

THE PARISH OF TIDENHAM (& St Briavels and Hewelsfield & Brockweir)

WEEKLY PARISH BRIEFING SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2020

I hope this briefing finds you well. Be assured that prayers continue for you and the nation at this time!

Things we might learn from the Coronavirus.

1. **The Beauty of Physicality.** Oh how much many of us miss human touch, gathering and being present together! Who are you missing being close to?
2. **The pain of isolation and exclusion.** The Bible alludes a lot to the hapless state of being socially excluded. We are all getting a little insight into what some people face every day. Perhaps our human compassion will extend to others once this season has passed?
3. **Are we people of fear or faith... or both?** A lot of church leaders are preaching and writing about living and under faith and not fear, whilst of course taking all sensible precautions against the virus. Sadly, there are some still living in stupidity and selfishness... and putting it under the banner of faith! Sadly also, there are those paralysed by acute and chronic fear.
4. **The value of stopping and reordering our lives.** This time is forcing many to slow down and re-orientate our lives. "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)
5. **How unessential are so many of our essentials!** There were things we couldn't possibly live without before this crisis... but that's changed. People are re-evaluating priorities. Do I really need to do as much travel? Is GDP everything in life? Family and friends are rather important!!
6. **Creation is thriving.** Pollution is down and creation is loving it.
7. **Our fragility (and equality) as human beings.** Psalm 103:15-16. "All flesh is like grass..."
8. **We are not in control.** We like to think we have everything under our control but this time is showing us otherwise.
9. **There is good and bad.** How amazing has been the community spirit, the support groups, the dedication of essential workers!!! How sad that people just have to contravene social distancing rules so they get the last bag of flour on the shelf... just in case someone else might get it first!
10. **Where hope is to be found.** Where is hope to be found? It's a good question! What's your answer?

What are you learning from this time?

A Funny Old Easter

It was strange not gathering in our church buildings on Easter Sunday (with all my creme eggs ready to hand out)! However we have managed to gather virtually. The Easter celebrations, taking place under the haunting Covid-19 virus, began on the Saturday night with the Easter Vigil. It was a first live Zoom to YouTube effort for me. As people have been saying, "we have the technology," to which I reply, "I know we do, but the problem is I'm sometimes the one operating it!"

Anyway, as 22 little windows appeared on Zoom, for the first time in weeks I had a real sense of gathering. It was a new and different gathering, but gathering none the less. If you have the means but haven't done so already take a look at the video on the Parish YouTube channel. It was a joy to share the time together.

I don't know about you, but I also did have that Easter joy when Easter Sunday came around, despite being rather nervous at doing a live broadcast. As I heard the Gospel (John 20) and preached that Jesus is alive my spirit was lifted!

With Lent and Holy Week over we're now into Eastertide, and have a forty day period (up until Ascension Day) to celebrate the resurrection before a further 10 days taking us to the glorious festival Pentecost, when we recall the coming of the Holy Spirit. I hope and pray that resurrection life and hope will inhabit our lives over these days.

I'm taking some leave this week as are many ministerial colleagues so here is a little reflection courtesy of Revd Canon Ian Bussell (he oversees the training of our curates).

Easter blessings to you all **Revd David Treharne**

Vicar of Tidenham with Beachley and Lancaut and Priest in Charge of St Briavels with Hewelsfield & Brockweir.

A Reflection from Revd Canon Ian Bussell, Head of Ministerial Development, Gloucester Diocese.

I feel like I'm living in two different worlds. One is the big picture, the world-wide pandemic, the statistics and the threat. This triggers all my fight or flight stress reactions – have we got enough? Why is there NO YEAST? Phew I got the last two courgettes in the shop! The other is the small picture, my daily reality. The sun shining, the trees turning from bare sticks to emerald green, birdsong, smiling at the neighbours. Somehow it doesn't seem right to be sitting in the sunshine when we should be running round panicking. But it's week three of the lockdown, I'm settling into a slower pace and needing to achieve less. And I'm noticing so many small things that make me stop and stare. And I've discovered (remembered?) that gratitude for things here and now seems to be the best antidote to fear of the future. Gratitude (when I remember) helps me sleep at night and work calmly by day. Gratitude makes me aware of all the good things around me rather than what might or might not happen. This isn't a forced 'look on the bright side' kind of gratitude. This is a gentle, a bubbling up, a noticing kind of gratitude which is only happening because I'm not busy. It seems that gratitude comes like the woodpecker – when I stop to catch my breath I hear the distant drumming, reminding me of Spring. Or like those disciples on the road to Emmaus who, having given up, had the time to listen to the story of this stranger and found themselves with the risen Christ.

I've been wondering how to make sense of Easter this year. The statistics still grow, we are waiting for fatalities to peak, nothing much has changed. So perhaps resurrection doesn't make things better. Those disciples returned to the same Jerusalem, under the same Roman occupation, with the same precarious way of life. But having met Jesus they saw the world differently, understood it differently, lived in it differently. So the only sense I can make of this Easter, as the planet continues to turn and the virus to spread, is that resurrection does not make the world different, but does make it new. The risen Christ opens our eyes to see that newness so that even in the middle of a Roman occupation or a global pandemic, we can give thanks.

PRAYERS AND BIBLE READINGS for the 2nd SUNDAY of EASTER

Easter 2. A very relevant prayer for our time!

Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father.

- Acts 2:14a & 22-32. John 20:19-end

Prayer requests from the Church and Community

Thank you for sending in your prayer requests. Please feel free to email tidenhamprayers@btinternet.com, please make it known whether your prayer request is PRIVATE or okay to send out to the public.

Tidenham Parish Prayers for Sunday 19th April

Thanksgiving

We have a God who hears our prayers who can be trusted to answer them according to His will.

Thank you Lord that my friend who contracted coronavirus whilst in Chepstow hospital has completely recovered from this and is hoping to be allowed home this coming week. Sandra Hunt

For continued connectivity through 'phone, internet etc.

For Easter and all who contributed to Parish services.

For all the 'unseen' workers who serve their communities.

For the HOPE that we have because of Jesus.

For the warm weather and the coming of spring; signs of new life and hope.

For good community support.

Thank you Jesus, for all that you give us and that we have you to turn to in hard times.

Intercession

Pray for Martina as Seth is slowly recovering from C-virus.

For families coping with ill health unrelated to Covid 19.

For all who are unwell at this time, that you would be alongside them in their time of need.

For those who are dying, that they would know your presence with them.

For the families of those who are dying, that you would be their source of comfort.

For all who are nursing or caring for others, in hospital or at home, that you would strengthen them.

For our Parish schools, staff, pupils and parents: Offa's Mead Academy, St John's on the Hill, Tutshill C of E and Wyedean.

For all residents and staff of care homes, especially Castleford.

For families who are mourning at present, especially as funerals are happening in a different way.

For them to be aware of God's comfort and support.

For all of us, to draw closer to our Lord, who provides and cares for us all.

Parish Prayer

Where the river flows, everything will live.

Where the river of God's love flows, everything will live.

Where the river of God's forgiveness flows, everything will live.

Where the river of God's joy flows, everything will live.

Where the river of God's blessing flows, everything will live.

Where the river of God's people's prayer flows, everything will live.

Where the river flows, everything will live.

Tidenham Parish. March 2020

SERVICES

Sunday service on Low Sunday (Easter 2) - 19th April 2020

This Sunday's service will be a service of Holy Communion with hymns and a sermon at which the president and preacher will be Dr Tom Clammer, Associate Priest.

The service will be streamed live to the parish Facebook page at 10:30 AM on Sunday 19th April. It will then be uploaded to the parish YouTube channel immediately after the service, and thus should be available from about 11:45 AM. The order of service will be posted to the parish Facebook page on Saturday.

The Eucharist

For as long as the lockdown lasts, we will continue to offer a live streamed communion service on the first Wednesday of the month, as is the tradition in this parish. The dates and times for these services (assuming social distancing regulations continue) for the next two months are:

- Wednesday, May 6, 12:15 PM, parish Facebook page
- Wednesday, June 3, 12:15 PM, parish Facebook page

Each service will be uploaded to the parish YouTube channel immediately after the service where it will be available as a recorded service.

The collect is:

Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father.

The post communion is:

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

TV BBC 1 - Sunday 19 April at 1.15pm, Songs of Praise

All live streamed services will be available online as recordings if you can't make the publicised times.

Children & Families - Jane Penny is producing worship resources suitable for families and children which will be available on Facebook.

There is a live song time for children, toddlers, babies via Zoom on Tuesday and Wednesday at 11am.

- Tues: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/376230590>
- Wed: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/451379308>

PARISH NEWS UPDATE

Despite not being able to gather publicly while our church buildings remain closed, our life together as a church family hasn't stopped. We now focus on what it means to be a Christian community while we cannot gather together for worship.

Ah my dear Lord, the church (building) 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

Spring Harvest – If life had proceeded as planned a good number of us would have been at Spring Harvest Christian Festival in Minehead this last week. With the event cancelled the organisers have put a lot of material online for free. Hopefully it will be there for a little while...

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

A Question – Let's ask ourselves what this very strange season in our lives is teaching us. Our Parish Life Groups may well address this question over the coming weeks. You're welcome to request to join the conversation(s) looking at life and faith!

Self-Isolating - If you find yourself in the position of having to self-isolate or know of anyone else in the church family who is, please let us know by emailing - tidenhamadmin@btinternet.com .

Volunteering to Contact others - Contact details of the COVID-19 Helping group co-ordinators in each area are on the website www.tidenhamparishcouncil.co.uk

Pastoral Care of the Church Family - We encourage YOU to keep in touch with one another and support one another through this time where possible. Who might you be able to phone this week? Remember, if anyone from the church rings you it is the CHURCH ringing you. However, if you are aware of someone who is particularly struggling please contact a member of the Team.

Parish on YouTube and Facebook - If you don't have access to a computer you may still be able to access the Internet if you have a Smart TV. Have a look and see if you YouTube. If it's there then you can probably get the Parish YouTube channel. Search 'Tidenham Parish Online Church.' Like many people you may have wanted to stay away from Facebook. If you dare to join then you are welcome to connect to the Tidenham Parish Facebook page... just request to join. Again, you'll then be able to access people in the church/community and find some resources for worship.

Stay safe online - Please don't disclose any personal or financial information, be aware of grooming, stay safe and enjoy the important online connections.

Financial Giving - Thank you to all those who have reviewed their giving and either started standing orders or made one-off donations. Standing order and gift aid forms are available to download from the website. Please contact Ewen or Clare for any assistance.

The Sedbury Space Crowdfunding appeal, raising funds to employ a part time centre manager, ends on Monday 21st April. We have successfully hit our initial target of £3,000 which means we can receive any monies raised but have put a 'stretch target' of £10,000 which would cover the costs for a full year. If you haven't yet made a donation and would like to contribute to the project please visit

www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/sedbury-space-centre-manager

If you don't do online payments but would still like to donate you can make a cash or cheque (made payable to Sedbury Space) donation via Janice.

TIDENHAM PARISH ONLINE LINKS AND CONTACTS

Parish Website: This has information, documents and links to other sites. <https://www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk>

Facebook page – all welcome to join and post comments. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/114300818701466/>

YouTube channel: 'Tidenham Parish Online Church' with videos and resources to assist you in your devotions.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UcRjOlVDBT9M9usfhp2722w>

Life Group meetings via Zoom – please contact relevant people if you'd like to join in

- Wednesday 10.30am. DTRevd@aol.com
- Wednesday 8pm. fiona.m.gardiner@btinternet.com
- Wednesday 8pm. janice-hamilton@outlook.com
- Thursday 1.30pm. Jane cfmtidenham@btinternet.com

Other Online local resources

Daily Prayer via Zoom with CYTUN Monday to Friday at 8.45 for 9am start <https://zoom.us/j/122778377>

Cytun Churches Together Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/206786133181081/>

Chepstow's Virtual Café Online via Zoom Every Saturday at 2pm. Find the link on CYTUN Facebook page

Tidenham Parish Council www.tidenhamparishcouncil.co.uk has useful links and information

For the latest Church of England Covid 19 guidance which covers all kinds of issues including weddings, baptisms and funerals. <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

There are also some really helpful resources for prayer and worship on the Church of England website. Click on this link... <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>

https://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/568755/Home/Coronavirus/Coronavirus_guidance_and.aspx

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St Briavels & Hewelsfield website		www.stbandhchurches.org.uk
Prayer requests	tidenhamprayers@btinternet.com	(by 12pm Wednesday for following Sunday)