



The Ship

St Jude's Church, Englefield Green Newsletter

Anglicans and Methodists working together

Number 129

March 2021

Services for March

Please note that it is our hope to be able to reintroduce services in church earlier than this current schedule suggests. We shall keep you informed via our website, Facebook page and personal email.

Sunday 7th March

9.30am Service on our YouTube Channel

Sunday 14th March (Mothering Sunday)

9.30am Informal Service live-streamed on our YouTube Channel

Sunday 21st March

9.30am Service on our YouTube Channel

Sunday 28th March (Palm Sunday)

9.30am Liturgy for Palm Sunday

1st April Maundy Thursday

7.30pm Liturgy for Maundy Thursday

2nd April (Good Friday)

12 noon Liturgy for Good Friday

Hourly reflections on the cross of Christ will follow concluding with a final meditation at 3pm. These will also be available on our YouTube Channel.

World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer for 2021 (formerly the Women's World Day of Prayer!) is this coming Friday, 5th March. It has been prepared by the women of Vanuatu and its theme is *"Build on a Strong Foundation"*.

WDP Vanuatu has produced a video of the worship service led in English which will be posted on WDPIC YouTube and social media. In view of the current restrictions on meeting together the video provides us with the exciting opportunity of experiencing WDP directly from the country that hosts this event.

The suggestion is that we might like to worship together in this way from 10.30am on the 5th March. I have some copies of the Order of Service for anyone who would like one and I can try to deliver one to you. If you do not use online media you may still like to have an Order of Service for your own reflection at home.

This annual event is the only source of income for WDP and this service book includes the usual offering envelope, which you can use if you wish. You can deliver the envelope to Sheila Hassan 45 Hythe Ave Egham TW20 8DD or to me, or send it directly to: World Day of Prayer, Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RR.
Judith Allford

Uncertainty

One of the very many lessons I learned during the years I was privileged to work within the NHS as a Hospital Chaplain is that human beings find uncertainty very hard to bear. Over and over again I was overwhelmed by the courage of someone who had just received a difficult diagnosis or had even perhaps been told that there was medically little more that could be done for them. But it was often those who found themselves in the limbo land of awaiting the results of tests or of a decision as to whether or not to operate for whom life seemed hardest.

If you are an aficionado of the television panel game "Would I lie to you?" or the bewilderingly obscure quiz show "Only Connect" then the names of David Mitchell and his wife Victoria will be familiar to you. In a very frank interview given some years ago David Mitchell talks with great openness about the three years between his first meeting with Victoria and the eventual beginning of their relationship. Looking back on those lonely, difficult and desperately uncertain three years David pondered as to whether they would have been easier to bear had he known that their conclusion would be a happy one.

Over the last eleven months I have learnt that I too struggle with the uncertain and the unknown. Early on in the pandemic I grasped eagerly at every milestone date that was suggested. Those dates provided an opportunity to plan and prepare for the way ahead. As the dates have become more tentative so I have become less confident about looking forward. And yet – I wonder? Would it have been easier had I known in March last year that we would still be facing COVID 19 in March 2021? Somehow, I think not. Whilst there are circumstances in which certainty can make life a little easier, there are other situations where ironically certainty can simply drag us down.

In this edition of The Ship I can offer little certainty about a return date to face to face worship in the coming weeks. I thank God with you for the wonderful progress of the virus vaccine which affords us all a greater sense of security in many ways. The light at the end of the tunnel is burning far brighter than before. But the most recent briefings from the Prime Minister have sounded a note of caution, a concern lest our confidence in the vaccine should lead us to grow careless.

At the time of writing our schools are preparing fully to open on Monday 8th March. Please pray especially for our local schools, for their wonderful teachers, head teachers and wider staff teams. They have provided so many families in our village with a bed rock of certainty in these uncertain times. Please pray for protection for them all as they return to a greater sense of normality but against the background of the very many additional challenges resulting from the pandemic.

Meantime the St Jude's Ecumenical Church Council, Church Officers, Andrew Reed and I will continue to work towards a date for throwing open the doors of the church once again. Holy Week and Easter are the high points of the church's year. They speak with unfailing certainty of the redeeming love of God in the Lord Jesus Christ for every one of us. We want to plan to worship Him together then, even though it will still mean masks and social distancing, and possibly even having to book our seats in advance! Please do check our website, Facebook page and Church door for regular updates and please find in this edition of The Ship further details of our proposed service pattern.

Our Lenten journey 2021 may be more uncertain than ever before but I shall never forget the patient who one day re-quoted these familiar words to me: *"I know where I'm going and I know who's going with me"*. He was speaking of his faith in the risen Lord Jesus who had never yet abandoned him on his journey and who had promised He never would. Lent reminds us all that the darkness of Good Friday will always give way to the dawn of Easter morning. I look forward to worshipping with you.

Judith Allford

The Church Organ

At last this month we are able to report that work has proceeded on the much-needed repairs to the organ in church – and we are again able to express our huge thanks to all who have contributed so generously to the organ fund over the past months, to make this possible, and who have been waiting patiently and uncomplainingly to see the money properly spent. (We had to wait our turn with James, the organ builder, who has been trying to keep on top of demands from cathedrals up and down the kingdom during the lockdown!)

The wind reservoir at the rear of the organ chamber, which was near the end of its useful life, was disconnected, taken out and supplied with new leather, before being reinstalled last week, all in semi-darkness and the dust of ages, in a very claustrophobic space: as James says, "Both extraction and installation had to proceed like the process of solving those puzzles where one space is left vacant for any moves to be made." Anyway, the "rushing mighty wind" which has been accompanying our services for some years now, with the air escaping from the reservoir, should now have been eliminated, and for that we are really grateful to James and his assistant, Steve, as well as to those who have contributed to the fund.

Some work will still need to be done, including the reinstatement of the Trumpet stop that adds so obviously to the joyful sounds of worship, and indeed some further necessary work on pipework in danger of collapse. We hope to be able to proceed with this, as soon, and as far, as our means allow. It is unfortunate that this is the case, of course, when the costs are high and when the church would prefer to be devoting money and resources to other pressing needs in today's world. But we shall do what we can, and James has shown himself to be someone very prepared to help with economies of expenditure and to advise on "bite-sized" repairs.

Needless to say, we should be very grateful for any further contributions to our organ fund. And we shall keep you posted about progress in all this!

From the Registers

Funerals:

(1st February) Mary Riley; (2nd) Philippa Jane Beresford; (10th) Peter John Richard Laley; (23rd) Margaret Victoria Phillips.

Readings at Communion

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| 7th March (3rd Sunday of Lent) | Exodus 20. 1–17 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 1. 18–25 John 2. 13–22 |
| 14th March (4th Sunday of Lent) | Numbers 21. 4–9 Psalm 107 1–9 Ephesians 1. 1–19 John 3. 14–21 |
| 21st March (4th Sunday of Lent) (Passion Sunday) | Jeremiah 31. 31–34 Psalm 51 1–13 Hebrew 5. 5–10 John 12. 20–33 |
| 28th March (Palm Sunday) | Isaiah 50. 4–9a Psalm 69 1–3, 7–9, 21–23 Philippians 2. 5–11 Matthew 26,27 |

The Village Centre

www.villagecentre.org.uk

01784 471110

Our Village Centre Cafe has remained closed during Lockdown but much of the work of the Centre has continued. February saw the launch of an exciting new project – more details later in this article!

Our Contact Centre is still operating at full capacity (four families per session) and there is a waiting list of families wishing to access it. Baby Basics is busier than ever with many referrals coming in from local professional bodies.

The refurbishment of our Café has been approved in principle by the Church Council of St Jude's United Church and the Staines and Feltham Methodist Circuit. Funding still has to be secured and if you would like to make a donation towards this exciting project please do get in touch. Thank you!

Our collections for the Runnymede Food Bank are continuing and the lobby at the main doors of the Centre is open each Monday and Friday morning to receive donations of food.

Our regular classes and lettings will resume once COVID 19 guidelines allow. We are also looking for new members for our Village Centre Management Committee.

This month's most exciting news is the 'soft' launch during the last week in February of the Village Centre Community Fridge & Kitchen! The launch has been hugely successful. Many local people have visited already and availed themselves of fresh surplus food donated by nearby supermarkets and collected on our behalf by volunteers. Picnic on the Green in St Jude's Road and the Beehive Pub in Middle Hill have been especially generous in donating food to us.

The fundamental principle behind the Community Fridge is that of redistributing good food which would otherwise be wasted. The facility is available to everyone within the area. Opening times at present are Mondays and Fridays, 9am–12 noon.

As the project develops the Fridge will be able to receive individual donations of fresh food. This will enable you to give your own surplus items as well as taking items that you can use. But, for now, please come along and choose some delicious ingredients for a lockdown meal at home!

Once again we owe very many heartfelt thanks to Ali Watts, our Centre Manager, for her tireless commitment and vision. We remain very grateful also to our growing team of volunteers. Our other staff member is still on furlough but we look forward to welcoming her back before too much longer.

Please do get in touch with Ali:

manager@villagecentre.org.uk

if you would like to know more about what we are doing, or if you would like to offer to help in any way. Please also remember, in the continued wake of COVID 19, that if you, or someone you know, has particular needs, you can still access help from the Village Centre/Mutual Aid by contacting 07526 360704 or the Runnymede Borough Council triage line, 01932 838383.

Giving to St Jude's

Please do access our website (www.stjudeschurch.info) for details of ways in which you can give to St Jude's Church.

Diary for March 2021

Our Sunday services (and Holy Week) are shown on the front page of this Newsletter