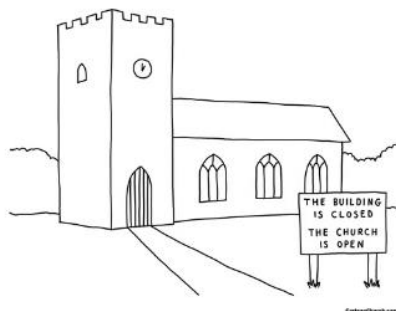


St Mary the Virgin, Great Brickhill



The Church continues to be alive and active, but our buildings must close.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK Update 5th April 2020

ALL CHURCH BUILDINGS MUST REMAIN CLOSED

As you know, following the announcement given by the Prime Minister on 23rd March, all church buildings must remain closed. There will be no public worship, private prayer or any other meetings or activities in churches until further notice.

We have received specific instructions from the Diocese as to who should have access to the church. Unless an emergency occurs, only one designated person should enter the church to check that it remains safe and secure, provided they follow all government guidelines and have access to appropriate materials to sanitise surfaces such as doorknobs.

Julia will be going to the church regularly to check that all is well. She has also kindly agreed to top up the Food Box with the spare supplies, which are in the vestry. It goes without saying that cleaning of the church will have to cease.

It is going to be possible to do the churchyard mowing, with a few restrictions in place. If there is anyone who now has time on their hands and would like to join the mowing rota, please get in touch with Phillipa. The mower and petrol will be provided.

Although the Monday afternoon Drop-In has been postponed until further notice, Jigar Patel has agreed to run the outreach Post Office service in the village for the time being, so please support it if you can (Mondays from 1pm to 3pm).

THINGS THAT ARE CONTINUING:

DISPLAY NOTICES & UPDATE THE WEBSITE:

We are regularly putting notices on the notice board by the church gate and uploading information to the website to keep you informed of the current situation.

THE PRAYER CHAIN:

We have an active e-mail Prayer Chain - anyone who would like to join the group or would like to have a prayer included, contact:- Valerie Kerr (valeriekerr@hotmail.com) or Mary Maley (mary@maley.org.uk).

THE FOOD BOX RUNNING:

Please remember that the Food Box in the church porch is there to help anyone who is in need of food either in an emergency or longer term. Please spread the news of this initiative as widely as you can. The church main and porch gates are being kept open for easy access to the Food Box at all times.

OFFER OF HELP AND ASSISTANCE TO THOSE WHO NEED IT:

Please see the notice "Where there is Love, there is Hope". We know the coming days and weeks will be filled with uncertainty and we want to assist you as best we can. If you need any help, please get in touch and we will do what we can to assist.

CHURCH COLLECTIONS:

As there are no church services the collections have dried up. The cost of maintaining the church however remains the same. We have heard from parishioners who would like to continue their giving to the church by other means, for which we are extremely grateful. If others would like to follow this lead, payments to the church can easily be arranged – the simplest way will be by a BACS transfer. Alternatively, a direct debit could be set up, or a cheque could be sent. Cash donations can be accepted if this is the only possible form of payment.

If anyone would like to do set up any payments, please get in touch with Neil for the details:- neilacook6@gmail.com

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOMORROW, PALM SUNDAY & HOLY WEEK:

There are five documents attached, all giving details of how you can share in worship at this difficult and challenging time:

- (1). The Rector has written a brief reflection and prayer for tomorrow.
- (2). How and where to find services for tomorrow, Palm Sunday, both via livestreaming and on the television.
The many donkeys used by churches to celebrate the story of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem will be getting a rest this year. And we won't be able to hand out the traditional palm crosses. People are being encouraged to be more creative – see the link on the Diocesan website for ideas for people of all ages:
<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/livestream/palm-sunday/>
- (3). A PDF file showing how to "Make a Palm Cross"
- (4). Prayers and Readings for Palm Sunday and Holy Week.
You may remember that Bishop Alan was going to be with us tomorrow to lead our Palm Sunday service – the best we can do is to give you the readings and prayer that would have been included in that service. Also included are the readings for the Holy Week services that had been planned.
- (5). A PDF file of Holy Week Services being live-streamed from the Diocese

TOMATO PLANTS:

Following the cancellation of the Plant Fayre, John and Celia had over **300 spare tomato plants** (Gardeners' Delight, Cherry, Alicanti, Plum and Beef). There are still some available – to place your order, £1.00 per plant:- email to jewhall@yahoo.co.uk or celiafeetam@madasafish.com or by telephone to 261 075

The plants will be ready by the **18th April** and arrangements are being made for the plants to be delivered to your door.

For further information about any of the above, please contact:-

Phillipa Cook TEL: 01525 261521 07788 740969 pjcook6@gmail.com

In these challenging times it is even more important to please remember that the Benefice website will be the best way to receive updates about the current situation and to obtain worship information. There is a special "Coronavirus" section to obtain up to date information and worship details:- www.brickhillschurches.org.uk

A powerful poem sent from the Diocese:-

