

ST DENYS
STANFORD IN THE VALE



Friday Fellowship News No 25 9 October 2020

HEATING ON SUNDAY WARNING

SADLY we have a problem with the church heating, which we hope to get fixed by 18 October. But due to awaiting an engineer/parts, this Sunday (11th), please wear an extra layer of clothes. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

THANKSGIVING GIFTS 2020

If you are on the Electoral Roll, by now you should have received either an email, or a letter related to the church's finances for 2020.

Like all charities, the Church is being affected by Covid 19, especially financially.

For five months of 2020 we were not able to hold services in our three church buildings, and despite our best endeavours to encourage givers to convert to bank transfers, the lack of cash collections, plus the loss of our two main village fundraisers - the Festival and the Christmas Bazaar, means that PCC Annual Budget will be short this year by around £15,000.

At the end of March, the PCC reviewed its planned budget, deleting anything 'non-essential' in terms of expenditure, and we 'furloughed' the Vicar's Part-Time Secretary, to save money. However, we still estimate that if we pay our Parish Share to the Diocese (*to cover the vicar's stipend, vicarage costs, diocesan central ministry and national CofE vicar training costs for the future*) in full, we shall be £15,000 adrift.

The church has **£8,800 in unrestricted reserves** (*in addition to the Re-ordering project fund and other reserves which are restricted*). In March, the PCC decided it was not wise to use up these reserves in 2020, for there was no knowing how long this virus would last, and therefore how long Church finances might be under stress. Any reserves we do have may be needed for emergency works.

In reality we have reduced our monthly Parish Share contributions to the Diocese to take into account a £15,000 reduction but have advised the diocese the

PCC will review our contribution after two fundraising events have been held.

Firstly, we are applying to the **Public Purposes Charity** for an Emergency Covid-19 Grant, and we shall know their Trustees decision around the last week of October.

But the second fundraiser is for Church Members. Over the first two weekends of October, we would like to invite every person on the Electoral Roll to make a **Thanksgiving Gift** to God for His faithfulness, and for the low impact of Covid in this parish. We'd like to give church members the opportunity to make a one-off gift, either via the bank or, via cash or cheque (*cheque payable to Stanford PCC - St Denys Church*) through the Vicarage letterbox, with a note of your name and address and ideally, an email address so we can acknowledge safe receipt.

If you are making a payment via BACS, the details are:

Lloyds Bank Plc
Account: Stanford PCC St Denys Church
Number; 00109758
Sort Code: 30.93.18

Please add Reference '**My 2020 Gift**' so that the Treasurer can identify your gift. If you are a tax-payer, please can we encourage you to complete the **attached form** to enable us to claim back the tax you've paid via the Gift Aid Scheme, **increasing your gift by 25% at no extra cost to you!**

The PCC has monitored the church's finance very carefully throughout the year, and given the Prime Minister's announcements that the latest restrictions will last a further 6 months, we foresee church services continuing at a reduced schedule, and under social distancing measures at least until the end of March 2021.

At the end of October, the PCC shall review finances again, and update the diocese and we shall update you via Friday Fellowship News. If you can donate via Bank Transfer or send cash/cheque via the Vicarage **by 18 October**, we would be most grateful. **Thank You!**

Margaret, Nigel & Paul.

CARE FOR THE FAMILY RESOURCES

CFTF, a widely respected Christian charity has organised a number of FREE Zoom seminars/webinars this coming Autumn/Winter on a range of key issues of interest to raising children/young people, and family life. Please see the PDF Document that came alongside this edition of FFN or, visit www.careforthefamily.org.uk

ZOOM FAMILIES CATCH UP

IF you and your family have attended Messy Church in the past, or go to Denys' Kids, you should have received an email inviting you to a Zoom catch up which will be on Sunday 11 October, 4pm.

It is unlikely we shall be able to meet together in person in the way we usually do as a MC gathering until the Spring, and in the same way we are pastorally keeping in touch with our 9am, and 1015am congregations by phone, email and zoom, we wish to do so by inviting families to log on so we can all stay in touch, share news and hear of some resources we'd like to offer over the autumn/winter season.

EMERGING FROM COVID

THE journey of recovery will be slower than our journey into lockdown. Life is not going to be a quick return to the old normal, but rather a new living with the virus, certainly for the rest of this year and through next year.

Lockdown has been difficult, but has also brought new insights, opportunities and priorities to the surface. Part of being a contemplative church will be to reflect carefully on lessons learned and next steps.

The diocese has therefore offered a new tool, loosely framed by the Anglican Five Marks of Mission, to aid reflection, to discern prayerfully, and to plan strategically the shape of the mission of the Church in each of its contexts.

The Five Marks of Mission connect very closely with our calling to be a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world. These are five different aspects of the work and character of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus does these things, so do we, His Church.

The tool, which can be downloaded (see above right), invites us to look at each mark of mission and reflect on what has been lost through the pandemic which we need to grieve, what has been reduced that we need to let go of, what has been reduced that we need to build up again, what has emerged that we need to respond to.

We recognise that Church will need to change. But that change will emerge in a thousand different ways across the diocese as locally, each parish pays careful attention to the Spirit of God and, as we hold onto our core values of going **Deeper into God** (*Worship & Prayer*), **Deeper Into Fellowship** and **Deeper into our Villages and God's World** (*Evangelism and Service*).

May I encourage you to download the tool kit and complete it and if you feel able, to send to me so I can collate people's reflections and provide a summary for the PCC to prayerfully consider? I will also circulate a summary in due course as an attachment to FFN so you can see what other members of the church family have shared. Submit the form to me anonymously if you wish. This will be a very useful introduction and insight document as we move forward into 2021 and the 'Why' Discernment process I have shared about in past FFNews.

www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/DOX-053-five-marks-planning-tool-final-110620-1.pdf

Living well through the next six months

Living with COVID-19 will be hard for everyone this winter. The Prime Minister has asked us all to observe the Rule of Six. There are lessons and challenges that Christians can draw from this number to help us live well in these times.

> SIX MONTHS IS THE NEW HORIZON

Focus on Easter and lean back into the great themes of the church year.

> SIX DAYS TO WORK AND A SABBATH TO REST

Reclaim the gift of one day each week for rest and re-creation.

> SIX PEOPLE TO JOURNEY WITH

Rediscover church as small groups of people supporting one another.

> SIX WAYS TO BE SALT AND LIGHT

Identify the people and community organisations you can support.

> SIX PERCENT TO YOUR CHURCH

If your income is stable, increase your giving to sustain the local church.

> SIX PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR

Pray for people you know to discover the riches of our faith.

"...neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor 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."

Romans 8.37-39



oxford.anglican.org/six

CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY 2020

THIS year's Churchyard Working Party will be on **Saturday 17th October, 9.30am to 3pm.**

Please bring rakes for raking grass with, and a wheelbarrow, if possible. Thank you. *Peter Gill.*

With my love and prayers:

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