

Nork with Burgh Heath Parish News and Updates – Tuesday 23 February 2021

Dear Church Family Members and Parish Friends,

Hoping you're all staying safe and well.

This news email contains the following information:

1. Zoom links for activities this week
2. Our Parish Giving Drive
3. Our Mission Partners & missional giving
4. Our parcels of love & cards of hope
5. Computers to support school children
6. Following on from the Government announcements yesterday evening

Information and the link for Sunday's service will be sent out later in the week.

Please do keep in touch

Love and prayers,

Alex

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1. Zoom links for activities this week

To zoom in to **THE PRAYER COURSE**, this evening (Tuesday 23rd February) at 7.45 for 8pm, please use this

link: <https://zoom.us/j/91422119623?pwd=VTQ4M3VKdFFSVTRNeHA3V2Y1ZUs1dz09>

To zoom in to our **PARISH PRAYER MEETING**, at 2pm tomorrow (Wednesday 24th February), please use this

link: <https://zoom.us/j/93252227529?pwd=eENJczhwSXN6UXJiMEhtbzc0NDISZz09>

To zoom into **AN EVENING WITH YAGYA & SALLY SINGH**, at 8pm tomorrow (Wednesday 24th February), please use this

link: <https://zoom.us/j/92256209405?pwd=OE1iQnFwVE5JQUJ1djlzQVhkWWtNUT09>

(Sally and Yagya will be telling us about their work as missionaries in Nepal, with the projects 'Bridges Nepal'. They are one of our mission partners and Sally's mum & dad are Lynne & Adrian Coppin from St. Mary's.).

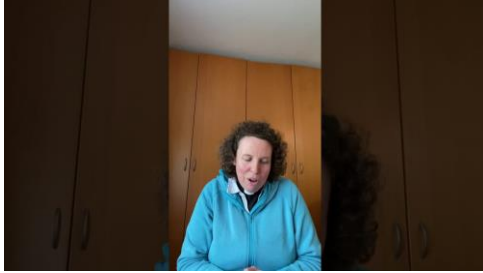
2. Our Parish Giving Drive

On Sunday we had our parish 'Giving Sunday' for 2021, where we reflected on the different ways of giving to God - such as of our time, our talents... and also of our treasure (our finances).

You will be receiving, through the door this week, a package of letters from Simon Morrison (PCC Member and Parish Giving Officer), Piers Clark (Treasurer) and myself asking all of us (Michael and I included) to prayerfully think about our giving to the parish at this time.

On Sunday I preached on the topic of giving and Piers gave a financial presentation also.

To listen to the sermon (by me), please use this link: <https://youtu.be/umAg9oOly6o>



[Sermon for Giving Sunday - Alex Stevens](https://youtu.be/umAg9oOly6o)
youtu.be

And, following this (they link to each other), to listen to the financial update by Piers, please use this link: [https://youtu.be/ Afbe3e3sSU](https://youtu.be/Afbe3e3sSU)

If you have any questions, please do be in touch.

3. Our Mission Partners and Missional Giving

For a while now I have been intending to write with some encouraging updates about our mission giving.

You may remember that last year (with the results announced at the October APCM) we went through the process of seeking mission partner proposals from church family members of organisations which we can give to as a parish.

Proposals were made by 16 people of 15 different potential mission partners and the PCC made the decision to have the following 6 organisations to be Mission Partners with the parish (receiving financial support, evenly distributed across each organisation each month - and importantly, also regular prayer support):

1. The Baxter's African Children's School Educational Charitable Trust (an international mission partner - but also very closely linked to our church family)
2. Bridges Nepal, the projects which Yagya and Sally Singh work on (an international mission partner - but also very closely linked to our church family)
3. Open Doors, who support persecuted Christians across the world (an international mission partner)
4. Christians Against Poverty (a national mission partner - supporting those struggling with finances across the UK)
5. Street Pastors and in particular Sutton Street Pastors (an national and local mission partner)
6. London City Mission (a local mission partner)

These are the mission partners I mentioned in the Giving Sermon this last Sunday (chosen for 2 years and then there will be a review by PCC) - and the plan is for each of them to join us in some form this year to give a presentation to the parish about their work, so we can get to know them better. We begin with Sally & Yagya Singh (who are in the UK currently on 'home assignment') tomorrow evening on Zoom at 8pm.

In addition to choosing these organisations as full mission partners, we also agreed to pray for other mission organisations linked to us as part of our intercessions each week.

Further to this, we also agreed the following 'one-off' financial donations (from money that had been put aside for mission giving during the formation of the new parish and in the early stages of my being Vicar here whilst we were deciding what to do about mission partners - and which is protected for this purpose alone) all of which have been given to their very grateful recipients:

- £10,000 (generously given to us by Keith and Rosie Ketchum to support others in mission), given to The Baxter's African Children's School Educational Charitable Trust, in recognition of John Baxter's extraordinary service to our parish being interim priest on a voluntary basis at St. Paul's for two years
- £500 to 'Through the Roof' (a Christian charity, working to transform the lives of people with disabilities across the world)
- £500 to 'Let the Children Live' (a Christian charity, supporting children living on the streets of Columbia)
- £1000 to Prison Fellowship and, in particular, to support the work of Jean Watson - church family member and chaplain to High Down and Down View Prisons (this was split - £200 to the Angel Tree Project at Christmas and £800 to the Sycamore Tree Courses which Jean runs in the prisons)
- £200 to the Tuesday Club in Banstead, which support people locally who have Dementia and/ or Alzheimer's
- £500 to 'CARE' a Christian charity involved in supporting politicians and policy writing (this was not announced at the APCM last year, as it was a PCC decision since then)
- £1000 has been spent on improving the children & young people's resources in both of our churches (this had been agreed previously as part of the worship review process of 2019)
- £3000 was allocated to support the work in the schools and nursing homes in the local area, some of which has been spent and some of which is in the process of being spent.

I have some lovely thank you letters from these organisations, which I am looking forward to displaying in the churches for you to see when we are able to return again.

During COVID times some financial support has also been offered on a more confidential basis to support those in particular need for missional or living purposes during the last year.

There is still some money in the Parish's financial reserves which is allocated to Missional Giving (and will not be spent on anything else - and is separate to the 10% of this year's

giving which we will give away), for the PCC to spend wisely and prayerfully as different needs come to our attention.

I hope you find all of this as encouraging as I do. It was a great joy writing to organisations to introduce us as a parish and talking to representatives from each of them about their work - as well as, with Piers' help, arranging the transfer of money which has made a big difference to each of them.

Thank you! It was Church Family Members who donated the money to make these possible.

If you have any questions, please do be in touch.

4. Parcels of Love' & 'Cards of hope'

Thank you so much to everyone who so generously contributed parcels of love and cards of hope over the last two weeks.

I am delighted to share that we have begun distributing 50 parcels of love! What a delight... and there are a good number of cards which can be sent from our parish to encourage people onward during these challenging times.

THANK YOU ALL!

5. Donations of Computers to help school children struggling with IT resources in the pandemic

Attached is some information about 'Level up' a local organisation who are asking if anyone would like to donate old computers, which could be wiped of data and used to support school children who are struggling and do not have the right equipment for learning during the pandemic.

Please do take a look and support this very good cause if you can.

6. Next steps for our parish, following the Government Announcements yesterday

Following the Government announcements yesterday, we know the plans for emerging from lockdown as a country. We now await further instructions and guidance from the Government, the Church of England and the Diocese on what may be possible when in church & parish life - and also need to think carefully about how this is applied to our situation locally.

For the current time we will continue as we are for worship on Sundays (Zooming at 10 am from the churches, alternating between St. Paul's and St. Mary's) enjoying the wonderful opportunity for relationship building it has provided us in recent months.

Further updates will follow in the coming weeks, as more information comes available and following discussion with the Wardens and the PCC.

Love and prayers,
Alex

Rev Alex Stevens
Vicar
Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath

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