

How can I help during this time?

You may be thinking that this information is not for you. This is, however, a time when the prayers, efforts and reflections of all the church is important.

Prayers

Please be faithful in praying for the church during this time. There's a short prayer printed beneath which I'd encourage you to pray regularly.

Pastoral Care

It can be more difficult at this time to know who might be ill or struggling. Please do let Sarah know at the office if you're aware of someone in our community who might appreciate support.

Efforts

There will be increasing responsibility on many during this time. It is helpful if people continue with their duties as much as possible. If you find that you have some spare time on your hands, then it may be worth asking John, Simon, William and Bea whether there is anything additional that you might be able to do to support them during this time.

Prayer for this time:

Lord Jesus, we thank you for Jane
and for all that she has brought to us in Godalming from you.
Bless her we pray, and surround her with your healing love and power
that, in your perfect time, she may resume her ministry as our leader.
Meanwhile, bless those who are supporting us in so many ways:
Simon, our area dean, and William and Bea our churchwardens;
John and Simon as interim ministers and Sheila as our curate;
Sarah, Mike, Maggie, Matthew, Patrick and Vickie.
Give us vision, wisdom and insight during this period,
that we may work together, and alongside other churches in Godalming,
to build your kingdom - transforming church and transforming lives.
We ask this for your name's sake. Amen.

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Archdeacon's Newsletter for the Parish of Godalming

June 2020

Dear Friends

I'm grateful for this opportunity to write to you all during the absence of Jane, your much loved rector, through sick leave. During the past few weeks, I've been keeping in close contact with the Revd Simon Taylor (your area dean) and with William Bryans and Beatrix Richards (your churchwardens). Following lengthy conversation with them, I write to you with two messages.

First, I continue to be immensely grateful to everyone in Godalming who has been working so hard over the past few months. Particular thanks to the ministry team: William and Bea (churchwardens); Sheila and Patrick (assistant curate and ordinand); Sarah (administrator); Mike and Maggie (assisting clergy); Matthew (director of music); Vickie (children & families); and Simon (area dean). Thanks also to members of the PCC for continuing to support the churchwardens and ministry team through learning to use Zoom and continuing the work of its governance via video conferencing!

Secondly, it has become clear that the challenges of Covid-19, in addition to Jane's absence, require us to call in some additional help to support the leadership team and to address some challenges we face. I'm grateful to the PCC for welcoming me at their meeting on 27 May and for their collaboration in the provisions that we've made together. This newsletter sets out what this support will look like. I know that you will give all those who seek to assist you during this period the characteristic Godalming welcome and support.

*As ever,
Paul.*

The Venerable Paul Davies
Archdeacon of Surrey

Diocese of
Guildford 
TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TRANSFORMING LIVES

Interim Arrangements

Arrangements for St Peter and St Paul's Church, Godalming

Bishop Andrew, with the support of the churchwardens, has asked Canon John Harkin to act as interim minister in Godalming. John was ordained in the Diocese of Guildford over 30 years ago and served in parish ministry in this diocese before successive incumbencies in Jersey (where he was also Vice-Dean of Jersey) and the Diocese of Winchester (where he was also an Area Dean). He has most recently undertaken a house for duty post in Mickleham. John, with his wife Sue, are much looking forward to getting to know people in Godalming. John will give two and a half days of his week to the parish and will start on Sunday 5 July. When Jane does resume ministry, it is intended that John will work alongside Jane for a period, providing additional support to her and the team as and when necessary.

Arrangements for St Mark's Church, Ockford Ridge

Bishop Andrew, again with the support of the churchwardens, has asked the Revd Simon Taylor, Rector of Busbridge and Hambledon and Area Dean of Godalming, to act as interim minister of St Mark's Church and Ockford Ridge. As John Harkin will only be working for two and a half days in Godalming, it would not be possible for this cover to extend to Ockford Ridge. Whilst Simon will take ultimate responsibility for this part of the parish, he will be keen to share this with other local clergy. Like John, Simon will assume this responsibility on 5 July (although as Area Dean he has legal responsibility, with the churchwardens, for both parishes during Jane's illness). As with the Town Church, Simon will continue to provide support for Jane with St Marks and Ockford Ridge following her return to work.

Arrangements for the training of the Revd Sheila Samuels

Clearly, Sheila has been a great blessing to the parish of Godalming since her ordination last June. You will, however, be aware that she is placed in Godalming, as all curates, for the continuation of her formation and training. This is impossible without a training incumbent. I'm grateful to James Rattue (rector of Farncombe) who has assumed a temporary pastoral care for Sheila. It has, however, been impossible for him to act as a training incumbent in a way that provides for proper formation and training. The Bishop has, therefore, with Sheila's consent, asked Simon Taylor to assume this role. We're extremely grateful to Simon for agreeing to this, and enabling Sheila to remain attached to Ockford Ridge. Whilst Sheila will remain curate of Godalming, she will focus her ministry particularly on Ockford Ridge and Aaron's Hill and it is likely that Simon will remain Sheila's training incumbent for the remaining duration of her curacy.

Questions that may be asked...

Do we know when our Rector will return?

The answer to this question is still 'no'. Jane is making good progress and I am checking in with her each month to see how she's getting on and whether there's any additional support that we can give. She misses the people of Godalming and Ockford Ridge very much and every time I speak to her she asks me to pass on her love and prayers. Do continue to remember her and Mike in your prayers too.

What will happen when Jane returns?

When Jane returns to work, we will work with her to manage a phased return to ministry. This means that she will not instantly return to full time work. Usually, there is a gradual increase in working hours until she reaches full time hours (which might be slightly fewer than her previous output!). This can take a few months. During this time, we will maintain the interim support that is in place to work alongside her and which will gradually be phased out.

Will these interim arrangements bring change to our churches?

All churches are in a period of enormous forced change at present. The bigger question might be about what churches will look like on the other side of lockdown and Covid-19. Whilst it is not our intention to introduce significant change during this period, we recognise that leadership is imperative at this time and that may demand some challenging decisions. These will, however, always take place in co-operation with the churchwardens and PCC.

What will be the impact of all of this on parish share and finance?

Parish share remains unchanged. The formula that we use does not change when there is a vacancy or sickness. Clearly, we're all aware of increased challenges to finances at present and the diocese is working to help parishes manage this. Clearly, we recognise that many people will have been impacted financially by Covid-19. For those who haven't, we do ask that people give as generously as possible to enable our mission and ministry to continue.

When will we return to normal?

Sadly, at the time of writing this, there is still a lack of clarity about the road ahead. Whilst we seem to be moving from the acute into the chronic phase of the pandemic, we don't yet have total clarity about the use of church buildings or any sense of when we might be able to gather together. The Diocese of Guildford provides bulletins every Tuesday and Thursday. You sign up for these on our diocesan website [here](#).