

St Mary the Virgin, Great Brickhill

PCC NEWSLETTER, 21st MARCH 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK

ALL CHURCH SERVICES, MEETINGS AND EVENTS ARE SUSPENDED

In light of Government guidance around non-essential contact, earlier this week the Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued advice that all public worship is suspended.



A call to "Light A Candle" at 7pm this Sunday, 22nd March

As a result of the restrictions the following have been suspended:-

The Monday Coffee Club & Prayer Group, Bellringing, the Lent Course, the monthly Bible Group and Men's Breakfast.

The Monday afternoon Drop-In has been postponed until further notice with immediate effect. BUT Jigar Patel has agreed to run the outreach Post Office service in the village for the time being, so please support it if you can (Mondays from 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm).

In addition, the 2020 GREAT BRICKHILL PLANT FAYRE has been cancelled. Below is a message from Celia & John Hall:-

In light of recent developments at this challenging time, together with the latest national advice, we have with regret, taken the decision to cancel this year's Great Brickhill Plant Fayre. We now find ourselves with over **300 tomato plants** of the following varieties surplus to our requirements, **Gardeners' Delight, Cherry, Alicanti, Plum and Beef**. They will be ready by the **18th April** and so we would like to sell them in aid of Church funds for **£1.00 per plant** from our home in Stoke Lane. Orders can be placed by email to celiafeetam@madasafish.com or jewhall@yahoo.co.uk or by telephone to 261 075 and the plants will be delivered. In addition to this we plan to have a table of

various perennials and herbs for sale at our garden gate in Stoke Lane over the coming Bank Holiday weekends again in aid of Church funds.

WHAT WE ARE ABLE TO DO:

OPEN THE CHURCH:

The church will remain open every day during the normal hours, from at least 10.00am-4.00pm. Please feel free to visit the church as a place for quiet prayer or reflection – we just ask that you respect the guidance to keep the appropriate space from others.

DISPLAY NOTICES:

We will put notices on the notice board by the church gate to keep you informed of the current situation.

UPDATE THE WEBSITE:

This will be the easiest way for you to keep abreast of what is happening. Please consult our website for regular updates:- www.brickhillchurches.org.uk

CONTINUE WITH THE PRAYER CHAIN:

We have an active e-mail Prayer Chain - anyone who would like to join the group or would like to have a prayer included, contact:- Valerie Kerr (valeriekerr@hotmail.com) or Mary Maley (mary@maley.org.uk).

KEEP THE FOOD BOX RUNNING:

Please remember that the Food Box in the church porch is there to help anyone who is in need of food either in an emergency or longer term. Please spread the news of this initiative as widely as you can.

OFFER OF HELP AND ASSISTANCE TO THOSE WHO NEED IT:

Please see the attached flier “Where there is Love, there is Hope”. We know the coming days and weeks will be filled with uncertainty and we want to assist you as best we can. If you need any help, please get in touch and we will do what we can to assist. Do forward the flier on to anyone whom you think might welcome it.

WORSHIP AS A VIRTUAL SERVICE:

There will be lots of opportunity in the coming weeks to live stream services from around the country. Local worship materials will also be available. **All of this information will be easy to access via our own website – a dedicated section “Coronavirus” is being set up.** This will provide all the up to date information that we receive and will give a platform to access worship details; the Rector will be providing reflections and prayers on a regular basis:- www.brickhillchurches.org.uk

TOMORROW, MOTHERS’ DAY, 22nd MARCH

There are various ways of sharing in worship:-

(1). The Rector has written a brief reflection and prayer for Mothers’ day – the document is attached as a PDF file

(2). The regular Sunday BBC services will be available to watch live or via iPlayer:

i). Radio 4 at 8.10am “Sunday Worship”, a recorded service for Mothers’ Day

ii). BBC 1 at 1.15pm “Songs of Praise” with Kathryn Jenkins

(3). Bishop Steven will preside at the Eucharist this Sunday and offer a brief reflection to the whole Diocese from Christ Church at 10 am. In keeping with the restrictions, only a handful of people will be able to be present. The link for this is:-

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/livestream/#toggle-id-4-closed>

(4). A special service from the Archbishop of Canterbury for Mothering Sunday, was recorded earlier this week at Lambeth Palace. It will go live at 9am tomorrow:-

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/online-church>

(5). Light a candle of hope: The national call to prayer (as shown in the image above). Churches Together in England have issued a call to prayer in the light of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is for all churches and people of prayer to join on Sunday 22nd March, Mothering Sunday to light a candle in a window, at 7pm on Sunday:

<https://www.cte.org.uk/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=569010>

WEDDINGS, FUNERALS, BAPTISMS:

Special guidance has been issued with regard to weddings, the reading of Banns, Funerals and Baptisms. If you need any of this information please write to:-

rector@brickhillchurches.org.uk

THE CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING:

The date that had been agreed for the Annual Church Meeting was Thursday 16th April. Bishop Steven has signed a legal instrument to extend the deadline for parishes to hold their annual meetings to the end of October 2020. Current office holders will accordingly be able to remain in office longer than they would otherwise have done. A new date for our Annual Meeting will be circulated at the appropriate time.

For further information about any of the above, please contact:-

Phillipa Cook TEL: 01525 261521 07788 740969 pjcook6@gmail.com

In these troubling times it is even more important to please remember that the Benefice website will be the best way to receive updates about the current situation and to obtain worship information:- www.brickhillchurches.org.uk