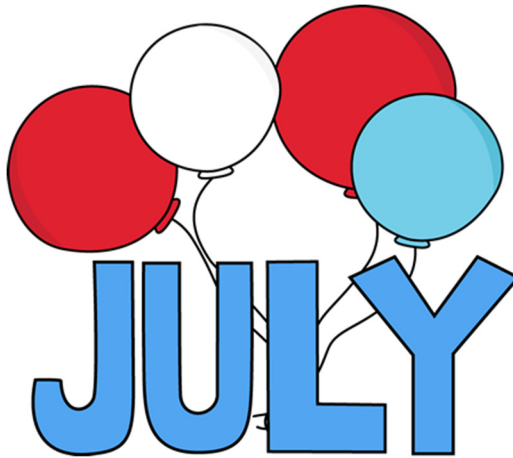


The Link

July 2020



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)

If you have any articles that you think others might find helpful during these anxious times please let me have them. Hopefully it won't be too long before normal service is resumed!!

Dianne

Articles to Dianne.goodwin@btinternet.com

From the Registers

In June we commended into the hands of Almighty God:

Richard Shaw of Talaton

John Bardsley of Whimple

From the Curate's Study

Hello my friends,

This is a long email and I make no apologies for that as it contains an important message, please do persevere to the end.

By now many of you will be aware that from the weekend of the 4th of July churches can reopen for some form of services. However, the important words in that sentence are 'can' and 'for some form'. You see it is easy to imagine that from that date all of our normal services will re-start and the rota and style of services will return to how they were pre-lockdown. In essence, that 'things will get back to normal'. But what was the old normal like?

In my Sunday service on 31st May entitled 'Hard truth and hope', I examined some of the 'elephants in the room' for many Church of England parishes, here are just a few:

Some of our congregations have dwindled, some are ageing and many are working flat out to keep the church going. The majority of people in this country don't come to church and many consider church irrelevant. Priests are fewer in number and having to minister to more and more churches. This cannot continue.

Is that the normal we want to return to? The hard truth is, if we do nothing this picture of decline is going to continue, why wouldn't it? Unless we imagine that folks in their twenties, thirties, forties and families are suddenly going to decide they have been missing traditional church and start coming, going back to normal is not an option. It may be the case that some of our congregations understand this and still feel strongly that they do not want any change in things which they feel comfortable with, and we must accept that many of those same people have faithfully supported and sustained our churches for a very long time. Managing people's expectations will need thought and respect, but we must be honest about the challenges we face. None of us 'own' our churches, we are all simply stewards of them and if what we 'like' contributes to the decline of our parish church we must understand the implications of that long-term.

More broadly, although restrictions have been eased, we are still in a period of risk from this awful virus and there are still extensive guidelines to adhere to so

we can manage that risk, things like communal singing or Communion are likely still a long way off, for example.

So where do we go from here? Well here are just a couple of thoughts. Clearly there are many others, but firstly we can be thankful that the 'lockdown' has led us to experiment with new online forms of worship, which is reaching folks who would never have traditionally come to church and also those who may like to, but cannot. This has opened up a whole new world of ministry. However, this is also not without its challenges moving forward. What happens to them when we begin to consider services in church? Most of those folks are not going to simply turn up at church and I do not believe we can simply record our church services and put them online as a replacement for what we currently produce. The YouTube services are currently very different from a traditional service and for many people this is why they like them. Having drawn together this new virtual congregation I feel we have a responsibility for them, that is what building discipleship is all about, but the services for our YouTube channel take time to produce, time which I will have less of if we were to consider going back to the old model of rota we ran pre-lockdown.

Also the lockdown has provided an opportunity for our churches (that is the body of Christ comprised of the people), to serve in our communities in new and innovative ways, which have got us noticed and appreciated. If we return to the 'old normal' the pressure to simply keep our churches going saps the time spent serving the community outside church buildings and we begin to slide back into irrelevance in the eyes of most of our parishes.

I am not proposing there any quick fixes or easy answers to any of the questions I am raising, rather I want us to start an honest conversation.

In my sermon on the 31st May I flagged up the many positive initiatives and changes we have already made across our mission community in response to some of these challenges, these include:

Working closer together, encouraging members of our congregations to lead services, intercessions and even sometimes preach, serving our communities through our coffee mornings, pub group, village events and charity works,

Continued on p6

Continued from p5

but I also acknowledge we need to do more and adding to that I believe before we rush back to the 'old normal' we need to be looking at our services, our music, our liturgy and everything else we do and asking 'who is this appealing to and who does this serve?' and 'what could we be doing instead?'

I understand that for many of us this period has been traumatic and there is a longing to get back to the familiar to make us all feel safe, but we need to be honest about the risk that poses to the churches we love if they are to be there in twenty plus years.

So our churches 'can' open for services 'in some form' from the weekend of the 4th of July, but we need to think long and hard as to 'if' we open them, so we can continue to keep everyone safe; then we need to consider 'what form our services' might take next month and going forward into the longer future.

The leadership team across the mission community will be meeting over this week and next to consider what happens in July. The bigger conversation needs to start between all of us as to what happens in the longer term, it is going to be challenging for many of us, everyone's voice should be heard. If you have a view please make it known, but let's be honest – not everyone will get exactly what they desire, that is just not possible. I would really encourage you to contribute to the conversation.

Our mission community is currently without a priest-in-charge and lockdown will inevitably slow down the process of recruitment, but the conversation I am encouraging does not have to wait until a new priest arrives; in fact it is essential we have it now! The results and outworking of this conversation will need to inform the type of individual you need as a priest; in short, do you want a traditional priest to maintain the status quo (and if the majority simply want things to remain the same, understanding the risks, that is a legitimate choice) or, having given real thought to the possibilities, do you seek someone keen to be more adventurous?

Whichever view you take, it is your choice, please be part of the process.

Please do email me if you have questions or comments.

God bless.

Marc

Three of our churches are open for private prayer. You will notice, if you use them, that large parts are currently cordoned off, this may seem odd and a little unsightly but it does have the benefit of massively reducing the cleaning we have to do. A big 'thank you' to the teams who are doing the cleaning as their work has increased massively. Can I encourage you if you use them to clean your hands with the sanitiser provided before you enter and as you leave and to bring your own bible or prayer book if you wish to use them, to help keep all of us virus-free.

Can I also take this opportunity to remind you of our various prayer resources. At the moment, although 'lockdown' is easing, there still remains much to pray about, so remember:

We have prayer boxes outside the churches in Whimple and Clyst Hydon and we have a regular weekly telephone morning prayer service which anyone can join, plus a similar Mission Community prayer evening service once a month (email or ring me for details). Please don't forget, if you know of someone who doesn't do the internet but who might like to join in with a telephone service, to let them know about this facility.

Also, although lockdown has eased, many of our most vulnerable are still shielding. Please, please do not stop checking on your neighbours and ringing up those who are lonely or vulnerable – that contact remains crucial to the long-term mental health and well-being of many people.

Thanks to the hard work of the team at Talaton, the dangerously leaning wall at the rear of the churchyard has been removed and we are now consulting on a replacement for it. We are also undertaking investigations into some cracking in the East Nave wall at Clyst St Lawrence, this may well impact on any future opening of the church as scaffolding is going to be required both inside and outside the church in the short to medium term, as we try to establish how serious any movement of the wall is.

If you visit the new churchyard in Whimple you might also notice the grass going unmown, this is not because it is being neglected but rather we are seeking to encourage a small but significant breeding population of glow worms who appeared last year – if you want to catch a glimpse of them later in the summer pop along at around ten or eleven pm and watch for their little lights in the long grass as the females seek to attract a mate.

Looking ahead to next month, on 5th July, our sermon series begins and there will be a variety of guest speakers filling the role of preacher, each of whom is a member of one of our congregations. Last year we ran a similar series and it was a huge success so note down this series in your diary.

But the big picture my friends is this, we are planning for the future! Work continues in our churches to keep them safe during this period, both from the virus and the effects of time and weather. Our churches have stood as sanctuaries in good times and bad for a very long time and we want to ensure they continue to do so. Some of this work is expensive and time-consuming and currently our cash flow has been hit very hard at all of our churches, but the leadership team believe the 'best is yet to come' and are working hard to realise a new season of blessing for all of our buildings.

PRAYER DIARY

July 2020

Prayer for the month:

The last three months have been incredibly difficult for us all and, whilst we do now have some adjustments to restrictions, our lives are still far from easy.

Pray that together we can make the new ways work and that gradually we can resume the things we want or need to do.

1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for our children who are going through uncertain times and pray that the way forward in their education will gradually become clearer as the months progress.
2nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for a safe way of resuming dentistry here and for those who are suffering severe toothache.
3rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, when we lose hope for the future, show us how to be positive and work out new ways forward.
4th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for small businesses as they work out how to get back to trading in a safe way that meets government guidelines.
Sun 5th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of Covid19 on Yemen is proving to be particularly dangerous as they have little means to combat the virus, so offer up a prayer for them.
6th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumption of alcohol went up significantly during the lockdown so give some thought to those families who may have been adversely affected.
7th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for the development of a vaccine against Covid19 and for greater understanding of how the virus works.
8th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for those who are apart from their families yet who may be fearful of using trains to travel to see their loved ones.
9th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for those who have paid out money on holidays and travel and are finding it difficult to get their money back.
10th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give thanks again to all who work in the NHS, for all that they have done in these difficult times.

11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for recovery in the jobs market now that there is more clarity about the way things will work.
Sun 12th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for our local church at a time that has seen ways of communication change radically.
13th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University students will be thinking about their next year and may be worried as to how things will progress so let's pray for them and their futures.
14th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray that changes to business and industry resulting from lockdowns around the world would lead to advancements in green technologies.
15th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of cash in the UK is clearly receding. Whilst this suits most of us, there are those who will find this difficult so let's give them some thought and pray that some protection can be maintained.
16th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray that our use of public transport would now fully take account of the need for hygiene and distancing and that there will in future be more travelling to work by walking or cycling, thereby also helping the environment.
17th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life in schools is going to be very different so give some thought to ways in which they can operate safely.
18th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray that the US is able to recognise the problems within their police forces and to educate and train in such a way that racism will be weeded out.
Sun 19th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for the people of Bristol as they try to come to terms with their history, in which money from slavery played a major part and as they debate this legacy and decide how to go forward.
20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray that the majority of people in this country will know how to deal with negativity and lies that are regularly spread on social media.

21st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brazil's public health system is struggling to cope and there is no real attempt to protect the Amazon or its people so make time for a prayer for Brazil today.
22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord, guide us through these difficult times and be with governments as they make important decisions.
23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Christians and people of other religions, the lack of physical contact with their places of worship will have been hard so pray for ways to operate safely in the future.
24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for our rail network at a time when they are facing unprecedented challenges and pray for the safety of travellers.
25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many changes to the way we live are likely to be long lasting or even permanent so pray that we can all work together to make new ways work.
Sun 26th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe has now served four years of a five year sentence for trumped up espionage charges in Iran. It is surely time for clemency so that she can be reunited with her family so say a prayer for this to happen.
27th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray that we don't fall foul of conspiracy theories that have no scientific or factual basis.
28th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for those who have no alternative but to use public transport and that they are able to stay safe.
29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help us, Lord, to embrace new experiences so that we can get the most out of our lives. Teach us how to overcome reticence and shyness in reaching out to others.
30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Day of Friendship: a good day to be thankful for friends and to think about how we can let them know that we care.
31st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for and thank bus drivers who have experienced more contact than most with the coronavirus.

Thank you for showing love for your neighbours near and far this Christian Aid Week. This year's Christian Aid Week (10-16 May) has been like none ever before.



Coronavirus has impacted us all. It's meant that we couldn't deliver envelopes, serve up Big Brekkies, or gather in our churches for worship this Christian Aid Week.

But despite all of this, you've shown great love for your neighbours near and far, in so many remarkable ways.

Great-grandfather John Hindson walked one million steps in his garden and raised £2,000 for Christian Aid Week.

The One World group in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, raised nearly £6,000 online – more than they were hoping to raise from their usual house-to-house collection and coffee morning.

Many of you have raised hundreds by taking part in daily quizzes. You've joined together in prayer for an end to poverty. You've sent nearly 5,000 [e-Envelopes](#) to share the joy of the week with friends and family. And so much more.

Together, you've helped raise over £1 million for Christian Aid Week so far!

Sophie Brightwell, Christian Aid Week Manager, says: 'I'm so grateful to our supporters for rising to the challenge of fundraising in new ways. You've shown that love never gives up. Every £1 you donate is vital and helps transform lives around the world – needed now more than ever.'

With every click. Every prayer. Every gift. Every one of us has helped transform lives. **Thank you.**

WE CAN'T BREATHE

George Floyd is the latest in a long line of black people who, in recent years, have died at the hands of the police in America. This has led to a global outcry against racism, demanding fairness and equality in interpersonal relationships. But more than this, justice requires us to root out and re-order any system, structure, or narrative which privileges white people over people of colour and their cultures, norms, and perspectives.

Many consider racism against black people to be an American problem, but Britain's imperial history has given us our own particular brand. While many white people would publicly denounce overtly racist behaviour, many of our systems are inherently racist and some people remain willing and conscious participants in them.

That's why it's not enough to check our unconscious biases. We must be determined to be 'anti-racist', to work against the status quo wherever it disadvantages black people. This is fundamentally theological: affirming the inherent dignity of all people created in God's image.

In the UK, recent research demonstrates that black children are twice as likely to live in poverty than white children. Black people face discrimination in employment and health care. They are more likely to be stopped and searched by police, to get sentenced to prison time and to be given longer sentences than white people. As a country, we have our own stories of excessive force and of the deaths of black people in police custody. Stories that do not end with justice.

These realities are well-known by black people in the UK, including black Christians. Black Brits share the pain of African-Americans suffering under the weight of the same sin and injustice, the same racism.

Yet, the lack of solidarity displayed by many white Christians and leaders has deepened this pain. The unity and witness of the church – as an institution and through its members in society – depend not just on shared faith, but also on shared love and shared burdens. The racial inequities of our churches often fail to speak prophetically to the world – this is a week for lament and repentance.

For those moved to compassion, it's also a time to listen, learn, and practise solidarity with your black brothers and sisters. Action is the way we bring about a new world. A world that cares, principally, for the 'least of these'.

Selina Stone

Tutor and Lecturer in Political Theology, St Mellitus College

Don't forget you can find our online services on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=churches4all

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=from+the+curate%27s+study

Talaton Community Shop & Post Office



Local & Homemade Produce
Newspapers & Magazines to Order
Card payments accepted with no minimum limit

	SHOP	POST OFFICE
Monday	9am – 6pm	9am – 1pm 2pm – 5pm
Tuesday	9am – 6pm	
Wednesday	9am – 6pm	9am – 12.30pm
Thursday	9am – 6pm	
Friday	9am – 6pm	9am – 12.30pm
Saturday	9am – 1pm	
Sunday	10am – 12.00 noon	

Talaton Community Shop, Talaton, EX5 2RQ 01404 822084
www.talatonparishcouncil.co.uk