

Welcome to this third edition of 'Update', keeping you updated during this time of social isolation...

HOLY WEEK AT HOME

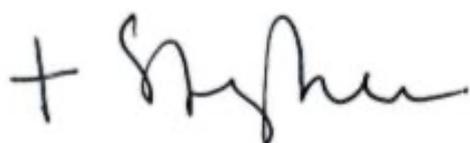
A message from Bishop Stephen: We have already become 'a different sort of church' in unprecedented ways. The very place in which the body of Christ finds its identity, offers prayer, and receives solace in time of crisis—that is, the church building—is not available to us, and, as in the early days of our faith, public gatherings of Christians outside the home are forbidden. Nevertheless, we are finding ways to join in prayer and intention; to cry 'Abba, Father'; and to recognise we are all buried with Christ by baptism into his death, that we might walk in newness of life. The present situation does not nullify the joy we have been granted in the resurrection, but it will be lived out this year in different ways.

Holy Week and Easter, in particular, will give us opportunities to reflect on all of these matters. In the annual commemoration of the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we explore who we are and our relationship to the God who loves us. We are enabled to realise, quite counter-culturally, that everything that we have that is good is a gift, and not a right. We, as humans, do not always have the answers.

We can reflect that, even in the hardest of times, even in the prolonged 'Holy Saturday' of emptiness in which we find ourselves, there is always hope. God, whose nature is mercy, sent his Son, who experienced the fullness of our own human suffering and makes all things new.

Our historic structures still place us at the heart of the community and of public life, and as spokespeople for our ecumenical partners and for those of other faiths who are experiencing similar difficulties to our own.

In these dark times, when it is not possible to recall the death and resurrection of Christ in our church buildings, we have the opportunity, through marking Holy Week at Home, of discovering how what we are now experiencing may contribute to our own ongoing journey as God's people. The homes to which we are primarily confined offer us a place in which our faith can be discovered afresh, where we can find 'the Church within'. Some of the suggested activities gesture in that direction. In the renewed hope that will come from remembering the story of our salvation, we hope that all the faithful will experience the genuine, unreserved joy of Easter.



*You can find out more about the Diocesan resources
for 'Holy Week at Home' at
www.chelmsford.anglican.org/holyweekathome*

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Public worship remains suspended across the Church of England, which means that there will be no services in church until further notice. This closure now also includes baptisms and weddings, although funerals can be taken at the graveside (but with only immediate family in attendance).
- The church building is now completely closed, and it is imperative that no-one enters the building. If this poses a significant problem, please contact David Poppleton (570725).
- The deadline for the Annual Church Meetings has been postponed by the National Church until the end of October. A date will be set once it has become clear when the current restrictions will be lifted. The current Churchwardens, Ron Levy and David Poppleton, will remain in post until the Visitation Services can be rearranged (hopefully: January 2021).

PARTICULAR PRAYER NEEDS

Please pray specifically for:

- **for the “Daughters of St Botolph’s”**, all working in front-line health-care: Lucy Jacob (née Abbott), Rebecca Parker (née Exton) and Kate Rothwell (née Branson);
- **for a “Granddaughter of St Botolph’s”**: Becky Levy, working on the front-line as a paramedic;
- **for the members of Crafty Drama**, now having to self-isolate at home;
- **for those who are self-isolating alone**, struggling with loneliness with no-one else at home.



If you have a particular prayer need that we could publicise in a future ‘Update’, just let us know.

THINGS TO LISTEN TO OR TO WATCH...

No one is pretending that just listening or viewing is as good as face-to-face fellowship. But in this time of social isolation, it may be that these opportunities are better than nothing. Here are a few to be aware of (the web-links in italics will help you access previous recordings if you want to ‘catch-up’):

- **Sunday Worship** on Radio 4 at 8:10am (www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qnds/episodes/guide)
- **Sunday Worship** on BBC1 at 11:00am (www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000h2sz)
- **Songs of Praise** on BBC1 at 1:15pm on Sundays (www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006ttc5)
- **Morning & Evening Prayer** with Mark, every weekday at 9am and 5pm and on Sundays at 9:45am and 5pm, although they can be viewed at any time afterwards (www.facebook.com/towncentrevicar/)

If you have a favourite that we could publicise in a future ‘Update’, just let us know.

THE COLLECT FOR PALM SUNDAY

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Anything for future ‘Updates’? Please email towncentrevicar@gmail.com or ring 01206 572641.