

WEEKLY MESSAGE FROM OUR VICAR, ALEX – 4th FEBRUARY 2022

Dear Church Family Members and Parish Friends,

Hoping you're all well. It is hard to believe how fast 2022 is passing - already we are in February!

Attached is a photo from our January foodbank collection. I mentioned last week that it was a bumper one! - thank you so much to all who contributed.

This email contains information on the following topics:

1. Parish prayer, next week on Tuesday (8th February) at 7pm
2. Safeguarding in our Parish
3. Eco Parish
4. Grow Your Own Lunch
5. The CPAS Evangelism Hub
6. Fellowship Group
7. Calling musicians!

Love and prayers,
Alex

1. **Parish Prayer, next week on Tuesday (8th February) at 7pm**

Our next Parish Prayer meeting is next week, on Tuesday 8th February, at 7pm. We will be meeting on Zoom, and you can join the meeting by using this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86841425322?pwd=Y3BzYlItMFBvQlFKZC9uYXZ5b0N4QT09>

2. **Safeguarding in our Parish**

On Sunday we held 'Safeguarding Sunday' in our parish.

To hear Karen's testimony about being Parish Safeguarding Officer for our Parish, please take a look on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfX2-cGjRg>

To hear my sermon on the topic of safeguarding, please use this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egFrPidqA-Y>

Our Parish Safeguarding Policy is attached, for you to read if you would like to.

If you have any questions about safeguarding in our parish, please do speak to either Karen or myself.

3. **Eco Parish**

Our wonderful Eco Parish group have been working hard recently to help make us more aware of how to look after God's world better and care for the environment.

To catch up again on Jim's talk on this, please use this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wtuhD-Oe24&t=117s>

And to hear Alastair's Lifestyle tips, please use this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLF-1WgS3io>

He has also summarised these for us here:

1. Buy Fairtrade. It makes a big difference to the producer in the two thirds world. Tell the checkout operator in the supermarket what you are doing. They are trained to take note
2. Think carefully before using BOGOF. It often stands for "Buy one. Chuck the other in the bin."
3. Use less plastic, particularly plastic used only once. Buy loose fruit & veg NOT shrink wrapped. Invest in a set of reusable cotton mesh produce bags (www.wildandstone.com)
4. Recycle; Recirculate. Avoid filling your bin that goes to landfill as much as possible. Schemes such as techtake-back take old electronic items.
5. Use peat free compost. Our current use of peat is a disaster.
6. Use mugs that will compost. Upgrade single use cups & water bottles.
7. Join a street clean/ beach clean. Support climate marches.
8. Be informed. For example use "Saying yes to life" and/or "Planet Protectors", both by Ruth Valerio.
9. Think carefully about big decisions Are solar panels for you? The Queen has installed them at Balmoral. The Victorian Society has withdrawn its objection to solar panels on a number of church roofs. Should you buy an electric car next time?
10. Journey with others. Do not be alone. Hold the micro and the macro together. No one can do everything. Everyone can do something.

4. Grow Your Own Lunch

Deirdre Jackson, who is also part of our Eco Parish Group, has come up with the wonderful idea of organising a 'Grow your own lunch' in our parish this coming summer, and also a plant sale to raise money for Christian Aid and A'Rocha...

More information will follow, but the broad plan, so we can all get thinking about how we may be involved is as follows:

February: Buy seeds to plant - anything we may wish to eat / share with others at a lunch in the summer. E.g. courgettes, tomatoes, spinach, salad leaves, beans, peas, soft fruits - or anything we fancy... even mushrooms!

February / March: plant your seeds in a green house or windowsill. Also please grow flower seeds and take cuttings, because we'd also love to have a plant sale (see below!)

April: Review your plants: Do you have any you may be able to think about donating to the plant sale?

May: Have a parish plant sale, raising money for Christian Aid and A'Rocha

June: Let us know what you may be providing for the 'grow your own lunch'

July: Have a 'Grow your own lunch' for all who would like to join in

5. The CPAS Evangelism Hub

A group from our parish: Sue Wharton, Tomos Davies, Michael, Michelle and myself, are currently greatly enjoying being part of the CPAS Evangelism Hub pilot. We are learning lots to be able to share in the parish with all of you.

Before Christmas, Sue and Tomos introduced 'Pray for Five'. For us all to choose 5 people (or more if wished) to regularly pray for, so that they may find out about God or grow in their walk towards / with God.

Please remember to pray for your five!

We are looking forward to sharing further updates with you soon. In the meantime, please do pray for the group and that this venture will help us all to share with others, even more, the wonderful love of Jesus.

6. Fellowship Group

A small group of us met on Monday for 'Fellowship Group': an opportunity to spend time together, sharing from God's word and praying. It was a lovely hour together. A flyer is attached with the next dates, more are welcome to join us!

7. Calling Musicians!

If you are a musical person - and you either sing or play an instrument and would enjoy sometimes singing or playing as part of a worship group in our services - please let me know. We would love to have as many people as possible using their gifts in this area.

Please do not assume I know that you play something! - we have had two whole years of covid, where everything has been different - and I had been in the parish less than a year when covid struck.

Our worship leaders and technical whizzes have served us wonderfully during this time (thank you so much to all of them!), keeping everything going throughout very challenging and restricted times.

It is wonderful to now be in position to look again to see who else may like to join in with serving in this area, to support their work.

Love and prayers,
Alex

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