

WEEKLY MESSAGE FROM OUR VICAR, ALEX – 20th JANUARY 2022

Dear Church Family Members and Parish Friends,

Hoping this email finds you all well.

It contains information on:

1. Our Joint Parish Service on Sunday (23rd January), at 10 am, at St. Mary's
2. Forest Church, which is launching on Sunday afternoon at 3pm, in the 'backlands' behind the St. Paul's hall
3. Our next foodbank collection
4. A reminder of the key dates for January-April 2022
5. The Fellowship Group
6. The Marriage Course
7. Baptism and confirmation
8. Leading in Love and Faith
9. Our new Curate, David, who will be arriving in our parish in July
10. Anita our 6-week placement student

Love and prayers,
Alex

1. **Our Joint Parish Service on Sunday (23rd January), at 10 am, at St. Mary's**

This Sunday (23rd January), at 10 am, we will be having our fourth Sunday whole parish service instead of our services at St. Paul's at 9 am and St. Mary's at 11 am.

This time it will be at St. Mary's, and we will be alternating between the 2 churches for the rest of the year.

As usual there will be an option to Zoom (more information for this will be sent out on Saturday), but whole parish services will be in person from now on.

I look forward to seeing you there!

2. **Forest Church - Launching on Sunday afternoon at 3pm, in the 'backlands' behind the St. Paul's Hall**

Following a successful pilot back in October, this Sunday (23rd January) afternoon at 3pm, we will be launching 'Forest Church'. An opportunity for outside worship for anyone who would enjoy it.

A flyer is attached. Please do come along and support this new initiative if you can.

You will need to wrap up warm - and to wear shoes that are appropriate for getting muddy. Access to the backlands is up a steep muddy slope - and the whole of the backlands is pretty muddy too ☹️

3. Our next Foodbank collection

Our next foodbank collection will be on Wednesday 26th January, next week, from 2-4 pm outside St. Paul's (or more likely just inside the St. Paul's porch if it's cold).

Items most needed at the moment are: tinned meat pies, brown sauce, powdered milk, long life sponge puddings, cereal, sugar (500g bags please), tinned potatoes, instant mash, washing powder, pods, tablets - bio and non-bio, sanitary pads and tampons. shaving gel/ foam, children's toothpaste 0-2 and 6+, tea bags, pasta sauce, long-life fruit juice, custard, rice pudding, bags for life

4. A reminder of the key dates for January-April 2022

Attached are the key dates for January-April for the parish, please do take a look and store them carefully in your diaries if you haven't had the chance to do this already.

5. The Fellowship Group

A number of you have been saying to me how much you appreciate being able to share with one another and encourage one another on the Christian journey - and how you would like more opportunities to do this.

The Fellowship Group (for which we may think of a better name at some point) will be a trial group that will meet 3 times in the next few months on these dates:

Monday 30th January
Monday 28th February
Monday 4th April

The idea will be that, each time we meet, everyone will bring something encouraging about how God has been working in our lives to share (in the space of 2-3 minutes each) with the rest of the group. This could be a bible verse, something from nature which has prompted prayer, a photo of a painting which has done the same (which would need to be sent to me first so it could be easily shared). Anything which has prompted us in praise and thanksgiving, or helped us to hear from God.

These meetings will be on Zoom at 7pm.

If you'd like to join in, please use this link to let me know and I will send more information to you:
<https://forms.gle/7J2D77uz8hUbtvnaA>

6. The Marriage Course

We will be running HTB The Marriage Course, for married couples in our parish, in February and March. This will be on Zoom on Wednesday evenings (time TBC, 7pm or 7.30pm- we need to experiment to see how long the sessions take). Michael and I will be acting as the Zoom hosts, although we will be doing the course along with any other couples who wish to join us. (Please do not worry we do NOT think we are experts on this, having probably the newest marriage in the church family 😊!)

There will be videos to watch and questions to answer in your couples only. There will be no sharing with the rest of the group on private matters - it is simply an opportunity to spend time growing marriages, helping couples to set aside time for talking about important topics.

For more information about the course, please take a look at this link:
<https://themarriagecourse.org/>

To sign up, please use this link: <https://forms.gle/DRKrz8cJMQXFGmk39>

The dates are below:

Wednesday 9th February

Wednesday 16th February

Wednesday 23rd February

BREAK FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday 9th March

Wednesday 16th March

Wednesday 23rd March

Wednesday 30th March

7. Baptism and Confirmation

In recent weeks I have been having some lovely conversations with several of you who are considering either baptism or confirmation as an outward expression of faith in our Loving Lord Jesus.

Below is a link with a 2-minute video about baptism and confirmation in the Church of England (although it starts by talking about infant baptism, it does talk about adult baptism as well - and confirmation too). If you have not been baptised or confirmed and are interested in this idea for yourself or for a child, please take a look: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EnpXtAPFZqc>

And then email me to arrange a chat. I would love to hear from you.

8. Living in Love and Faith

The Church of England are currently undergoing a period of church-wide learning together, listening to one another and listening to God as part of discerning a way forward for the Church of England in relation to matters of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

Some materials called Living in Love and Faith have been designed to help those who would like the opportunity to reflect on these topics together to be able to do so.

I have reviewed the materials myself and would like to give anyone who would appreciate also doing so, the opportunity to spend time in five reflective sessions with me on these topics.

To register your interest, please use this link: <https://forms.gle/M3wDe3eBd5eboJdR8>

Dates and details are still TBC.

9. Our new Curate, David - who will be arriving in our parish in July

Last Sunday we announced the wonderful news that we will be having a curate join our parish from July this year.

His name is David, and he is married to Margaret. He is very excited about joining us and he has sent some information (attached) about himself so we can learn a little more about him.

Please do be praying for David and Margaret as they prepare to join us.

10. Anita our 6-week placement student

Last Sunday, Anita and Nigel, her husband, joined us at both services. Anita is on a 6-week placement with us, taking time to discern what vocation God may be calling her to and experiencing life in a different parish as she does so.

She and Nigel will be with us every Sunday, and Anita will be joining in with a range of other activities across the week too.

Please do look out for her/ them in the churches and on Zoom.

Love and prayers,
Alex

Rev Alex Stevens
Vicar
Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath
07312 113019

The PCC of the Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath is a Registered UK Charity No 1180563