



Christ Church and St Mark's



Parish Information Sheet for April and May 2020

These are strange and difficult times. There's a lot of fear around and not a little frustration as well. Think back to the first Easter. Israel was under occupation by the Romans and people longed for freedom. If only someone would get rid of the Romans ... If only someone would develop an effective vaccine for Covid-19 ... To many in early 1st century Israel it looked as if they'd got the man who'd finally set them free ... Despite their many misunderstandings Jesus' band of followers were pretty sure that he was the One, the person God had sent to save them. Even if he wasn't planning active rebellion, he was teaching a new way of life for God's people, a new way of including folk who didn't easily fit with the religion of the day, moreover he was healing people and releasing them from the burden of illness. Then disaster struck in the form of the religious authorities and the Roman occupiers. The Jesus that they admired, loved, followed was arrested, tried and crucified all within a couple of days. Jesus friends and followers expected the authorities would be prowling the streets of Jerusalem and hunting them down ...

Just as swiftly as the disaster had come on them and their friend, things changed again. One, maybe two, women had crept out just as it was getting light to complete the burial of their friend. At first sight the open and empty tomb looked like the last straw until they saw Jesus, alive, risen from death, speaking their names, giving them a message for the rest of the group. The impossible had happened. Jesus was alive! This was the moment it all changed for them and for the rest of the world.

The resurrection of Jesus sets the seal on all that he said and did, from the beginnings of his ministry to his death on the cross. He really was and is the son of God. He really was and is the source of our hopes for this life and the one beyond it.

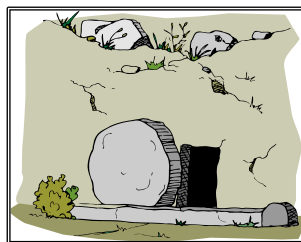
As Jesus' friends discovered later that day, locked doors and solid walls were no barrier to Jesus, nor are they now. No restriction on movement or association, no lockdown will get in his way. We can't gather in churches to celebrate that Jesus is alive but we can celebrate in our hearts and our homes and even on our time out in the fresh air.

Alleluiah! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluiah!

He is with us and with the people we love. He is out with the key workers and indoors with us, and nothing, absolutely nothing not even Covid-19, will get between him and the people he loves. Extraordinary as it may seem, that's you and me!

Happy Easter.

Duncan Campbell



It doesn't look much, does it?
It's what *isn't* in it that matters ...

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Some Bible verses

*The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I
fear? (Psalm 27:1)*
Jesus said I am with you always (Matthew 28:20)
*The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not
overcome it (John 1:5)*
I will never fail you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5)

Locally please pray for:

People who have Corona Virus
People who are bereaved
Health professionals at Watford General and
our GP practices
Anyone involved in decision making during
this outbreak, including our Mayor and town
council.

You can find prayers and more on:

www.churchofengland.org

Coffee, Tea and Cakes



Our coffee mornings are normally at Christ Church from 10am to 12 noon on the first Saturday of every month.

There will be none in April or May, but we hope that there might be:
The next Coffee, Tea and Cakes on **Saturday 6th June.**

All Welcome.

BOOK SWAP

On the 1st Saturday of the month, during "Coffee, Tea and Cakes" 10 am to 12 noon.



Bring a book and swap it with another - Free
Buy a book - 50p

Christ Church and St Mark's Collections

During this difficult time, we still need income to maintain the churches and the work that we do. We are fortunate that some of the congregation pay regularly through their bank. If you normally put money into the collection at services, please remember to save it for when we can meet in church again. If you use the envelope scheme, then hopefully their presence will remind you to fill them!

WEDNESDAY Circle

This is a monthly afternoon meeting of a social kind at St Mark's, at 2pm.

Anyone who enjoys instructive talks, quizzes, crafts, competitions, the occasional outing, and refreshments is welcome.

We hope that the next meeting will be on:

17th June at 2:00pm

where there will be a speaker on Leavesden Hospital.

Have You Given These a Try?

If you have contacted The Ecclesiastical Insurance Office but found their quote unsuitable for your needs, would you let Ray Andrews know, please, so that he has some idea of how many people have tried to take up the offer?

Buy House/Contents Insurance and benefit your Church!

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Office (E.I.O.) is offering £130 to the Church for each House/Contents Insurance policy purchased by a member of the congregation.

This is to celebrate their 130th Anniversary and I and another church member have already taken out a policy, benefitting the Church by £260.

We have both found the premiums quoted very reasonable, so if your house/content policy is up for renewal, please try E.I.O. for a quote.

Their website is:

www.ecclesiastical.com/Trust130

and nominate Christ Church Watford to receive their donation of £130. You don't have to accept their quote but you do have to take out a policy to claim the £130. Give them a try – please!

Ray Andrews – Treasurer

Our Lent Challenge 2020

We were asked again this Lent to try to fill Ray's jars for Water Aid.

Our route to the jars was rudely cut off during Lent, so we have been unable to fill them!

Water Aid need our help more than ever now, so please either:

Make a donation directly to Water Aid via their website www.wateraid.org/uk (please let Ray know so that we can celebrate the total), or

Hang on to your change (notes also gratefully accepted!) until we are allowed back in church.

Thank you

Coronavirus information: What should I do?



How does Anita do that?



2 in 5 people lack handwashing facilities at home.

Anita's village in Nepal only has 4 taps. With 160 homes, 40 families share 1 tap. Water's scarce so Anita's family struggles to stay clean, putting their health at risk.

Sue Pankhurst's Last Sermon

This week begins the first of a series of 3 sermons focusing on children. Next week will be about children and baptism, and the following week about children and Communion. But for this week, let's just have a think about children, and particularly children in church.

So.. why children specifically? Well, I think we all hope that they will continue the work of the Church into tomorrow... and as such, are very important people...

But Rowan Williams, when he was Archbishop of Canterbury, said they are so much more than that... to quote: "they are an intrinsic element in the church of the present. Children need, as members of the church family, what any of us adults need... nurture, listening, stretching of the mind and heart". And I would add to that list, belonging.... nurture, listening, stretching of the mind and heart...belonging.

Sunday Schools were set up back in the 18th century with the very good aim to teach the children to read and write and so to give them a better start than they were getting. In the 19th century, they began to have some Christian content... and gradually they specialised in religious education as state schools, who taught general education became more widespread. On to the 20th century, and Sunday Schools were still on the larger side and held in the church hall or, maybe, even further away, and often at a different time from the main church service...I can remember going to Sunday School at 3.00 in the afternoon. They'd taken on a different identity from the church, and many of the children didn't go on to become church members.

So, what about the 21st century... what progress should we be seeing now?

Yes, children may need to have teaching at their own level but surely they should feel included in the church family from the start...And we have made progress there. But we need to ask ourselves if we are truly including our children in our church family...we should question how we treat them, how we think of them, and what we expect of the parents... And, if we are tempted to separate them.. is it for their benefit or for ours? Is it because it's what has always been done? Or is it because they can be taught in a different way? Or is it primarily to give the adult members of the Church some peace and quiet? Jesus was quite sure that they should be treated as one with the rest of us. Remember the time when little children were being brought to Jesus to be blessed and the disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them, presumably the parents or other members of the family? Jesus' response was equally stern.. 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs'. Wow! Just think on that for a mo... the kingdom of heaven belongs to these children who are in church today and many more who aren't... Why was Jesus so sure that they were so important?

And again Jesus said to his disciples, 'Unless you change, and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this little child', he said putting a child amongst them, 'is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me'.

All through the bible children are considered important by God. Throughout the Old Testament, children are seen as a gift from God and a sign of the covenant relationship with him. Even at the very beginning the importance of children is assumed when God tells Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply.

If you look up 'children' in a bible concordance there are pages of verses where children are mentioned. For instance:

God gave the elderly couple, Abraham and Sarah, children as many as the stars in the sky.

And remember the boy Samuel? He heard the call of God 3 times before Eli, the elderly priest, helped him to understand that the boy was being chosen by God to model faithful response and to be his messenger.

Psalms 8 is a hymn that celebrates God's glory and the God-given dignity he has given to human beings. And included in those human beings are the young children... 'From the lips of children and infants' it says, 'you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger'. 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise...' How often do we recognize that in their sayings?

Stephen Lake, when he was sub-dean at St. Albans Abbey, wrote: 'All through the Old Testament there is this reverence for the gift of children and a tenderness towards the life of each child. There is an appreciation of the simplicity offered by the young and affection for their openness and honesty. This is the basis for Jesus' treatment of children'.

We all know that children are open to learning...'What does this mean?' 'Why is that happening?' 'Why are you doing what you're doing?' 'Where are we going?' 'Are we nearly there yet? They say what they think,

they ask what they need to know! They are honest and question what they don't understand. Whereas we adults are perhaps a bit more ready to hide our ignorance.. and to be embarrassed at showing our joy in our worship, whereas the children might be found dancing to the music...and happily exploring during worship. We can learn a lot from children in church. And, like Eli, we can offer them a pattern for worship and help children to understand what we've learned... if they take part with us.

Let's go back in time again...it is assumed that children were present during the great Jewish celebrations and in the early church. Jesus went up to Jerusalem with his parents for the Passover.. and they found him missing when they were on the way home... he wasn't lost though... he was listening to the rabbis in the temple. Children have an amazing ability to listen even when they look as though they're doing something else.

When the bible talks about 'households' being converted and baptized this certainly included the children. They must have listened to the letters from Paul alongside the adults. But we have no reason to think that they sat quietly, listening... children don't, on the whole! But, that doesn't mean they don't take in at their level what's being taught. As long as we help them to focus on the story they'll remember as much, if not more, than an adult will... so, if we give them a picture to colour or tell the story in a more child friendly way, getting them to be part of it, show it on the screen and ask them about it later...something will register. And it might well suit others of us too because we all learn differently.

Perhaps our church congregations are getting smaller because of how it looks from the outside...people are frightened of church, do you know?! Yes... it's full of peculiar people who stand up, sit down, sing strange songs they've never heard of and pray prayers they don't understand... but not only that... they're not places where children are welcome... That might be a little old fashioned but that's how it's seen.

"you don't make a noise in church!"

"you don't run around in church!"

"you don't move in church except when you're told to!"

"you have to wear smart clothes to church!"

In fact, 'you feel uncomfortable in church'.

Our society today expects fun, noise, activity, laughter ...belonging. Surely if we want to bring people into the church community it has to show that we are an inclusive community, welcoming all, and making it an 'alright' place to be... however and whenever they come... And we know we're not that strange... It's just that we haven't changed with the times; and people who aren't used to church haven't come along with us. That's where lift off! and messy church come in... we're teaching children and families that we aren't that odd... in fact we're quite fun and we do have something to offer them in the teaching we give and the community we create. So please pray for both these important roles in our church diary and consider if you are able to help occasionally in this vital work that we, as a church community, are doing... so that somewhere down the road, in God's own time, some of the people we touch may come to know God as their friend, their redeemer and their Lord.

And as a final thought: If we are going to become more accepting in our worship ... maybe, our quiet, devotional time that we love and traditionally come to church for can and, perhaps even, should be done at other times...not making it 'the thing we do on Sunday' but making sure we stay close to God throughout our week... And then.. a bit of noise in our church service can be exciting...the children, the adults all part of one worshipping community glorifying God and welcoming whoever comes.

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs'.

Sue concluded the sermon by reading a short story about All age Worship.



Part of Sue's sermon.

"How long we live and how we are in heaven for eternity."

Thank you and a Reminder

The numbers of people needing the help of the Foodbank in Watford is sadly still high and rising by the day, as in the rest of the country.



January 2020

To our Friends at Christchurch and St Marks,

Christmas Gift Bags for YMCA Residents

I write to express my thanks to all of you for your generosity in giving your time and love to making so many fabulous gift bags for the men and women who spent Christmas in our Watford Hostel.

One YMCA
Charter House
Charter Place
Watford
Herts
WD17 2RT
T 01923 353600

Our Residents come to stay with us for a variety of reasons. Some may have experienced relationship breakdown, others might have poor mental health or addictions. Others have lost their jobs and are looking for work. We welcome them and provide support and care to help them get back on their feet and live independently again.

There will be a number of our Residents who will not see any family or friends over Christmas. This often leads to loneliness and to them feeling that they are not worthy of being cared for. An unexpected gift coming from a stranger is a sign to them that they are valuable and remembered. Your kindness is also a sign that God has not forgotten their situation and is still active in the world today through His people. One resident said to us 'What? Really, a gift for me? Are you sure?' Many other residents have expressed joy at receiving their gifts and the difference it has made to their Christmas.

We too as a Chaplaincy team, as providers of spiritual and pastoral care to our residents are blessed and encouraged by your practical and prayerful support to us.

So as you have blessed us, may God bless you this year with His Peace and may His presence be known in your lives daily.

Yours in Christ,

Matt Penny
Lead Chaplain, OneYMCA

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

SUPPORT & ADVICE

ACCOMMODATION

FAMILY WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Registered Office: One YMCA, Charter House, Charter Place, Watford, Hertfordshire WD17 2RT.

Company No. 4430743. Registered Charity No. 1102301 Registered Housing Provider No. H4418 VAT Registration No. 190 3566 03

Home Sweet Home

Sadly for some people, home is not the safe sanctuary many of us enjoy. Living with someone who is controlling, who monitors your movements, your communications, your spending, who criticises and blames you constantly, who leaves you feeling guilty and responsible for their behaviour and feelings, who physically or sexually hurts you, may make your home a very unsafe place to be.

With the current situation requiring us to stay in our homes, isolating you from people you may normally turn to for support or places you may go to escape for a few hours, you may wish to access other information and support to keep you and other family members safe and feeling listened to.



LLP



Herts
Sunflower

We will continue to monitor our emails
24 hours a day/7 days a week, alongside
our emergency telephone number
which is 0203 9355 999

DAUnit@jkclawyers.com

www.hertssunflower.org/



Herts
Domestic
Abuse
Helpline

08 088 088 088

SaferPlaces
Domestic Abuse Support Services



03301 025811



01923 816 229



Call 999
if you are in danger



Staying safe during COVID-19

A guide for victims and survivors of domestic abuse

<https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Safety%20planning%20guide,%20victims%20and%20survivors.%20COVID-19.pdf>

Our message to victims and survivors of domestic abuse

We know that if you are currently experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse you will know what being isolated and frightened will feel like. You might be worried about self-isolating with someone who is harming you. We've created this to help you think about what you might do over the coming weeks to stay safe.

You are not alone in this.

You are a survivor, equipped with the knowledge, strength and tools that help keep you and your family safe every day.

Below are some things you can think about if this is happening to you. Remember that you are an expert in your own situation and only take on advice that feels safe and relevant to you. It is important to try and think about the things that may change or make you more unsafe, especially thinking through now how you might get help if you need it. We also know that, like everyone, you could be worried about contracting the virus and the **NHS** website can give you advice around this.

Always remember that the abuse you are experiencing is not your fault.

Websites and useful guides

Accessing information online may feel like the best option for you at this time. If you do access any information online you may need to delete your browser history or use 'private browsing' as a way to hide your searches.

- [SafeLives guide to staying safe online](#)
- [Women's Aid guide to private browsing](#)
- [Guide to technology safety](#)
- [Making a safety plan, Women's Aid](#)
- [The Survivor's Handbook, Women's Aid](#)
- [Guidance on economic abuse during COVID-19, Surviving Economic Abuse](#)
- [Karma Nirvana](#)
- [Chavn](#)

Live chats and survivor forums

- [Women's Aid Survivors Forum](#)
- [Women's Aid Live Chat](#)
- [Victim Support Live Chat](#)

Domestic Abuse Support: Apps to keep you safe during self-isolation

Domestic Abuse Support:

Bright Sky- free mobile app

Provides support and info to people affected by abuse and those seeking to support them. Available in English, Urdu, Punjabi or Polish. Visit Hestia.org/brightsky for more info.

Hollie Guard

Offers alarm profiles that can raise alerts to your personal emergency contacts by shaking your phone. Gives extra protection when travelling or working alone.

One Scream

Add up to 3 people to be notified when you need help. Activate app and leave to run in the background or your panic scream triggers the app even if phone buried in your bag. A loud siren will be heard, phone vibrates and a notification pops up. Alarm can be cancelled within 20 seconds or an automated message will be sent

to your chosen contacts and an open line created for contact to hear real time events. Download on App Store or Google Play.

Silent Solution system

When needing 999 help but unable to talk from a mobile for safety reasons. After dialling 999 alert call handler by coughing, tapping handset or, once prompted by the automated system, by pressing 55. Call is then taken by a police handler who will attempt to communicate using simple yes/no answers.

we're
here to
help



Watford
Women's
Centre

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC ABUSE, CALL US ON 01923 816 229

TELL US YOUR SAFE NUMBER AND WE WILL CALL YOU BACK.

01923 816 229

EMERGENCY APPEAL

Imagine what isolation feels like if you are living with an abuser. Your generosity can help us to continue to keep women safe when they most need our support.



Watford
Women's
Centre

PLEASE DONATE NOW:
www.wwcplus.org.uk/donate

CHRIST CHURCH & ST MARK'S, WATFORD MISSION STATEMENT

WE ARE people who are drawn together by our Christian belief and our response to God.

WE BELIEVE that God reveals himself to us in many ways as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that people can live in a loving relationship with God and with each other in Christ.

WE AIM to follow Christ's teaching and example, living a full life in every community in which we are involved, sharing our faith with others through example, worship and service.

We are a Fairtrade parish.

We use only fairly traded tea and coffee at our church events.

Fairtrade stalls are held after the main morning services:

at St Mark's on the 1st Sunday in the month and

at Christ Church on the 3rd Sunday in the month.



2020 DIARIES

There are still new diaries available. If anybody would like a copy, please see Paul Pratchett.

DIGITAL PARISH INFORMATION SHEET

The full colour version of the current Information Sheet will soon be available from our website:

www.christchurchandstmarkswatford.org.uk, but to be sure of having one, please contact the office to receive a copy by email.

THE NEXT EDITION

The next edition of the Information Sheet is scheduled to be published at the end of May, to cover all events in June and July.

If you have any articles, dates or information for inclusion, please send them to the Parish Office by post or via email to ccwatford@btinternet.com by 21st May.

www.christchurchandstmarkswatford.org.uk

Parish Office – St Mark's Church, Leggatts Way, Watford, Herts. WD24 5NQ

Phone 01923 681972 email: ccwatford@btinternet.com

Vicar:

Rev Duncan Campbell
Email: vicarccwatford@gmail.com

Christ Church Vicarage, Leggatts Way WD24 5NQ
phone: 07806602093 or 01923 674142

Church Wardens:

Mr Paul Pratchett email: paulpratchett@hotmail.com

Mr David Miller email dmiller949@btinternet.com (251292)

Children's and Young Families' Outreach Worker (for our parish and St Andrew's)

Claire Locke Email: admin@liftoff.org.uk

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/liftoffchildrensactivities

Lift Off! website liftoff.org.uk