer.

Last week I gave the news (sent to me by Steven, churchwarden at St Mary's) of the demise of the Queen Bee from the St Mary's bee hive and that it was hoped that a new Queen will take her throne in the next week or two. Steven has just announced the latest news from the bee hive - a new Queen Bee has been born during the past week! In about 14 days' time she will start laying eggs to repopulate the hive, and those bees will start work 14 days after being laid.

Some photos of the bees and hive, taken last year, are attached. As can be seen, the bee-keeper is very suitably dressed for self-isolating (from the bees, that is!).

St George's Eastergate

Revd Sheila will be leading the usual service of Holy Communion from the church, available to view from about 10am. The service includes prayers, readings and other contributions from various members of the congregation – so nice to see many familiar faces which we may not have seen in person for a while now!

St Georges Sunday Coffee get-together: Next Sunday, 31 May, will be Pentecost, the 'Birthday of the Church'. At 11.30am, we will be meeting together after the service via Zoom to celebrate this special festival. To join the Zoom gathering at 11.30, click

on: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81847032556?pwd=ejAzcTlaZks4M2NLRnBBdjVYSnhdz09>. Everybody from across the parish is very welcome to attend.

The St George's team continues to request video messages from members of the congregation for inclusion before the blessing each week during Sheila's online service. The previous request for this is repeated here – do please let Sheila or me know if you can provide a message:

It would be great to hear a little about what you have been doing and how you have been coping in lockdown, plus any messages of encouragement you may have for the congregation. Sheila invites anyone that wishes, to record a short video message to share. It can be a single speaker, couples or families - all are welcome.

(Please note: The videos should be less than 30 seconds long, be filmed with your phone or ipad in the horizontal position and include an introduction of yourselves at the beginning. Alternatively, sending a photograph of yourselves holding a large card with a message for everyone would be another lovely way to share your love and thoughts for fellow church goers. Please send these to both jonathan.stapleton@gmail.com and smhandaway@hotmail.co.uk with a reference of "Family check in" and your name.)

We look forward to hearing these messages of love in the weeks to come to help lift our spirits and increase our sense of community when we cannot physically meet together.

All recorded services from St George's Eastergate and St Mary's Barnham continue to be available to view on our parish YouTube channel. [Click here](#) to view, or type 'Parish of ABE' into the YouTube search box and select 'Parish of ABE Recorded Services'. A link to this channel, along with links to our Facebook pages, can also be found on our Parish website www.parihofabe.org.uk, which also gives other useful information and resources.

News from Chichester Diocese

'Thy Kingdom Come' campaign: I am attaching the latest news link to the diocesan website which includes several items that may be of interest, including the 'Thy Kingdom Come' campaign which has a series of events from the 21st May (Ascension Day) through to the 31st May (Pentecost). There is also a link to a video message from Bishop Martin, explaining why these ten important days can deepen our prayer life together, especially in these challenging times. Each day from the 22nd May to 29th May, Bishop Martin invites you to join him in prayer. He will be offering a short daily Novena prayer for the diocese at 12noon from his chapel in Chichester.

Here is the link to the website: <https://mailchi.mp/chichester.anglican.org/4fhipiw85y-1031601?e=cfb39876a5>

Email from Archdeacon Luke: I am also attaching a very uplifting email received from the Archdeacon of Chichester which he has sent to all parishes which are currently in vacancy (interregnum).

Music video – 'The UK Blessing'

I expect you have heard quite enough from me on this subject! BUT, some of you may like to watch the recent interview by Premier Christian News with Tim Hughes,

the organiser of the music video. I found it to be an interesting and uplifting account of how one person was able to unite so many different churches from across the UK to produce this worship song. It is a real testament to ecumenical inclusion and unity during this unusual time of restricted working. The interview can be found here: <https://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/prime-minister-gives-tim-hughes-award-and-labels-uk-blessing-video-a-sensational-singing-masterpiece.>

If you wish to listen to the song again it is here: <https://youtu.be/PUtll3mNj5U>

Contact Newsheet, Prayer Diary for May and Parish News magazine

This week's Contact Newsheet is attached. This includes the bible readings for this Sunday which you might like to read during the services (the second sheet gives the readings for Aldingbourne and Eastergate and the third sheet gives those for Barnham). The May prayer diary is also attached as usual.

The May parish magazine continues to be available to view online at <https://www.parishofabe.org.uk/parish-mag.> and some printed copies are still available if you would like one, please call or email me and I will arrange for one to be delivered to you.

Parish Prayer Group

The weekly Prayer Group continues to meet from 5.30 to 6.30pm on Tuesday evenings to pray for the parish generally and for individuals who we know are in need and have asked to be prayed for. During this period of lockdown, all are invited to join the group to pray together in spirit in their own homes. It is a lovely way to feel connected with others in the parish and to feel our Lord's presence with us all. If you would like a list of detailed prayers emailed to you, or delivered if you would prefer, please let Maggie know (cournadge@outlook.com or call 552099 or 07740 543974). Maggie has put some general prayers on the Parish website which you may wish to use during this time of prayer.

Food Bank

Please continue to support the local Foodbank by placing food items in the baskets in the Barnham Co-op store OR the Trading Post, which has now also kindly agreed to allow this (thank you Richard for arranging this with the Trading Post). Further details of this valuable service, and a list of most needed food items, is given on the attached Contact sheet.

Finally

I am attaching a link to a short video showing Dr David Jeremiah, an American conservative evangelical Christian author, explaining his thoughts on past times of biblical 'sheltering'. If you can overlook the American delivery style, it is an interesting perspective on what we are going through right now – maybe something to consider at a future house group or similar event? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ghUW4WM0Tg.>

I wish health and happiness to you all, and your families, this coming week.

Best wishes,
Gary

