



Five Crosses

Tintinhull, Chilthorne Domer, Yeovil Marsh,
Thorne Coffin, Lufton

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2020

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Dear Friends,

We are becoming used to even more restrictions imposed by the need to limit the spread of the Corona virus, Covid-19. Many of the activities that we normally enjoy are, for the time being, denied to us – sport, visiting restaurants or pubs, the cinema or theatre. Anything that involves us mixing with other people is something that we need to think carefully about and follow what our Government is advising.

We have had to learn that this virus, although mild in many cases, spreads very easily and poses great threats to those who are elderly, chronically ill or who have poor immunity to infection. We have watched in horror as every day the news reports that the numbers infected have risen rapidly and that the number of deaths continues to grow. Our hospitals and surgeries are stretched to, and sometimes, beyond breaking point. On a more personal level we may have witnessed our loved ones falling ill or having to self-isolate from contact with even family members. That is especially difficult and distressing when our elderly parents are made to feel increasingly isolated and remote from other people.

You don't need me to tell you that it is especially important to keep in touch with those who are isolated – a phone call, a note through the door, a check that lights go out at night and curtains open in the morning. Making sure that they have

enough food and the other things that they need. I know that in all of our villages people are looking out for people who need help.

The Church of England has suspended public worship, closing our churches for all uses (even, at the time of writing, restricted funerals). When the Archbishops of Canterbury and York announced the suspension they were keen to emphasise that the Church was not “shutting up shop”. Worship will continue – albeit in a restricted way; Christians were urged to look out for their neighbour, especially the most vulnerable in our communities; and we are called to pray for our neighbourhood, our nation and our world. That prayer, as all prayer, will start with thanksgiving – for the people who are working tirelessly to restrict the spread of the virus, for our medical staff and carers who are provided support, treatment and care for those affected by the virus, for all who are working to maintain the essential services on which we all depend. Having given thanks our prayer then expresses our concern and care for those in need – and it challenges us to meet that need wherever we can, because if prayer does not challenge us, motivate us and inspire us to do something for those for whom we pray there is little point in it.

During the time of the current emergency all of our churches will be kept locked, so our homes must become a place of reflection, thought and prayer but any

prayers you would like me to add to my services at home could be sent to me so that when I celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays I will pray for anyone who would like a prayer said for them at that time. I will video the services and put it on our website so that all who would like to can share with us in worship. Do check our web-site to keep up to date - the address is near the top of this Newsletter. The crisis will pass, but it will have been challenging and I hope that it will have made us stronger and more caring as communities – that lies in how we respond. With prayers and blessings in Christ, *Fr Peter*

Letter from the Right Reverend Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton: **“Time to show our care for all”**

As we reflect on the Easter story this month, I’m reminded of the sense of ‘touch’. It was Passover, a religious festival, and as Jesus was laid in the tomb, Sabbath was upon them. So the usual burial rites were not attended to by the women who were closest to Jesus. It would have been improper to touch the dead body; hence their early arrival on that resurrection morning.

In the following days, in attempts to dispel disbelief, Jesus’ followers had opportunity to not only talk with him, eat with him, but also touch him as he came among them. Thomas’s doubt was dispelled as he was invited to place his hand in the wounds of Christ.’

As I write this we are wondering what Covid 19 might have in store for us in the UK. We hear now that Italy has taken drastic action in hoping to contain the virus. I don’t know what further precautions we in the UK may have taken by the time you read this. Currently we are all taking greater care with our personal hygiene in washing hands and ensuring we use and bin tissues. Today, along with the rest of the Church of England, we in Bath and Wells, have recommended that we only receive bread or wafers at Holy Communion and refrain from touching, through blessing, sharing the Peace or prayer through laying on of hands.

There will be various responses to the concerns raised by the Government and the media. Some may feel anxiety or fear about the nature of the virus whilst others may wonder if the emergency planning appears over-reactive. Our response as a Church must be that we do what we can to ensure we stay safe by taking all precautions recommended. And that we do all we can to reassure people who may feel vulnerable and worried by staying calm and showing compassion and care for all.

But how do we express such care? I’ve realised that touch plays quite an important part in showing we care for someone. When I was training as a nurse for a brief period many years ago, I recall being shown some research on touch. It was an eye-opener! Even the briefest of touches can cause people to feel better, cared for and happier.

But the presence of Corona virus means that we are having to withdraw touch to prevent the possibility of infection. So how might we try to replace touch with other signals of our care and value? What might that look like?

As folk may find themselves ‘self-isolating’ due to potential symptoms of the virus we have the opportunity to find new ways to show our care. Phone calls and cards, food deliveries, creative use of social media and streaming of worship services may all be ways to stay in touch and help people to know they are not alone. Rather than finding ourselves paralysed by the situation let us discover how we can create new opportunities to strengthen our relationships and communities.

May our actions be the reassuring, life-affirming ‘touch’ of the risen Christ this Easter! Easter blessings, Ruth+Taunton

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

LUFTON

Susan Collins writes: “This is a time of greater uncertainty than we have ever experienced in our lifetime. We now know that our familiar services will not continue. Those of us who are of a certain age and there are many in our Parish, let alone the Benefice, will need to be thoughtful about

their movements, but hopefully, not isolated. We should all pray that we and those around us will be safe and assist each other when necessary. All of the congregation in Lufton will be trying to do these things. The two Lent Talks which did take place, with the topic 'After The Acts of The Apostles – the 1st Three Centuries of the early Church.' were interesting but sadly the others were cancelled. Also sadly, our Church needs to be kept locked.

A number of the parishioners in Lufton are over 70 yrs and others have health problems, so we are taking care to distance ourselves from others physically. We take this opportunity to wish all in the Benefice and beyond, a peaceful contemplative Lent and an Easter which may be different, but also a time to celebrate in our own ways. We also sincerely hope you keep well."

YEOVIL MARSH

Christine Salmon writes: "It is very difficult to know what best to put in these confusing, concerning and uncertain times, but the following is all I feel able to write for Yeovil Marsh. Sadly, the planned Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Thursday 23rd April 2020 is cancelled when it was hoped to make suggestions to take the church forward through 2020. Please keep any thoughts you might have brought to the meeting in mind for a later date, when we are back to as near as we can manage to normality. Details will be found on the church notice board."

CHILTHORNE

Angie Clothier writes: "Unfortunately thieves managed to take the lead from the roof of St Mary's during the early hours of Saturday, 14th March. We have temporarily waterproofed the roof and hope to get it repaired in the near future.

From Jill Coe : " Thank you everyone who came and supported our Jumble Sale. We made £311 clear profit for "Children in Distress – Romania"; a wonderful result. They will be delighted. Also,

please, if anyone has suitable shoeboxes for use in our appeal later on in the year , do let me know on 01935 840466." ALSO Ginny Fraser, who will cover those donated boxes in nice wrapping paper says "the strong, good quality boxes should have a separate bottom and a lid and not be the really big ones that winter boots are sold in and not the very large sized men's shoe boxes. " *Editor:* just keep these boxes by you to be able to give them to Jill and Ginny when the present difficult times begin to lessen.

A message from Christine Denman: My mother was a member of the community for over 60 years and regularly attended St Mary's before immobility made this too difficult. Mum's funeral was held at St Mary's at Chilthorne on 12th February 2020. The family would like to extend our thanks to those who attended and for their kind words and cards, also the donations for Cancer Research UK."

TINTINHULL

John Gower writes: "On a cheerful note, the PCC put on The Churchfitters recently followed by Iolanthe, the latter in conjunction with the Drama Group. They were both very successful and thank you everybody who helped or supported these events. On a more sombre note, the Corona Virus is going to be an unwelcome visitor to our village. Church are locked but Fr. Peter is videoing services in his home on YouTube which will be brilliant. Unfortunately The St Margaret's Church Flower and Craft show has had to be cancelled this year. At least I will be spared the humiliation of finding out how badly my Sloe Gin fared! Out of this strife is coming good. People are planning to help vulnerable people led by the Parish Council. This is being expanded in at least one area in the Village. Regrettably both in the PCC and other parts of the Village, most willing volunteers are probably unsuitable to fight their way into Supermarkets to purchase food for others as their age or underlying health puts them at risk. However, if you need help, please ask and arrangements will be made if at all possible. Even in isolation, a phone call or

SERVICES DURING APRIL 2020

**Due to the Corona virus
Covid-19 Pandemic,
there will be no public worship in any of our Churches and they will
remain locked until further notice. And for now there will be no
household deliveries of our Five Crosses Newsletter.**

It is hoped there will be a Eucharist celebrated every Sunday
probably in the Vicarage at Tintinhull.

The service will be recorded and all can share the video on the Benefice
website. (Details on the heading of this Newsletter's front page)

Think, Reflect and Pray

If you, or someone you know needs support, conversation or prayer please
contact Fr Peter on the Benefice website or Phone 01935 829058.

Tintinhull cont. . :FaceTime call can be of great help and comfort. It's good to share "
From Carol Perry: Church Coffee shop in WMC is suspended for now but the Post Office
will remain open **Every Wednesday At the Working Men's Club Open 9.30am - noon**"

Ray Cozens writes: "The Churchfitters on 6th March were an outstanding success. Some
comments made were - "*a real winner last night- great from first song to the last*"; "*The
tables looked great and the food and the band were both worth coming for*" and "*we had
a really great night and have fingers crossed that they might come back again*". None of
this comes without a lot of hard work by many people and we (the PCC) are very grateful
to all of you who work so hard to put the evenings on and those who support them year
after year. Over the last six years the subsidy provided by both the County and South
Somerset D.C. has diminished to **nothing** and the acts which we put on are now very
expensive (the performers are trying to make a living). We have, over the last few years,
factored into the ticket price the income provided by the **raffle and bar**, this enabled us
this year to reduce the ticket price from £17:50 to £15. To continue with this policy we do
need both bar and raffle to have your full support both before and during the show. Thank
you again for supporting yet another successful evening; now we must look for next year's
act. Any suggestions?"

From the Editor: Confirming church related events you missed due to the pandemic:

- During April Church Organist, Ann Horsington was going to hold a special
"come and play the church organ in St Margaret's church" event but due to
Covid -19 this has to be cancelled. Budding organists look out for a new date.
- Church Spring Flower Show - a happy, annual village event will be certainly
be missed for its competitive spirit and welcome cuppas and splendid cakes.
- No flowers in St Margaret's Church for Easter
- The "Travels in Central America "evening 2nd April, on hold for another time.
- **General Parish Note: All APCMs are cancelled until further notice.**

From the Register: on 25th February – Burial of the ashes of Norma Northcott at
St Margaret's Church.