

The Benefice of St George's, Benenden

Our Mission: "To know and love Jesus and make his love known to all"

& St Nicholas, Sandhurst

Our Worship: Sunday 26th July

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Collect: Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: graft in our hearts the love of your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of your great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 26th July Benefice Services:

Readings: Romans 8:26-end, Matthew 13:31-33 & 44-52

8am HOLY COMMUNION AT ST GEORGE'S, BENENDEN

led by Revd David Commander

10am HOLY COMMUNION AT ST NICHOLAS, SANDHURST

led by Revd David Commander & Lyn Hayes

THE WEEK AHEAD

Revd David is on holiday from today, Sunday 26th July, returning on Friday 14th August Should you require the services of a Priest during this time please contact your Churchwardens:

St Nicholas: Anne Tylden-Wright Tel 850 281

St George's: David Collard Tel 241 944 and Tracy Claridge Tel 240 454

Sunday Next: Sunday 2nd August – The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Readings: Romans 9:1-5, Matthew 14:13-21

8am HOLY COMMUNION AT ST NICHOLAS, SANDHURST

led by Revd Rosemary Kobus van Wengen

10am HOLY COMMUNION AT ST GEORGE'S, BENENDEN

led by Revd Rosemary Kobus van Wengen

Daily Scripture and Reflection is posted on the St Nicholas & St George's church websites and Facebook pages every day of the week.
Please take a look.

PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON THE CHURCH WEBSITES AND / OR FACEBOOK PAGES FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION REGARDING OUR CHURCH SERVICES

Church Websites: <http://www.benendenchurch.org/> <https://stnicholassandhurst.org/>

Facebook Pages: @StGeorgesBenenden @StNicholasSandhurst

A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>

Wearing of face masks:

The latest Guidelines from the Church of England were issued in our Diocese by Bishop Rose on the 23rd July. There are two Q&A's to draw to your attention:

1.Q. *Should I wear a face covering in a church building?*

A. *Face coverings are currently mandatory on public transport and will be mandatory in shops and in supermarkets from 24 July 2020. People are also encouraged to wear face coverings in enclosed public spaces where there are people they do not normally meet, such as a place of worship.*

We strongly advise that face coverings should be worn by all those attending a place of worship, including ministers, worshippers, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors, where there may be other people present; remembering that they are mainly intended to protect other people, not the wearer, from coronavirus COVID-19 and that they are not a replacement for physical distancing and regular hand washing.

It then goes on:

3. Q. *Why should we wear face coverings?*

A. *Coronavirus (COVID-19) can spread predominantly by droplets and perhaps aerosols from coughs, sneezes and speaking. The best available scientific evidence is that, when used correctly, wearing a face covering can reduce the spread of coronavirus droplets in certain circumstances, helping to protect others. Because face coverings are mainly intended to protect others, not the wearer, from coronavirus (COVID-19) they are not a replacement for physical distancing and regular hand washing.*

It became mandatory to wear a face covering in shops in England from the 24th July; it has been mandatory on public transport for some time. No one will be barred from coming into church if they are not wearing a face covering; it is your choice. This is however the first time the CoE has, to my knowledge, used the expression, "We strongly advise" in their Guidelines, so I simply ask you to consider the advice for yourself and for others. (Disposable face coverings are available at church as you enter.)

As the wearing of face coverings is for the "protection of others", it would seem pastorally insensitive if I, as the parish priest, did not. (The use of a face visor does not comply with the definition of a face covering in these new Guidelines - as it does not sit securely round the side of the face.) I will therefore be wearing a face mask at services from Sunday, and have asked the rest of the Ministry Leadership Team to do the same - at least when they are leading. I realise that this will cause upset for some who will consider it unnecessary, but for others it will allay their anxiety. The virus has not gone away. As we meet more people the risk of transmission is increased; hence the advice to wear a face covering in a building when other people are present.

Revd David

Readings: Sunday 26th July - The Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Romans 8.26-end

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

God's Love in Christ Jesus

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 13.31-33

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

³¹ He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

The Parable of the Yeast

³³ He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

Matthew 13.44-52

Three Parables

⁴⁴ 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Treasures New and Old⁵¹ 'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' ⁵²And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

St. George's and St Nicholas Church are open for public worship "Praise the Lord!"

But we are not "back to normal"; there are many restrictions:

- Everyone must hand sanitise on entry and exit.
- Everyone is strongly advised to wear a face mask (available in church).
- Everyone must 2m social distance at all times. "Households" can sit together.
- Use alternate pews (Marked with "green tick" and "red cross").
- A register of names of people attending is being kept for 21 days.
- If someone is in the "70+" or another "vulnerable, at risk" group, they are advised not to come to church. But it is your choice; you will be very welcome if you do come. (But as part of the Government guidelines we have to advise of the increased risk in an indoor public gathering.)
- Organ music, but no hymns, at the 10 o'clock service.
- Communion distribution (wafer only) standing at the chancel step; plus one-way system to return. The priest will wear a face visor during distribution. (Only the priest to receive the wine.)
- Service Booklet to basket when leaving. These will be quarantined for at least 48hrs.
- No refreshments or fellowship time after the service, in church nor in the churchyard.
- Exit: St. George's - north and west doors; St. Nicholas - west door.
- Numbers will also be limited. (We estimate that St. George's can seat 60 people in "households" and St. Nicholas 40 at the 2m social distance.)

Our 8am and 10am Sunday services continue to alternate weekly between St. George's and St Nicholas. Hopefully each week we will have some bells rung for 15 minutes prior to the 10 o'clock service at the relevant church.

The Risk Assessment is available on the website, should you wish to read the detail. This will be reviewed, and if necessary amended, as required.

I look forward to worshipping God with you.

Revd David