

Nork with Burgh Heath Parish News and Updates - Friday 12 June 2020

Dear Church Family Members and Parish friends,

Hoping you are all staying safe and well - and apologies that this week has 'run away' with me and the update comes somewhat later in the week than intended...

This week I write with the sad news, that Howard Peacock, who has been a regular member of St. Paul's for many years and was a resident of Rosedean Nursing Home, along with Dorothy, whom so many of us know so well - has died. I was very fond of Howard and will miss seeing him when David, Fiona and I lead services & visit the home - as well as at St. Paul's itself. Howard had a wonderful sense of humour - often pretending to be asleep, whilst listening to everything that was going on... and then suddenly opening his eyes wide in front of you! He had a beautiful smile & chuckle, and could light up the space around him for others. A real gift.

Howard's death is thought to have been caused by old age (he was 86) but the exact details are unknown at the present time. Please do pray for his family and the other residents of Rosedean, all of whom have additional and complex needs, and who are struggling to understand what has happened and to adjust to life without someone who they shared a home with and saw every day.

I am in regular contact with the Home - and have taken round card and gifts on all of our behalf, as appropriate.

Other items included in the news this week are on the following themes:

- 1) An update from Andrew Shaw
- 2) An update on the work of Yagya and Sally Singh in Nepal
- 3) Information on Zoom Alpha
- 4) Information on our Parish Zoom Quiz
- 5) Information on other parish Zoom events in June
- 6) An update on our plans to open the church for private prayer in due course

As always, please do email if you have any questions - or ring (07312 113019). It is always a pleasure to be in touch with each of you.

Love and prayers,
Alex

1) An Update from Andrew Shaw

Congratulations to Andrew, who has now almost completed his training as a Licensed Lay Minister for our parish! YES! Well done!!

Andrew has a couple more assignments to complete, but has been signed off by Bishop Andrew. Although his licensing is postponed (due to the current coronavirus crisis - and we will circulate more information about the new date in due course), Andrew is being given Bishop's 'Permission to Minister' in the Diocese, without being formally licensed in the meantime. He and I are meeting soon to chat and plan this together, but it is wonderful to have Andrew 'aboard officially' in this way.

He writes of his recent placement at St. Mary's Ewell:

An integral part of my training to be a Licensed Lay Minister was to spend from January to Easter in a different parish. Sadly, my experience ended on March 15th, but I had completed enough research for my major assignment: a theological reflection on my time at St. Mary's Ewell.

St. Mary's is an Anglican Church, but with a traditional, high church flavour. Each main morning service is a Sung Eucharist led by a robed choir. I was able to join this excellent choir for a couple of services, and particularly enjoyed listening to them for the Ash Wednesday service, where the unaccompanied Tudor music lent a special solemnity to the occasion.

St. Mary's puts great emphasis on encouraging families to bring their children to baptism; they also have an annual service to celebrate marriage, when they all enjoy a glass of prosecco! Another important strand in St. Mary's outreach has been a series of organ recitals. The exceptionally talented organist (before the lockdown) was drawing audiences nearly three times as big as those for Evensong – amongst those who went were Neil Thomas and two other organists who worship at Burgh Heath.

2) An update on the work of Yagya and Sally Singh in Nepal

The following is a link which takes you to a Premiere Radio interview with Sally and Yagya Singh, who have been Mission links, and family members, of St. Mary's for many years. (Sally is daughter to Lynne and Adrian Coppin). In the interview, they talk about their work, serving the Lord, in Nepal: <https://www.simonwardlondon.com/my-faith-at-work-podcasts/>

It is great to hear what they are able to be doing at the current time - and to be further informed in how to pray for them.

3) Zoom Alpha

Zoom Alpha got off to a good start on Tuesday, with the introductory session to the course - and it is not too late to join us if you would still like to be part of the group.

The dates and themes are as follows. Sessions begin at 8pm and are finished by 9.30 pm. You are welcome to join for all of them, or for a 'one or two off' if there is a particular topic of interest. Simply get in contact with me and I will send you the zoom link.

If you are not attending, please do be praying for those of us who are learning together on the course.

Tuesday 16th June: Who is Jesus? & Why did Jesus die?

Tuesday 23rd June: How can I have faith?

Tuesday 30th June: Why and how do I pray? & Why and how do I read the Bible?

Tuesday 7th July: How does God guide us?

Tuesday 14th July: Who is the Holy Spirit & What does the Holy Spirit do?

Tuesday 21st July: How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Tuesday 28th July: What about the Church?

4) Parish Zoom Quiz - Saturday 20th June, 6.30 pm

Chris Moore, one of our two wonderful Church Wardens, is happy to host a Zoom Quiz for our parish, which we hope to hold at 6.30 pm on Saturday 20th June.

Please contact Chris on: cw_bh@norkwithburghheath.com to find out more information/ sign up. Children are welcome to join, with their special adults.

5) Other Zoom events in the next couple of weeks:

Other Zoom events in the next couple of weeks are as follows:

Sunday 14th June, 9 am	Parish Said Service	A short (half hour) service, followed by a chance to chat over coffee. We read a bible passage & chat about it, share prayer requests and pray together.
Sunday 14th June, 10 am	Zoom meet for children & their families	An opportunity for children (and their parents/ carers) to catch up with each other. We will share news, sing a worship song and read a bible story together.
Tuesday 16th June, 2pm	St. Paul's Prayers	A time of prayer for St. Paul's members, which will follow an adapted version of the Church of England prayers for during the day

Tuesday 16th June, 8pm	Alpha Film Series on Zoom: Who is Jesus? And Why did Jesus die?	An opportunity to watch two short films (approx 20 minutes each) on the themes of Who is Jesus? And Why did Jesus die? And discuss questions/ thoughts arising from these together.
Thursday 18th June, 4pm	St. Mary's Prayers	A time of sharing & praying together - giving thanks to God and interceding for others
Sunday 21st June, 9 am	Parish Said Service	A short (half hour) service, followed by a chance to chat over coffee. We read a bible passage & chat about it, share prayer requests and pray together.
Tuesday 23rd June, 11 am	Parish Coffee Morning	Log on, bringing your cup of tea or coffee and enjoy chatting together for ¾ of an hour. The last 'coffee meet' was delightful!
Tuesday 23rd June, 8pm	Alpha Film Series on Zoom: How can I have faith?	An opportunity to watch the Alpha series short film on 'How can I have faith?' and discuss this together
Sunday 28th June, 9 am	Parish Said Service	A short (half hour) service, followed by a chance to chat over coffee. We read a bible passage & chat about it, share prayer requests and pray together.

Please let Alex know if you would like to join in and she will send you the link.

6) The Churches Opening For Private Prayer

A number of you have heard the news that churches in the UK are now allowed to open for private prayer.

Some of you have been in touch about this - excited, or worried, or both in the last week.

It is wonderful that the churches are beginning to be able to open in a small way again (for which we praise God!). However in order to ensure that this is done safely - and with the welfare of all who may attend such an opportunity central to our thoughts - there is quite a bit of preparation, paperwork and risk assessments/ risk actions associated with even opening on a very small scale.

The incumbents (Vicars) from the deanery met yesterday via Zoom to talk about how to approach this together, to support each other and also to try and maintain consistency amongst the local C of E churches.

The general consensus is that it is best to do this wisely and slowly. Starting small and adding to the opportunities very gradually. None of us wish to do anything which could be the cause of the virus spreading again - and especially not to our own church families, whom we all love so very much.

In our parish, I also want to be in touch with the Wardens, standing committee and PCC on this, but will write again with further updates soon.

In the meantime please assume that

a) Nothing will change for at least 2 more weeks in the parish (both churches will remain fully closed - with everything continuing to happen via email, Youtube and Zoom, whilst cleaning and preparation happens inside each church) until at least the week beginning Monday 29th June - and I will write with further updates as to what may (or may not) change then, keeping a check on the Government, National Church and Diocesan advice - all of which change almost daily

b) When things do begin to be able to happen, this will be very gradual. We are likely to be mainly online for a long while yet - and even when services can start again on Sundays in some form, over half of our church family are over 70 (and more at risk/ vulnerable) - so there is likely to need to be supplementary online worship to go alongside whatever will be able to happen in the churches for a long while yet, for those who wish for it.

This coming week, I hope to send out some survey questions to ask each of you your thoughts on some of the different options which may come available to us in the coming weeks and months, to ascertain your views and feelings - to feed into our planning process.

Thank you very much!

Love and prayers,

Alex

Rev Alex Williams

Vicar

Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath

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