



The Link



Churches 4 All

Whimble - Talaton
Clyst Hydon - Clyst St Lawrence

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

The Pastoral Care Team has grown! Its members have been trained and are available to lend a listening ear, offer practical help and support, visit those who are housebound, ill, in hospital or bereaved, and to offer prayer.

**If you or someone you know would like a visit
from a member of the Pastoral Care Team,
please contact any of the following:**

Revd Ruth Heeley (758708)
Margaret Burrough (822257) or
Lorraine and Malcolm Crozier (822953) or
Rebecca Hardy (822405) or
David Rastall (822486)

Having put together The Link for April I suddenly realised that a lot of the events advertised were sadly, having to be cancelled.

As a result I have reduced this month's issue but have retailend an article from Ian Spicer about his course he is doing with South West Ministries.

If you have any articles that you think others might find helpful duing these anxious times please let me have them. Hopefully it wont be too long before normal sevice is resumed!!

Dianne
Articles to Dianne.goodwin@btinternet.com

My Dear Friends,

I write to you in the midst of a crisis, because, let's be honest, that is what it is.

As our prime minister pointed out this is the worst health threat in a generation, none of us have experienced anything like this before. In a very real sense we are off the map. This virus poses a real danger to many of the most vulnerable people in our country and many other countries. New updates from local and national government and in our case the Church of England are coming out so fast it is hard to keep track of what is going on and how one should react, but it seems certain that things are going to get a lot worse before they get better.

Families are going to lose loved ones to this pandemic; an event that has been predicted for decades has arrived and, it seems, we are not prepared. We cannot change where we find ourselves, but we can change what happens from now on.

For many of you it may seem as though much of the Mission Community is unravelling - our Lent Course cancelled, sharing of the peace stopped and taking of the Common Cup stopped and it seems clear this is just the beginning. This can all feel really destabilising - tradition and ritual play a huge part of our faith lives and have done for centuries, when things like this happen it can really add to the anxiety and fear in our communities. Please know that your Churchwardens, PCCs and I are in regular contact and the welfare of the most vulnerable members of our congregations and communities is uppermost in our minds. Please be patient when we make decisions about events and services - we are operating on a day by day basis with the information and advice we have.

However, as the situation develops, consider this - things like services and meetings are important but they are not the most important business we have. They are church business; we are part of something bigger! We are on God's business! Even if all services are cancelled, God's business goes on, and is more important than ever.

We don't stop being Christians just because the business of the Church has been disrupted. God's love for us and his world has not diminished. Crises have happened before, and they will happen again and history shows us when crises occur we Christians dig in for the real work. We will need to pray like we have probably never prayed before and will need to serve our communities in new and creative ways.

So, what can we do? To be honest, I can't give you an exact idea of how things are going to play out in the coming weeks and months, but here are a few of my thoughts: This virus reminds us of our shared humanity with all of God's people, it doesn't respect national boundaries, skin colour, gender, sexuality, class or religion. We truly are all in this together.

It also reminds us we are not immortal, life is a fragile and wonderful gift we should not take for granted and, we are not all powerful, this tiny organism is wreaking havoc around the globe and for all our ingenuity and science, at the moment at least, we seem powerless to stop it.

People will of course be asking 'where is God in this disaster?' It is an absolutely valid question.

Well, we his Church are his eyes and ears and hands and feet. He is right here with us doing his work.

For now we can start small in our own communities, ring our elderly neighbours regularly to make sure they are ok, help out that family whose breadwinner will have to work extra hours due to staff shortages, collect provisions for someone who has had to self-isolate, find creative ways to help the self-employed in our community who face financial hardships. Give what we have to spare and sometimes that which we do not. Do not give in to fear.

We can be a face of love and compassion and hope.

Eventually some sort of normal service will resume, it is not clear now how long that will take, but the disease will reduce, in all likelihood a vaccine will be developed and life will start to look more like it used to. The challenge will then be to not forget what we felt like right now!

If we hold on to this feeling and channel it when this is over we can vow to change the world. What if this event became known in history as the year the human race woke up? What if this event helped us understand what it felt like to be frightened and helpless in the face of something we cannot control, an experience so many millions around the globe live with most of their lives - and we vowed to make it stop, not just here but everywhere. Around the globe, every day, thousands die from diseases and conditions for which cheap and simple cures exist and much of the world turns a blind eye because it is happening somewhere else. Well not today. Today, we are all vulnerable to this pandemic.

For now do not feel embarrassed to admit you are afraid and ask for help. I will keep you updated with any news or advice I receive from the Diocese as things continue to change. Use the Churches4All website as a source of information also and, although things seem uncertain, know that God holds each one of you in the palm of his hand.

Love and blessings

Marc

Rev Marc Kerslake

Assistant Curate.

Churches4All Mission Community.

Whimple, Talaton, Clyst Hydon, Clyst St Lawrence.

From the Registers

: funeral of Eunice King East Devon Crematorium

WHATS ON

Church services across Devon are to be suspended but church buildings are to remain very much open for prayer and reflection to reflect the Government's coronavirus guidance.

The decision was announced by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

The Church of England's Public Health Advisor, the Reverend Doctor Brendan McCarthy said: "This isn't about shutting up shop for the church.

"We want to keep the prayer life of the country as active as possible at this time."

Crucial events like funerals will still go ahead but with as few people present as possible.

Prayer gatherings can still happen in churches as long as people observe the hygiene precautions and a keep a distance of two metres from others.

The Church of England is due to publish guidance as soon as possible about other key events in the church calendar, like weddings, baptisms and church meetings'

Churches4All

Virus Update

My friend's, as we are entering this unnerving period the leadership team of the Mission Community want to try and keep you updated with what is happening as effectively as we can and we want to provide as much help and support as we can. To that end can you ensure we have your contact details to add to our email and telephone lists. If you are concerned we do not have your details and if you have access to email send me your details at :

marckerslake@hotmail.co.uk

If you do not have access to email please ring me:
01404 822104

Please also do not hesitate to contact me if you are worried, or if you are struggling, this is not a case of 'soldiering on' or not wanting to make a fuss, there are a number of groups in our parishes setting up teams of volunteers to support those who are alone and vulnerable, there are people ready and wanting to help you!

Rev Marc.

PRAYER DIARY

April 2020

Prayer for the month

Pray for refugees from war torn countries, especially Syria and Yemen, and for migrants attempting to find countries that will allow them to make better lives for them and their families.

Recent trends show that a number of European countries are becoming increasingly hostile towards these people , despite the teachings of major religions encouraging us all to show compassion.

1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for the former employees of FlyBe who lost their jobs in March, for their futures and their families. Pray also that this would be an opportunity for the country to re examine whether so many domestic flights are really necessary.
2nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As we come in to April, we find ourselves in an unprecedented situation in respect of the effect of the Covid19 virus on the world's population; today let's pray that we are all able to help contain the virus and follow the best path to eradicate it.
3rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At times, it seems they we are overwhelmed by problems and fears for the future so let's pray for each other and lend a hand to those who need help.
4th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for the staff of our local schools, that they would receive the support that they need, and for our school children and their futures.
Sun 5th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for those around our villages as they offer their help to others in these difficult times.
6th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for our government as they formulate policies to deal with Covid19 and pray that we will all play our part in helping by using basic good hygiene and having thought for others.
7th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Health Day: pray for those who have serious health issues, be it cancer, diabetes, heart disease or other issues and pray for the work that's going on to address these problems.
8th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for those affected by the floods of February and March and for the government to do more in respect of defences.
9th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for workers in the pub and restaurant trade as their livelihoods are affected by Covid19.
10th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord, we intercede for those around the world who are persecuted for their faith or their politics.

11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for the people of Italy, who have suffered the worst effects of Covid19 and who are having to make great sacrifices in their day to day lives.
Sun 12th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With all the emphasis on the effects of Covid19 on us all, let's not forget those around the world who have other serious issues to deal with every day of their lives.
13th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray that government ministers would show respect to civil servants who perform a vital government function and who need support, not hostility.
14th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, please strengthen families, providing them with wisdom and understanding so that young people would become secure, loving adults.
15th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, show us how to examine our own behaviour and views and to admit it when we have got things wrong, which is never easy but essential if we are to make progress.
16th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, please guide those who campaign for justice and help them to speak up for the voiceless and vulnerable in society.
17th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, please help us to bring resolution to the hostile attitudes facing our nation and show people with opposing views how to treat each other with respect and tolerance.
18th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, please guide decision makers to follow the right path when it comes to deciding on major projects such as HS2, Heathrow and the A303, taking into account the massive effect on the environment.
Sun 19th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for those who run entertainment venues and football clubs as they experience a huge reduction in activity and consequent loss of revenue.
20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for our children and teenagers and their futures, given the difficulties they face in respect of climate change, nuclear weapons and problems in securing their own homes.

21st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for humanitarian workers distributing food and medicine in various countries and ask God that they would have access to what they need and for protection.
22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for our local councils, health services and church leaders as they make decisions regarding Covid19 and its effect on our way of life.
23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord, help us to reconcile the thousands of empty homes in the UK with the many people who have no home.
24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord, we think about those who are suffering hurts from the past (most of us probably) and ask that you provide them with healing and comfort.
25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for those for whom pain is a daily problem, be it physical or mental. Pray that God would draw near to them and that they would get the support that they need.
Sun 26th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for our schools as they deal with the effects of Covid19 and, if they close, then pray for young people who have exams approaching and think about how they are going to get through this period.
27th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As we wake up to another busy day, let's take some time to think about others; our families and people who we will come across today, thinking of their difficulties and trying to help where possible.
28th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for those, especially the young, who are searching for truth and enlightenment.
29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord, help us to sustain the incredible world that we have been given and show us how to start to put things right.
30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for victims of racist abuse in the UK. Despite legislation there have recently been many signs of increasing racist attitudes so let's pray for the will to fight the racists.



Are you proactive, organised and looking for a great opportunity to support your community?

We have a fantastic opportunity for an administrator for the Churches4All Mission Community. You will be supporting our four churches and the work we do in the villages of Whimple, Talaton, Cyst Hydon and Cyst St Lawrence.

We are looking for a great communicator, with good admin skills and a modern approach. You need to be computer savvy and able to embrace social media. You need to be organised, creative, discreet and passionate about community life and what the Church can do to support that.

The contract will be for a minimum 5 hours per week with flexible hours and able to work from home, with some occasional evening meetings. Pay: £10 per hour. If you would like more information do look at our website: www.churches4all.org. To apply just drop a CV with a covering letter to gerri.turner2@gmail.com. Closing date for applications: 31st May 2020.

Foundations in Christian Ministry (FiCM).

Session 5 update



The modules covered in the February session of the FiCM were on Theology, Spirituality and the Bible. All thought provoking and requiring further reflection. However, what made the greatest impression was a session on vocation and training lead by Jon Curtis, who you may know from our Lent course. The Church of England has a vision for “Setting God’s people free”, which I interpret as releasing people into their gifts and ministries. Jon shared the diocese’s plan to provide training and certification in a range of skills – worship leading, preaching, small group leading etc. I think this will be a great resource, as we are all I being encouraged to move on and get out of our comfort zones.

But this course has become about more than what I am learning academically. In the February edition, I shared about my motivations for doing the FiCM course. As I seek to move forward, I also find myself looking back. How has my past made me who I am today? So.....who am I and what’s my story?

I was born in West Norwood, South London. My parents were Christians, and I was bought up with my two sisters going to the local Baptist Church. I did all the expected things – attended Sunday School, Boy’s Brigade, Church Youth Groups etc. My parent’s faith and sense of service were a great witness to me at that time – Mum was a Sunday School teacher and Dad was the Captain of the Boy’s Brigade. I made a commitment to follow Christ at the age of 19, but my world soon fell apart when Mum died of cancer. Also, I had just moved from the very sheltered world of school into the very adult world of work – not a very safe place for a young unworldly believer.

My faith was crushed and I turned away from God. I did a deal with God, literally, my words were "Sorry God, I made a mistake when I decided to follow you. Let's do a deal – I won't bother you if you don't bother me". I entered a very lonely and barren time in my life. By shutting out God's love I shut out the possibility of human love. I turned inwards and became distant and armour plated. But God kept pursuing me. He had never agreed to the deal I made. It was a revelation of the power of the Holy Spirit (being at a meeting where a blind woman was healed), that opened up a chink in my armour and allowed God to begin to shine a light into my life again.

Looking back I realise I had no real understanding of who God was and how Jesus bridges the gap between heaven and Earth. God is a loving father who wants the best for us. Jesus walked this Earth and understands us perfectly. Also, I had never fully encountered the Holy Spirit. However about 25 years ago during a spiritual revival known as the Toronto Blessing, the church I attended organised a series of prayer meetings. On these occasions I received prayer to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It was a truly transformative time in my life. My experience was that a lot of my head knowledge about the Christian life and faith became heart knowledge. I was set free from many of my fears and it has left me with a continuing sense of peace and hope.

Now I look forward to the next phase of my life. Sometimes it's easy to look back and think that the days gone by were the glory days. I don't want that. Deep down I don't want to stand still. I want to see God bring about as much change and transformation in my life in these coming years as he has done in the past

Ian Spicer

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Wednesday	9am – 6pm	9am – 12.30pm
Thursday	9am – 6pm	
Friday	9am – 6pm	9am – 12.30pm
Saturday	9am – 1pm	
Sunday	10am – 12.00 noon	

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www.talatonparishcouncil.co.uk