



St Peter's Wolvercote & All Saints Wytham First Sunday after Trinity Sunday 14 June 2020

Dear Friends

In the last few days we have started to make preparations to open our churches this coming week, following government advice that we would be allowed to open for private prayer from Monday 15 June. You may have heard that the government has just changed this date without notice to Saturday 13 June. Unfortunately, we are not able to prepare in time to do this safely! So we are staying with our original plans to open St Peter's from Tuesday 16 June and All Saints' from Sunday 21 June onwards for private prayer. Details of opening times are given below.

We are all by now aware of the restrictions that will accompany this including social distancing and use of hand sanitisers. For the same reasons we are not able to use hymn books, service sheets or any other resources on paper, as these also carry a transmission risk. However in spite of all this, we are delighted to be able to begin to welcome you back to our churches.

Appropriately as we begin to emerge from lockdown, our gospel this Sunday is about our ministry and mission to our community. For this reason, we have recorded my sermon by the door of the glass link, between St Peter's Church and the Parish Rooms, looking out to the community beyond.

Although sadly I will not be here to share in it, it is good to start to look beyond our present crisis to the future ministry and mission of our churches here in Wolvercote, Wytham and Cutteslowe.

With love and prayers
Charles

Worship for Sunday 14 June 2020

The Collect

Let us pray

God of truth, help us to keep your law of love and to walk in ways of wisdom, that we may find true life in Jesus Christ your Son.

Amen

Exodus 19.2-8a

²The Israelites had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain. ³Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ⁴You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you

obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, ⁶but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.'

⁷So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸The people all answered as one: 'Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do.'
For the gift of the Word - **Thanks be to God.**

Romans 5.1-8

¹Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in

which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. ⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

For the gift of the Word - **Thanks be to God.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (9.35 - 10.8)

Glory to you, O Lord.

³⁵Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because

they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'
¹Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him. ⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near."
⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon prepared by Revd Charles Draper

It has been a great sadness to lose our Wolvercote and Wytham Midsummer Festival this year – which I had intended to be the conclusion of my ministry here. I have always admired the way St Peter's and All Saints' are so deeply involved in the village community especially during the Festival week.

One of the most significant moments for me in my five years here was the time three years ago when our Team and our St Peter's PCC looked at what were our highest priorities. I had asked two questions – firstly which was the most important of all our priorities, and secondly which of area should we be giving greater priority than we do at present. Without any prompting from me, both Team and PCC came up with the same top priority, namely, ***to be a church for our local community***. And both also came up with the same answer for the area we should give greater priority – and that was ***Prayer and Spirituality***.

For me this was a pivotal moment – the moment we set a direction for our churches to follow. And it seems to tie in very well with our Gospel reading for today – and is also highly relevant as we begin to emerge from the lockdown and start to look towards the future.

Our Gospel reading begins with Jesus travelling around Galilee, teaching about God, proclaiming the good news, and bringing healing wherever he goes. He sees a great need around him:

"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."

But of course there is a limit to what he can do by himself – and anyway working solo was never his way – he had called people to be his disciples from the very beginning. So now he chooses a team – a team of twelve – who will share in this ministry and mission with him.

The present situation we are in rings many bells with this. As we come out of the worst of the coronavirus crisis, we are aware firstly that this pandemic will be with us for a long time yet, and secondly, that the after

effects of job losses, poverty and government debt will be with us a lot longer. We have seen wonderful heroism all around us in responding to the crisis. But as these challenges continue, I believe many people will feel a need and a longing for some hope.

In this time when we have been much aware of our mortality, the good news that Jesus brings us of resurrection and eternal life has been more relevant than ever. And as we look to the future, the good news that through all the ups and downs of life in this world, God's purposes are good, and that as Julian of Norwich said: "*All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well*" is also highly relevant.

These are not platitudes – we are not saying that "*all is well*" - it certainly isn't. Neither did Jesus ever say that. Julian's statement that "*All shall be well*" is very different, and is in line with the New Testament hope that however bad things get, God is ultimately in control, and we can trust in his ultimate purposes for his Creation. We do have good news to proclaim – good news that is sorely needed. And just as Jesus chose the twelve to proclaim good news in Galilee, so he has chosen us to proclaim the good news in Wolvercote and Wytham.

I would want to emphasise this. St Peter's in Wolvercote, Wolvercote Baptist church, and All Saints' in Wytham, along with some help from St Andrew's working alongside us with our blessing, in Cutteslowe – we are God's mission agencies in this community. And as we start to come out of this crisis, and start to plan for the future, we need to have confidence in our calling – we are the ones that God has chosen for this task, just as Jesus chose the twelve to share with him in proclaiming the good news in Galilee.

It is actually part of an older calling. Our reading from Exodus reminds us that when God chose Israel in Old Testament times, he gave them a calling, as a "priestly kingdom" to bring God's love to the whole world – a calling which we see above all fulfilled in Jesus.

So as Jesus chose the twelve to share with him in his calling, so he has chosen us today for this calling in our community. We may at times feel we are not up to it – but God has far more confidence in us than we have in ourselves. And so I believe we were right three years ago to affirm that our primary calling is ***to be a church for our local community.***

It is this sense of calling – a calling to mission and ministry in our particular community - that is why I have always believed that the local church is worth supporting. And I believe we need to support our church in this calling in three ways in particular.

Firstly, to support it in practical ways. We have a wonderful team here, headed up by our churchwardens at both churches and our ministry team. And we are delighted that as we enter times of change, at St Peter's we now have two new deputy wardens to support the churchwardens in their work – Sarah Pepys and Paul Valentin. And we have a strong PCC and many active and committed volunteers. I am very glad that as I move on, it is in the knowledge that there is a strong team to take things forward here.

Secondly, to support it in prayer. We were also right three years ago to affirm the importance of ***Prayer and Spirituality.*** Our foundation in prayer is vital. This is the engine room in the ship, or the boiler in the house, that provides the fire and the energy to sustain and give life to our ministry and mission. Please do pray for our churches here, and for the future growth of our ministry and mission to our community.

Thirdly, to support it financially. We are the only "mission agency" here – there is no plan B! And therefore our churches need support. Many of you will remember me preaching on finance and giving back in early March – just before the lockdown. Like many other institutions, the pandemic has left us in an even more parlous state financially than before – especially with the loss of rental income from the parish rooms.

Now I would say again what we said after the coronavirus first struck – that if this pandemic has left you struggling financially, then certainly none of us would expect you to increase your giving at this time – indeed you may need to review what you already give. However if you are one of those whose income has been protected – and indeed some of us will find our expenditure has actually been reduced – then this might be a time when you might be willing to step up and increase your giving, to help the church to continue in its ministry here in this place. Or there may be some of you who may feel called to give a one off

donation to help the church through a difficult year. If this is you, but you are unsure how to give while our churches are closed, then do look out for more information on this in future mailings.

It is a great privilege to be called to share in this work of mission. And it is an exciting challenge, as following the virus, all churches will be looking for new ways to share the love of God with our communities – and I shall be sorry not to be here to share in this with you, in this place.

There will always be many different ways to be involved. When restrictions are lifted and people are once again moving into the new mill site housing development, some of you will be involved in the joyful task of welcoming them in the name of our churches. And other areas of community life will soon begin to emerge – and many of us will continue to find other ways of being involved in the community – ways that are right for us.

But meanwhile all of us can pray for our community and for our neighbours – and of course pray for our church and its future ministry. All of us can support the church, as through the vacancy and under the leadership of a new vicar, I hope there will be new initiatives to share the good news Jesus gives us with those around us. And last but certainly not least, every one of us can simply be a good friend to our neighbours and to whoever we meet and come across in our community around us.

Amen

Intercessions prepared by Steve Goddard

In our communion services, we include Intercessions: prayers which we offer as a congregation, around a number of themes. Although we cannot for the moment physically meet as a congregation, our prayers are needed as much as ever – perhaps more so – so here are some themes that people may wish to concentrate on in their own private prayer.

The Church

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith. We thank you, Lord, for the worldwide Church and we pray for its peace and unity. We pray for our fellow Christians suffering hostility and persecution anywhere in the world.

We pray for all Christian leaders, especially Archbishop Justin, and here in our own diocese, we pray for Bishop Steven; and for Charles and Sarah, and those who minister here in our own church of St Peter's and at our partner churches. In the Deanery, we pray for retired clergy, Joanna and Viv, and non-stipendiary ministers William and Shei. May all in positions of responsibility have strength and wisdom as they face the challenges of this very difficult time.

Our local community

Here in our Deanery, we pray for the parish of South Hinksey with New Hinksey; for the Roman Catholic church of Saints Gregory and Augustine; for the Orthodox church in Canterbury Road; and for Churches Together in North Oxford.

We give thanks for our local community with its opportunities for friendship and service, and we give special thanks for the way in which people are coming together to support each other. We pray especially for our neighbours who live or work in Lovelace Road, Lovelace Square, Jordan Hill, Haslemere Gardens and Hayward Road.

We pray for local organisations who help us maintain our community, many of whom cannot currently meet as normal, including Wolvercote Women's Institute; Wolvercote Horticultural Society; St Peter's Stewardship Committee; the Bellringers; our choir; and our prayer groups; the Communications Group, and all those who work hard to keep us in touch with each other through the weekly e-Newsletter, the Flying Goose, the Quarterly and the Website. We pray especially for the Partnership Enabling Group.

The world at large

Looking beyond our local community, we pray for people all over the world who are involved in trying to control the spread of the coronavirus; and for those researching into a vaccine or other solutions to the current crisis.

We pray for those affected by racial discrimination and prejudice, and those who live in fear of racial violence. We pray, too, for an end to violent demonstrations, and for a renewed determination to bring about a fair and loving society for everyone.

We remember victims of state-sponsored violence or terrorist activity, refugees and asylum seekers.

We give thanks for God's creation and our environment

O glorious God, the whole of creation proclaims your marvellous work: increase in us a capacity to wonder and delight in it, that heaven's praise may echo in our hearts and our lives be spent as good stewards of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our own country

In our own country, we pray for wisdom in our response to the Coronavirus crisis, and especially for a sensitive and caring response to the lifting of lockdown restrictions.

Those in need

Comfort and heal, Lord, all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Among the sick who have asked for our prayers are Margaret Williams; Jenny Gerrard; Trixie Collier; Marion Boulton; Vicki Shepstone; John Waugh; Margaret Ewert; Jean Tuffley; Charmaine Anderson; Lyn Dean; Gordon Killie and his wife, Jane, and children Charlie and Isabella; Gordon Murray; Ian Kennedy; Ray Voss; Andrew Hosier; James Bastin; and Holly. Give them comfort in their troubles, Lord.

The recently departed, and others we wish to commemorate

We remember the recently departed, and especially Kelvin, Albertine Turkson and all who have died, directly or indirectly, as a result of Covid-19. We pray for their family and friends and all who miss them. We pray too for those who died about this time in earlier years, and especially for Mary Blakeman and Alan Morton. According to your promises, grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom. Rejoicing in the fellowship of Evelyn Underhill, Spiritual Writer, 1941; of Richard, Bishop of Chichester, 1253; of St Peter; and of all your saints, we commend ourselves and all people to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray

Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts: may our communion strengthen us in faith, build us up in hope, and make us grow in love; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Wolvercote and Wytham churches reopen

St Peter's

We are very pleased we can now begin the reopening of St Peter's Church.

We shall be open for private prayer on:

Tuesday 16th June 10:30-11:30

Wednesday 17th June 19:00-20:00

Sunday 21st June 08:00-11:00

Tuesday 23rd June 10:30-11:30

Wednesday 24th June 19:00-20:00

Sunday 28th June 08:00-11:00

Future dates will be announced during the week of 21 June.

We shall have to comply with the social distancing guidance which will limit the number of parishioners in church at any one time. We ask that you bring your own prayer book. Please use a face covering if possible and make use of the hand sanitiser as you enter.

Welcome back to our church!

Churchwardens Wendy Sobey, Will & Sandie Capel



All Saints' Wytham

We warmly welcome you to personal prayer at All Saints' Wytham on Sundays from Sunday 21 June at 09:45 until further notice. The church will be open for an hour. We can chat outside the church, suitably distanced, in the open air.

Please bring your own prayer materials or prayer books as we cannot use those in the church for now. We will supply a take-away sheet with prayers suggested by the Diocese. All these arrangements will change as circumstances and government rulings alter in future. It is a joy to welcome you back to our lovely church.



Love from Lorna and Kathy

Sunday Explorers at Home

Dear Explorer Families and Team

It's raining but not very convincingly right now. One of our lockdown projects when the weather was better was to dig up some of the garden and make a little allotment. I have been amazed, frankly, how well things have been growing there and it makes me more positive about rain.

There is water in this week's story, taken from the book of Acts. One of Jesus' disciples, Philip meets an important Ethiopian official on the road from Jerusalem, reading one of the prophecies written by Isaiah about 700 years BC. Philip explains that the prophecy is about Jesus and baptizes the Ethiopian in a nearby river. I have filmed the story with the help of the toybox and there are some good junk modelling projects to go with it.

Do send me any pictures of your lockdown projects to put in a piece about Sunday Explorers in one of Val's church emails, and we can also make a display when the church is open. Pictures are welcome from children, parents, leaders and clergy (anyone on this mailing list really)

Have a good week and God bless you

Anne

Anne Dorman, Children's and Families' Worker, St Peter's Church

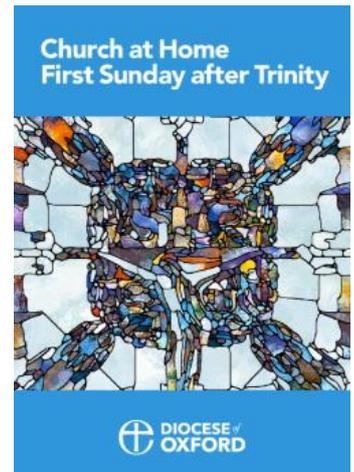


Church at Home: watch online or dial in

The Diocese of Oxford's online Church at Home service (<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19-2/livestream/>) takes place at the usual time of 10:00 this Sunday. Bishop Steven is giving an address on Philippians and the Gospel of Mathew. The Revd Skye Denno is presiding from her home in Old Marston.

As of next week, churches are able to reopen for socially-distanced private prayer. The Diocese will continue Church at Home services for the foreseeable future, as group worship is still not yet possible under government public health guidance and there will be many among us who need to isolate for many more months to come.

As ever, the order of service will be available to download at the address above. Those unable to watch online may call 01865 920930 to participate by telephone. Standard call rates apply.



Music Sunday - celebrate the role of music and musicians in church life

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM)'s annual Big Sunday Music Service is this Sunday. Everyone is welcome to join the service at 18:00 on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRQivlwyTqw>).

Sung and led by a variety of choirs from home and abroad, the Service will be led by The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Chair of RSCM Council, and will include music by John Rutter, Margaret Rizza, Charles Villiers Stanford and the newly commissioned Music Sunday Anthem by Thomas Hewitt Jones, Hymns and Psalms and Sacred Songs.



The Quarterly - June 2020

The Quarterly is a journal put together by the churches in the Summertown-Wolvercote Church Partnership. At present the June issue, introduced by a moving article contributed by Charles Draper, is only available electronically via this link

(http://www.stpeterswolvercote.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Quarterly_June2020.pdf). It carries important news about All Saints' Wytham joining the Partnership. One of the broad-ranging articles comes from Revd Cara Heafy, associate minister at Summertown URC, describing her other role in a care home. The impact of the pandemic on the Gatehouse is described by David Kay and further expanded in a separate article by Diana Clews. Jenny Gerrard writes on Easter in the Orthodox Church. Tony Lemon provides a fine obituary for Tim Bravington. Partnership News summarizes how Partnership churches have been coping in the lockdown.

Michael Daniell



Share *your* story

As we humans went into lockdown, the earth sighed with relief. Our air is so clean we can see hundreds of satellites circling in the night sky. The sound of bird song isn't drowned out by traffic noise. Animals on the verge of extinction are re-appearing. If we rebound from lockdown into our old ways it will be, without exaggeration, a tragedy of epic proportion.

What changes have you made in response to the pandemic which relieve the pressure on our fragile earth, and that you could consider carrying forward? I've become an enthusiastic supporter of our local shop - supporting Karl and Katie's commitment to our village enterprise - and the Sunday community market which has continued to supply Local, Organic, Affordable, Fairtrade (LOAF) food and products. Now shopping has become easier, I will stop buying online and generating so much unnecessary packing material. I've regained confidence riding my bicycle and will renew my efforts lobbying Oxford City Council to improve cycle lanes on the Woodstock Road and around our area. And I love picking my home-grown strawberries!



We'd love to share *your* stories. Have you learnt a new skill which you'd like to share, or discovered a novel use for vegetable peelings. The next e-newsletter is Wednesday 17 June. Please send your story to: info@stpeterswolvercote.org or call 07770 766546. Thank you!

Val Tate

Crisis counselling support

The Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC) is providing a new service in response to the distress and suffering of many people as a result of the pandemic.

ACC's COVID-19 Crisis Counselling Support Service is for anyone in the UK, whatever their faith, who has been bereaved during the time of the epidemic and anyone working within an NHS setting in a frontline role.

The service offers anyone who is eligible up to ten sessions of counselling on a no-fee basis from a professionally trained counsellor. If you do not have access to an email, please telephone 0247 644 9694.

Reminder: The future of Wolvercote Surgery

Wolvercote Commoners want to alert everyone to the possibility that the local Health Authority is apparently unwilling to commit to using the new surgery on the Mill Site, despite the space being set aside specifically for this purpose. They seem to be more interested in opening a new surgery in Summertown and withdrawing support for satellite surgeries like the ones in Wolvercote, and at Kendal Crescent. The doctors themselves recognise the value of satellite surgeries, and support the idea of the new surgery, as they can see there will be more demand from new families on the site. The Wolvercote Commoners have always supported the provision of a new surgery.

Contact Christopher Hardman (01865 513545) to share your concerns

Wolvercote Commoners