

ST MIKE'S NEWS

A newsletter brought to you during Covid-19

Issue 4 12 April 2020

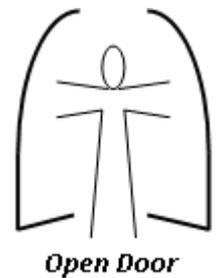
Church Together Apart



@stmikesmacclesfield



www.stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk



From Martin

I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection
(Phil.3:10)

How are you? And how are you coping?

Those are two questions I'm not really sure how to answer for myself. Physically I'm well; I'm comfortable at home with food in the cupboard, and I'm managing to take daily exercise. But emotionally? And spiritually?

One impact of COVID-19 that we have become much more aware of other people, whether it's standing at our front doors and clapping for the NHS, or courteously giving a wide berth to others as we pass in the street.

Some of us will know by name an individual who has died because of the virus, and to the difficulty of daily life is added the burden of how to grieve when you couldn't be present at their bedside, and how to show compassion to a bereaved friend when you can't give a consoling touch or hug.

All this on top of the strange world we're in where some people are working 'normally' (I'm particularly grateful that our garden bins are still being emptied), and others' work continues now from home but where the focus or means of working has changed significantly.

In this I've enjoyed hearing how some of you are growing your faith – reading that book you bought some time ago or revisiting old ways of worshipping again (Mission Praise CDs!). Thank you for the various appreciative comments regarding our efforts centrally – for these newsletters, service booklets, online services and more. I'm pleased too that you're finding ways to share these with one another, and I hope that the group phone chat facility announced today will help you further. *(see back page)*

But amongst all this, the questions remains: "How am I? And how am I coping?"

'Surreal', 'strange', and 'disconcerting' – words which embrace how life is at the moment. As I write this I'm SO



conscious that this week, Holy Week, would normally be so different. Different from other weeks in the year, and especially to what it would be like in other years.

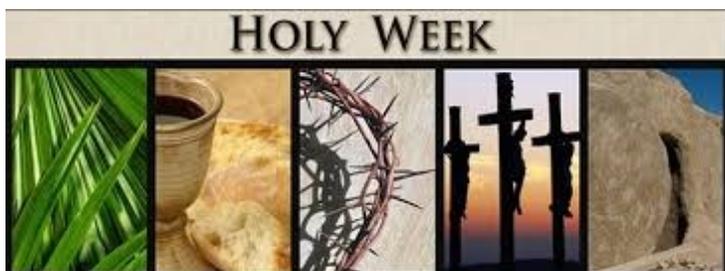
Usually many of us would be gathering in church more than once this week – for the Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday, for the choral service and/or quiet contemplations on Good Friday, the vigil on Saturday, and the glorious celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Day. Usually we'd do that.

But not this year.

This year, Holy Week is surreal, strange, and disconcerting. Perhaps this year our experience is even more like it was for Jesus' followers in Jerusalem that year. The 'normality' of life with Jesus – the fun & fellowship, the miraculous signs, wonders, and joy of His teaching – they'd all ceased. The surreal experience of crowds cheering His arrival into the city on a donkey gave way to foreboding and fear. What had been common and normal became a memory as Jesus shared Himself in a new way through the Passover meal – the basis of our Communion with God and with one another ... and we can't do that this year.

For me, this time feels like 'Holy Saturday' (the day between Good Friday and Easter Day) – when all of life is different and we don't know what the new normal will be. There is confusion and trepidation in

(Continued on page 2)



From Martin (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

the air, and fear too, at times.

Despite Jesus foretelling his death and resurrection, his followers were uncertain of the future – what it would be. Fleeing from Gethsemane as the soldiers arrested Jesus, separating from the crowd baying for blood, the disciples distanced themselves in confusion, trepidation and fear.

We know their outcome. We know the joy of Easter. We know that, but do we feel it?

At this time of prolonged Holy Saturday, may your knowledge of the reality of Jesus and his resurrection sustain you in hope. But may you also enter into and experience more fully the passion of Jesus – *you might read a gospel account of Jesus' last few days (Luke 22 & 23, or perhaps John, chapters 12 to 19).*

As we prepare to find new ways to celebrate Easter this year, may we all experience God in new ways. (Phil.3:7-11)

With my love, prayers and good wishes to you all,
Martin

As I've been spending more quality time (slower pace, more present) with my gorgeous boys I've found myself falling in love with them all over again. The pure joy they bring. I've always loved them but now I'm



looking at them in a completely different way. Really seeing them and noticing them. We were playing fetch in the park recently and as they were running back towards me with the ball I was seeing them in a different way, almost like it was in slow motion. I don't want to go back to the daily walk being fitted in amongst a busy, fast paced schedule. I want to slow down and smell the coffee as the phrase goes. Now I've just got to do the same with the girls and prize them out of their rooms and studying for long enough to have a proper conversation rather than snatched chats. Maybe they'll even notice me in a different way!

Sue Reid



Thank You from Styal Prison

The Chaplaincy at Styal prison warmly thank all who gave Christmas gifts for Styal and Thorncroft Prisons.

Lynne Spedding and I attended a moving Service led by the Prison Chaplains at St George's Stockport in December which celebrated the end of the year long art exhibition, the Festival of Light.

The offerings of Christmas gifts from the churches in the Deanery were presented during the evening which resulted in a veritable sea of brown gift bags.

The Revd Yvonne Yates told us that on Christmas Eve afternoon, the Chaplains at the Prison decorated a buggy with bells, donned Father Christmas outfits and visited all the houses in turn. The women were overwhelmed by the gifts, very emotional and were thrilled to receive the messages in the cards. Yvonne said many tears were shed by the women and Chaplains alike! Over 420 gifts were given !

As well as the gifts of maltesers, soap, socks and card, each woman received toiletries that had been donated by the Deanery.

Normally they expect to welcome a handful of women at the Christmas Day service, but on this occasion they were overwhelmed by the numbers attending, who were obviously so moved by the generous donation of gifts they had received the day before.

Thorncroft Prison also received many gifts for the men.

Please continue to remember Yvonne Yates and all the chaplaincy team at Styal in your prayers; as well as all the prisoners and their families, and the prison staff who are exposed to additional risk from corona-virus in a closed institution".

Anne Kite

Carers Hub

The carers hub is still working with carers offering telephone support, advice and sourcing other support available for carers and their families needs.

We are still taking referrals and all our team is working to get carers what they need at the moment.

Jayne Shaw

<https://livewellservices.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Services/4387>

Learning New Skills



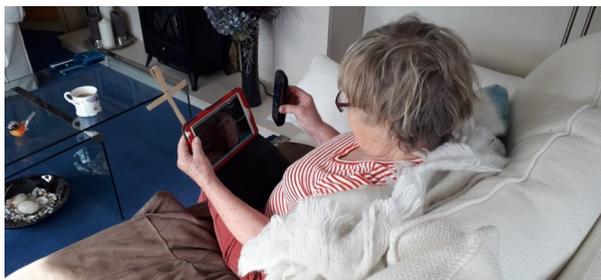
Getting to grips with new technology and video calls via WhatsApp. When Eve and David first shared a video call with me, it was a very special moment to see the joy on Eve's face. Lovely to catch up with Gordon and Vicky too. Gordon is making a good recovery from his heart surgery.

Getting Creative with Palm Sunday Crosses

Our church members have been getting creative making their own palm crosses and displays. Thank you to Peter for the display on our church railings.



Did you watch the Palm Sunday service led by Martin and Catherine with a reading by Mike Strutt and homily by Karen Brady? Thank you for the positive feedback received so far. If you haven't seen it yet, click the link at the bottom of the page.



Here is Anne sharing the Palm Sunday service with Hilary

https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12802/page/55761/view/?fbclid=IwAR01kPShBO4kasgRDpozCeZqXtD8tbFPSbzaQck9_7gaZBxrChPd6En7VHc

Anyone else doing PE with Joe Wickes?



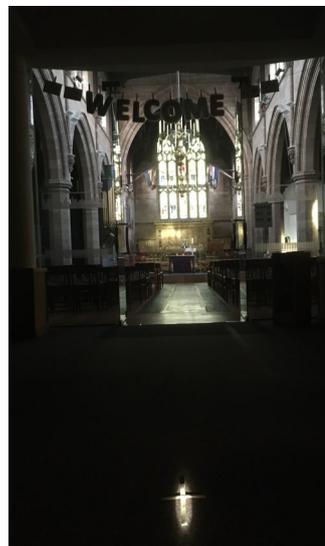
Two of our church members, Anne Kite and Sue Munro both doing the daily PE with Joe Wickes, proving the big kids can join in too!

Anne is pictured here post workout with her post workout hydration drink of choice! Sue pictured here during the workout. Her workout hydration drink of choice has perhaps been cropped out!

The light of Christ

Whilst checking the church recently there was a beautiful elipse of sunlight shining onto the floor in the Welcome Area from the westerly setting sun. It looked beautiful. I felt moved to place my Palm Sunday Cross on it. The building may be dark and closed but the light of Christ shines always.

Sue Reid



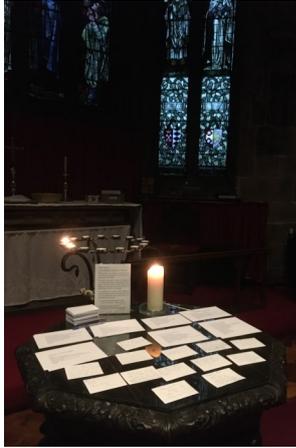
Ah my dear Lord, the church is locked but let my heart be open to your presence; there let us make, you and I, your Easter garden; plant it with flowers, and let the heavy stone be rolled away. *by Alan Amos*

Goodbye Dad

These strange times throw up some incredible moments. Today I said farewell to my wonderful dad. Due to the current restrictions and the fact that all the churches are closed, the vicar of St Mary's, Eastham (the marvellous Beth Glover) hit on the idea of giving him a blessing at the Lych Gate and then be taken on a drive through the village. Dozens of people turned out, stood 2 metres from each other and lined the streets, clapping out of respect as he went past. It was truly moving and made me realise just how loved and respected he was.

In the words of Beth, they turned out to say goodbye to 'a principled, fun-loving, deeply committed if highly irreverent Christian, grumpy, gorgeous man'. Goodnight Dad, God bless....and thank you.

Pete Munro (Thank you Pete for allowing us to share this)



Prayer Requests

Are you in need of prayer? We can share prayers with one another in these times apart, when we can't simply go and write a prayer on a card in the Savage Chapel. E-mail any prayer requests to office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk with PRAYER REQUEST in the subject title and we will ensure this is shared with small groups of church members who are continuing to 'meet' virtually for prayer.

Alternatively Text or WhatsApp your prayer to 07513 170 210 and it will be shared with people in the diocese to pray. Or you can email your prayer to foxhill@chester.anglican.org. Prayers received will be distributed across the diocese to volunteers to pray in their own time as part of a daily rhythm of prayer.

You may also like to join in 'praying a prayer' click here to see [prayer items](#):-

[the latest prayer sheet](#) and previous ones [here](#)

Worship might look different from week to week but what is clear to us is that it remains our joy as Christians and that in isolation we are yearning for it. The number of people tuning in is actually overloading servers! We continue to consider ways to make this an even better experience, but keep watching for us on Sunday mornings.

Beatitudes for a global pandemic, written by Jayne Manfredi, an ordinand from Crewe...

 Blessed are those who stay indoors for they have protected others.

 Blessed are the unemployed and the self-employed, for their need of God is great.

 Blessed are the corner shopkeepers, for they are the purveyors of scarce things.

 Blessed are the delivery drivers and the postal workers, for they are the bringers of essential things.

 Blessed are the hospital workers; the ambulance crews, the doctors, the nurses, the care assistants, and the cleaners, for they stand between us and the grave, and the Kingdom of Heaven is surely theirs.

 Blessed are the checkout workers, for they have patience and fortitude in the face of overwork and frustration.

 Blessed are the refuse collectors, for they will see God despite the mountains of waste.

 Blessed are the teachers, for they remain steadfast and constant in disturbing times.

 Blessed are the church workers; the deacons, priests and bishops, for they are a comforting presence in a hurting world as they continue to signpost towards God.

 Blessed are the single parents, for they are coping alone with their responsibilities and there is no respite.

 Blessed are those who are alone, for they are children of God and with Him they will never be lonely.

 Blessed are the bereaved, for whom the worst has already happened. They shall be comforted.

 Blessed are those who are isolated with their abusers, for one day – we pray - they will know safety.

 Blessed are all during this time who have pure hearts; all who still hunger and thirst for justice; all who work for peace and who model mercy. May you know comfort. May you know calm.

 And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.

Typo spotted by Robert Marshall this week in a church Facebook group post

NOW THAT THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS HAVE STARTED here are 25 suggestions of things to do at home with your children. Grandparents please pass on for your grandchildren.

https://www.parentkind.org.uk/blog/10563/Days-in-with-the-kids-25-indoor-activities-for-the-Easter-holidays?fbclid=IwAR0-X-ImJm4Y6AhgjlLayQST3VV2QjicZ8Cd_y8tz35rMEINpX5PzMO

Take a look here for some popular children's storybook characters by Axel Scheffler and Julia Donaldson who have had the Covid-19 treatment <https://www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2020/apr/04/gruffalo-axel-scheffler-and-julia-donaldsons-coronavirus-cartoons>

Click here to see some useful tips on speaking to your children about Covid-19 <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/?fbclid=IwAR3SL0TXogUux4okYzhjyGfzuTP6VbnviR3HABVbg4aQcZoQuukzcad5fv4>

ELEVENSES Elevenes with The World of David Walliams – The World of David Walliams...
www.worldofdavidwa...
David Walliams is releasing a FREE audio story every day for the next 30 days. It might help some parents out there to get their kids to quieten down and listen to a story whilst you get a few jobs done or just grab a cuppa in peace 😊
<https://bit.ly/AudioElevenes>
10:18

HE IS RISEN

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.



Happy Easter

THE EMOJI EASTER STORY

- ❤️ Easter is about Jesus coming to pay for our sins because He loves us so much! John 3:16
- 😞 Jesus had to die on the day we now call good Friday to pay for all the times we sin and disobey God. Mark 15:37-38
- 😵 After Jesus died he was in the tomb for 3 days before something amazing happened. Mark 15:42-47
- 🕶️ About the time sun was coming up on the third day, some of Jesus' friends went to the tomb not knowing what they would find. Luke 24:1
- 👼 When Jesus' friends got to the tomb they found an angel who told them Jesus was alive! Luke 24:2-7
- 😮 All of Jesus' friends were surprised and happy when they found out he was alive and saw him for the first time! John 20:14-17
- 😊 Soon after Jesus came back to life, He went back to heaven and His disciples watched him go. Luke 24:50-53
- 😄 Before Jesus went back to heaven He told His disciples to tell everyone the good news that anyone who believes in Jesus as their Savior can live with Him forever in heaven. Matthew 28:16-20

This Sunday's Roots Materials

Resources for adults: www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome12apr

Resources for families: www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome12apr

Martin finds a way to use your landline or mobile to phone a few friends at the same time



Not everyone is online, so Skype, Facetime and Zoom are meaningless. Using the phone one-to-one calls are great, but sometimes what you need is a chit-chat with a few people together, just like you would over a cuppa. We've now set up a system to do just that.

Whoever is wanting to be part of a group chat each dials up the same number, then types in an access code, and finally a PIN. However many people do that can all join the same call. It's as easy as that!

We tested it as a family (3 in different rooms in the Rectory, plus Jess in Warrington and Nicole in Oxford). It was surprisingly easy.

The instructions:

Agree a time for everyone to call (eg. 11.15am on Thursday).

At the agreed time, everyone dial the phone number **0333 0110 946**. *

When prompted, enter the 'Room number' on the telephone keypad followed by the 'hash' key (**32610586 #**)

When prompted, enter the PIN on the telephone keypad followed by the 'hash' key: (**8290 #**)

You will then be available to speak to others who have also dialled in.

If you're the first you will hear music whilst waiting for others to join you. When they do there'll be a chime to let you know. Say who you are, and enjoy the chat!

* *The fact it's an 03xxx number means it's only the cost of a local call for each person, which you may have included as part of your phone calls package anyway. It is definitely **NOT** an 084xx, 087xx or 09xxx premium rate number.*

How does this sound? And how will it sound when you're able to have a 3- or 4-way conversation with friends? Apparently you could have up to 50 people in the conversation – *but I suggest you don't!*

Please note: since this is available to St Michael's Church members generally you may find another group chat already going on. We **COULD** get round this by specifying **DIFFERENT** time slots for your group but we **HOPE** we can **AVOID** that level of organisation and you'll just enjoy talking with whoever's on the line. However if this proves too difficult or too busy, leave a message on the church answerphone (01625 421984) and we'll work something out.

Martin



If you haven't found us on Facebook yet, take a look.
We are posting and sharing regularly each day
[@stmikesmacclesfield](#) Give us a like or follow.