



The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Westerham

www.westerhamparishchurch.org.uk



Newsletter: March 29th to April 4th 2020

As we noted last week there are no Sunday services or midweek meetings at the church at the moment. Following the Government announcement on Tuesday the Archbishops and Diocesan Bishops of the Church of England underlined their advice to “stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives”. Furthermore we are now unable to hold weddings, baptisms or funerals in church until further notice. (Funerals can be held at the graveside and in crematoria, although there are limitations on numbers who can attend.) This means that our building is fully closed; now also for private prayer and visitors.

Our church office is closed, but Alyson has access to church documents and emails to which she is responding from home. If you require a response via phone, please call the vicar, details below.

The Foodbank is still open and needs our support, although the collection point in the church building is obviously not available; the collection points at The Co-op, Wolfe Garage and Waitrose Biggin Hill are available. And if you know anyone in need of the Food Bank's help and support at this difficult time, or you need this support yourself, then please contact the foodbank at 01959 562147 or 01959 562058 or via email westerhamfoodbank@gmail.com.

Sunday

This week I encourage you to tune in to [The Archbishop of York's Sunday Service](#), from 9am on Sunday 29 March, recorded at Bishopthorpe Palace.. Also on [the Church of England Facebook page](#).

Each Sunday I aim to share some thoughts with you based on the lectionary reading for the week. Please look at [this article](#) on the church website, which contains Sunday's Old Testament reading from Ezekiel and some thoughts for us all to consider during the week about “hope”

Monday to Saturday

[Morning Prayer at 8.30am and Evening Prayer at 5.00pm.](#)

We continue to pray at home as a church family using the same words at the same time from Monday to Saturday. You can find the daily Morning and Evening Prayer on the Church of England page [here](#). You can also download the Daily Prayer app on your phone - it's available for both iOS and Android devices.

You can also find the services of "Prayer during the day" and "Night Prayer (Compline)" if you would find it helpful to pray these prayers as well at a time that suits you.

Worship From Home

We have created this [new page on our website](#) which has prayers, Bible studies, reflections and suggestions to help you. This page is growing all the time, and now contains links to Diocesan podcasts from Bishop James and Bishop Simon.

The website is up to date with all we are doing; please check it regularly as this is the best method of keeping everyone up to date, particularly as things are changing so quickly.

By necessity much of what we do is via the internet. I know not everyone has access and so if you know of anyone who would appreciate the material we have, ask them to contact me and I will print and post it to them.

Meetings

We have two meetings that are going ahead this week, both on-line using Zoom; members please look out for emailed invitations.

Finance Committee Meeting - Monday 30th March at 7.30pm.

PCC Meeting - Thursday 2nd April at 7.30pm.

Keep In Touch!

I encourage you to be good neighbours – please continue to phone those who might be lonely or need help as well as those who might just enjoy a chat. Contact me if you are unable to offer help yourself.

Clocks Go Forward

Whilst our lives may be driven less by clocks at the moment the clocks do change this week to British Summer Time on Sunday March 29th at 1am, when they move forward one hour. (One result of our “staying at home” – other than for essential trips – is that the church clock will not be moved forward and the chimes will be off. This will be corrected and the chimes put back on when the situation changes.)

Finally, **we pray:**

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Revd Kevin Barnard

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