

ST DENYS

STANFORD IN THE VALE



Friday Fellowship News No 3 Easter 2020

On behalf of the Churchwardens and the PCC, a very Happy and Holy Easter to you all!

This year, Lent and Easter have been unusual in so many ways, and it has, perhaps for the first time, given us an opportunity to reflect on how Christians in persecuted countries feel when they cannot gather together for fellowship and worship.

They, like us, are united in faith and are adopted into God's family through belief in the work of His son Jesus on the cross, and his defeat of death which we celebrate on Easter Day.

As you reflect further on our brothers and sisters who face continual challenges in being able to worship together, it may be that you might wish to join the mailing list of **Open Doors**, a Witney-based international Christian charity, supporting persecuted Christians worldwide. Nigel Archer has recently started working for them, and for details of how you can support OD in prayer and finance, visit www.opendoorsuk.org

GOOD NEWS!

At this difficult time, it is always good to be able to share positive church family news.

Firstly, **Jean Dudley** continues to recover well at home and thanks you all for your continued prayers.

George (Dan) Smith has been discharged from the JR Hospital, and is now at St Katherine's Nursing Home, Ormond Rd, Wantage OX12 8EA. Do send him a card or a letter to let him know you are thinking of him.

On Wednesday (8April), it was my great pleasure to deliver a card, some flowers and a wooden Prayer Cross made from wood from the Holy Land, to our oldest church member.

Sylvia Hill was **109 years old**, and Val Alsop and I arranged for the residents of Penistone's Court to stand outside their front doors at 11am, and sing 'Happy Birthday' to her. Following which, Bob Ely led us in a rousing version of 'For She's a Jolly Good fellow!'. Thanks Bob!



Thanks too, to Zoe Williams, for organising an on-line 'congratulations ring' from the **St Denys Handbell Ringers**, which was forwarded to Sylvia's daughter, Penny, and then played to Sylvia.

It was clear that Sylvia loved every minute of it, and the cards and gifts that she received locally, were matched by Sylvia's 10th Congratulations card from HM The Queen!

GOOD FRIDAY

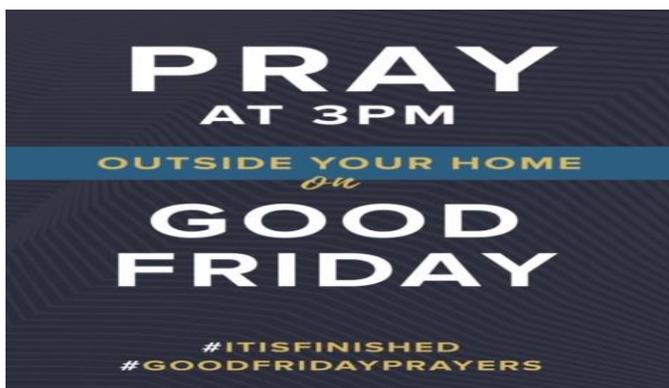
My huge thanks to Peter Gill and Roger Callaghan for erecting the large Cross in the churchyard ready for Good Friday. A very powerful reminder to all who are exercising around the village of the fact that God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ, and that he understands every human emotion that we are going through.



Stations of The Cross

The CofE has made available recordings by the Archbishop of Canterbury of five podcasts, taking listeners on the Holy Week journey by exploring and reflecting on five of the biblical Stations of the Cross. To listen, click on

<https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/living-out-our-faith/lent-holy-week-and-easter/stations-cross>



The **Evangelical Alliance** has encouraged all Christians to stand outside their doors at 3pm on Good Friday, and to pray for all those suffering with Covid-19. The EA has also produced a brilliant short video for Christians to watch. As God's people, we have a sure hope that whatever darkness we might be feeling now, Easter is just around the corner and is a wonderful time for us to

remember Jesus, the light of the world, making a way out of darkness for us. Watch the video by clicking <https://www.eauk.org/resources/what-we-offer/videos-and-podcasts/the-comeback>

EASTER DAY

Please look out in your email inboxes on Sunday morning. And for those who may wish to join in with other Christians in celebrating the resurrection of our Lord, we suggest you may wish to join in with the following services:

From the Archbishop of Canterbury:

<https://www.facebook.com/thechurchofengland/>

From the Bishop of Oxford:

<https://www.facebook.com/bishopofoxford>

From St Aldates, Oxford:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgyAvKxtSel&feature=youtu.be>

At 4pm, evangelist J. John is livestreaming a special Covid-19 Easter Sunday Message of Hope. To watch, click on

<https://www.youtube.com/user/philotruster/>

Please feel free to **decorate the cross** with **flowers** on Easter Sunday if out for a walk. And finally, from dusk on Easter Sunday, and every night until 19 April, **St Denys will be floodlit** - reminding villagers of Christ's light shining in the world, which has never overcome it. The cross will be reflected onto the church.

SPRING HARVEST AT HOME

Every year around Easter, up to 60,000 Christians gather at Spring Harvest for five days of worship, preaching and fun. Whilst this year's events have been cancelled, the teaching and worship will be on-line from 13-17 April!



Why not watch from the comfort of your sofa?
<https://www.youtube.com/user/SpringHarvest>

A Very Happy Easter to you and your family!

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