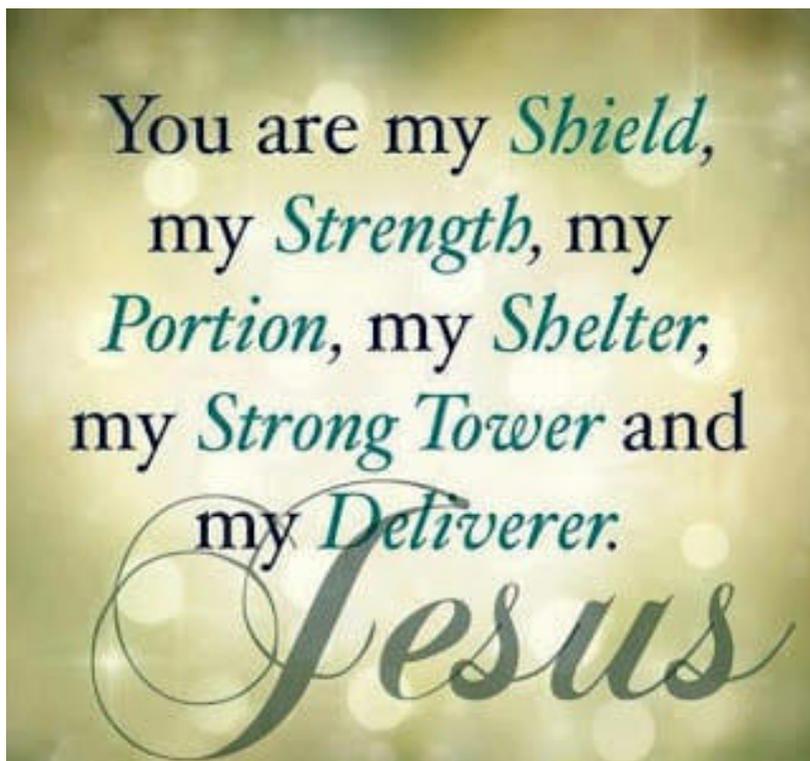


*St Mary and St Cuthbert's Church,
Chester-le-Street*

JUNE 2020 NEWSLETTER



MOVING FORWARD

As you probably know the government is talking about opening up churches for services on Sunday July 5. That is not definite, but it is pencilled in nationally. BUT there will be restrictions – it will be socially distanced (therefore numbers will be restricted) and with perhaps a one-way system. We will be stressing hygiene and cleaning. There are major questions over whether we will be allowed to sing or be able to share in communion. Some people may be told they should not come to church because of their personal health situation. It will not be church as we knew it before.



We receive a lot of guidance from the diocese on these matters. At the end of June, we should know more precisely what will be possible in the church building and we will share that information in the next newsletter.

The Parish Centre will certainly remain closed a bit longer than the church. The Centre is likely to partially reopen in the coming months and a bit later hopefully the café will reopen. We can't be sure yet as to when these things will happen.

Pray for wisdom in our decisions in the coming weeks and months.

Rev David

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office is still functioning with Jan Rowland working from home at present. She can be contacted in the normal ways – on the phone 0191 388 3295 or jrowland@clsparish1.plus.com.

God is Statements

Produced by Barnard Castle Parish

God is changing people, challenging us to adapt, and opening hearts.

God is still important. God is with us in these challenging times to comfort and guide us.

God is working out his plan: we need open minds to see our role in it.

God is moving in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform.

God is in the midst, drawing us closer to him and to one another.

God is waiting and watching and working by our side.

God is with us, working amongst us as we help one another during this crisis.

God is challenging us with the fact that the Church isn't the only group who can love its neighbour...

God is holding us together even though we are isolated.

God is still taking care of the world and bringing hope for us all.

God is at work, motivating people to help.

God is with us as we question how and why we do what we do.

God is reminding us that we, the human race, are not in control.

God is bringing people back together.

God is creating, and inspiring churches to be creative.

Rev David

CHURCH FINANCES

We are in a challenging position as a church. At the moment we are about £5,000 worse off as a parish per month compared with how we expected to be.

It is possible for anyone to contribute to our church finances from their bank into the church account.

The account is: *St Mary and St Cuthbert, Chester-le-Street*.
Account No. 50050083 Barclays bank. Sort code: 20-27-41.

The national **Parish Giving Scheme** (PGS) which a lot of us use now has a “donate by phone.” You can set up a regular gift to our Parish by a single phone call to: **0333 002 1271**. The PGS code for our parish is 130313004 (For more details of this scheme see our May newsletter. If you do not have a copy of this it can be found on the Church Website – www.maryandcuthbert.org.uk)

Thank you to everyone who is giving.

FACEBOOK SERVICES

These continue on our church Facebook page each Sunday – [St Mary and St Cuthbert Parish Church, Chester-le-Street](#). There are also video messages posted each week usually on Monday and Thursday.

There is usually a daily reflective photograph and prayer topics posted each day on our [St Mary and St Cuthbert Parish Church Congregations and Friends](#) Facebook page.

Messy Church is on our church Facebook page on the 2nd Sunday in the month with **Messy Mini Bytes** the 4th Sunday.

Rev Simon continues to post on his Facebook page - Contemplative Morning and Evening Prayer

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

A Daily Hope Line continues to hear hymns, reflections and prayers. Thousands of people are finding it very helpful.
Free phone: 0800 804 8044

PCC

The **PCC** are having a “meeting” over Zoom on June 9.

AREA DEAN

As mentioned in last month’s Newsletter I am now **INTERIM AREA DEAN** for Chester-le-Street and Houghton (till December). I was commissioned over Zoom by the Bishop on May 19.

Rev David

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

May

- 6 Phylis Noble Sandiford (96)
Stuart Punshon (67)
Isabel Nail (92)
- 7 Doreen Gardiner (84)
- 8 George Wood Allan (89)
- 12 Douglas Robson (78)
- 15 Kathleen Stokoe (73)
Nancy Key Wood (89)
- 19 Peter Heslop (69)

- 22 Edith Mary Renshaw (91)
28 Doris (Peggy) Day (99)

June

- 1 Gladys Hornsby (90)
2 Susannah Cowie (76)
3 Florence Ashton (100)

“QUIET CORNER”

from John Hopper, one of our Lay Readers

As I sit here in my office at home, I am looking at two stark headlines. The first is from a financial supplement of my weekend newspaper from some weeks ago. It reads *“Prepare the next generation for the world ahead”*. The second headline is from the New Testament in my Contemporary English Version Bible and it is opened at 2 Peter 3. The headline reads *“The Lord’s return is certain”*.

There seems little to connect the two headlines given that they come from two totally different sources. Yet pondering on both of them, they are, in a strange way, very much connected, although I have to admit I didn’t see it until I looked at both alongside each other instead of in isolation. At first, I thought that the headline of *“Prepare the next generation for the world ahead”*, had a connection with children. On reflection however, and I am sure that Sue White would agree with me, that children are very much a part of this generation.

Where my thoughts strayed, was to focus on what was meant by the “World Ahead”. Do we interpret it as being what lies ahead in this world on earth? Or, does it have a wider meaning, the next world and life in Heaven when we depart here? My musings and

pondering seem to suggest the latter, although I'm sure the Newspaper Editor would strongly disagree.

The second headline from my Bible, starts off with Peter saying *"My dear friends, this is the second letter I have written to encourage you to do some honest thinking"* (v1). In Peter's day, the believers were beginning to wonder when the Lord would return and take them all up into Heaven and why was he taking so long about it? He finally answers the question with the comment in verse 10: *"The day of the Lord will surprise us like a thief"*. In other words, it could be today, tomorrow, the next week, month or year. The real nub of the problem is, are we ready for that great and wondrous event, whenever it may be.

The question we all should ask ourselves now, is what we do in the meantime? Peter partly answers the question in verse 14; *"My friends, while you are waiting, you should make certain that the Lord finds you pure, spotless and living at peace"*. He goes on to say in verse 18, *"Let the wonderful kindness and the understanding that come from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ help you to keep on growing"*. Perhaps the newspaper headline should have read, *"Prepare this generation for the world ahead"* - adults and children whoever and wherever they are. Now we know what we all can be doing for ourselves and others, during this period of "lockdown" whether partial or not.

WORD for TODAY Bible Reading notes

There are still copies available covering May, June and July. Contact Rev David and he will get a copy to you (0191 388 4027 or david.tully1@sky.com).

WORSHIP – don't just watch!

During this lockdown season, we face the challenge as followers of Jesus to know how we can worship. At the moment we are restricted to online worship or participating in TV services. It is good and a lot of people are involved in watching such things – which we can do with modern technology. How do we make sure we actually worship rather than just watch a picture on a TV, laptop or smartphone.

One of the two key New Testament Greek words for worship is *proskuneo*. It literally means to draw close to God. How can we do that with TV services or our Facebook live services? It is rather easy to be passive and just watch.

I came across some suggestions from Matthew Porter (a vicar in York)

1. Arrange your space. Think about the place where you will worship and with online worship, think about the device you will use. Pick a space that is conducive to worship. We actually do that on Sundays in church – we choose a particular place to sit, do the same at home. Arrange things so that you truly engage and are not distracted.
2. Prepare your heart. Don't just turn on at the right time – just as many of us pray before the start of a church service. Be quiet before the Lord – take a few moments to pray. Pray for those worshipping with you, in their homes. Pray that there will be people tuning in or switching on who aren't yet following Jesus, who will hear the good news of Christ, experience His presence and want to know Him. Also, ask the Spirit of God to help you in your worship.
3. Give your worship. When the service begins be active in what you do. This is harder than most of us realise, because our homes are set up for comfort and we default to sitting passively in a comfy chair. When we watch things on a screen we tend to sit quietly and watch and listen. But in worship we are invited to be fully engaged and express

our thanks and praise. Why not stand for part of the online/TV service in the presence of the King of kings? Say Amen out loud. Sing enthusiastically. Kneel down. You may feel it is appropriate to clap or lift your hands. As we read in James 4.8 *“Come near to God and He will come near to you.”*

As you probably realise these suggestions really apply to our worship at any time and anywhere. They are not new in this “stay-at home” season. To worship: Arrange – Prepare – Give.

CLAP for NHS and Carers

It has been a lovely feature around the country over these last two months on Thursdays at 8pm. Musical instruments have been played and the Rector was blowing his watering can (not a pleasant sound).



Rachel Orr (from our Central congregation) has sung beautifully in recent weeks with a backing track.

People have come specifically to hear her and many people featured her on social media.

Alpha Course

Rev Jon is planning to run an Alpha course in June and July, probably running on two evenings a week starting about June 10.

ALPHA ONLINE COURSE



Rev. Jon Wilkinson is hoping to run an online version of our Alpha Course during June and July.

If you are interested please get in touch with him -

Email - jonwilko@virginmedia.com

Tel - 07940823338

It will be different, and yet similar to an ordinary Alpha.

The differences are that we will not be gathering in the same room but meeting through Zoom, and sadly, we will not be able to share a meal together.

The similarities are that we can still enjoy excellent talks via video, and hold discussions afterwards.

Each session will last between 60 and 75 minutes. All you will need to participate is to have a smart phone, tablet, or laptop, and an email address.

A note on e-safety. To protect confidentiality the meetings will be password protected, and the sessions will not be recorded.

*Newsletter produced by Rev David Tully, Rector of Chester-le-Street.
Tel: 0191 388 4027 Email - david.tully1@sky.com*