

CHURCH LETTER

Dear friends,

The previous issue of the Thurston Newsletter was published in April and, due to the Coronavirus crisis, we have had to stop producing the Newsletter for the past 3 months. During lockdown it would not have been safe for our faithful band of helpers to deliver them around the village and there wasn't much to report.

Now life is slowly returning to a new "normal" and we are getting used to social distancing, face masks and long queues outside shops. I am writing this at the start of the summer holidays, and parents (and children) will welcome a break from the demands of home schooling. Holidays plans involving more exotic destinations may have been put on hold, but we can go and meet outside and spend time with family and friends face to face. Phew, let's hope that the worst is truly over and be sensible in following government guidance, so that, all being well, schools will be able to go back in September as planned and we avoid a further spike and renewed closures.

We've all seen so many changes over the past few months. Some of you may have been furloughed, while others have not been so lucky and may have lost their jobs. I've learnt to use new technology in the form of Zoom online meetings, and while we can't meet face to face these seem to work very well. After we needed to close our church buildings, we began to record online services and I know that we have reached many people that way. By the time you read this, we will, fingers crossed, have had our first service back in church but we will continue to put the service on Facebook and our website for those who are cautious about coming back to church just yet. Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals can now take place again in church, albeit with many restrictions. Do get in touch if you have any questions about what we call the Occasional Offices and we'll be happy to help. One of the biggest changes is that we are not allowed to sing in church. Music is such an important part of our services that it will be very challenging to adjust to the new format of services for the time being.

St. Peter's Church annual Gift Day which usually takes place in June will now be held on 12th September and details will be published in the September Newsletter. We won't be publishing a service rota this month as we don't know how things will be progressing. For the first few weeks, we have asked you to book if you wish to attend a service, as social distancing requirements limit the numbers who can attend. We are also required to keep contact details of those attending for 3 weeks and share those with Track and Trace if someone should test positive for coronavirus. In church we need to observe 2m social distancing and everyone needs to use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the building. Other measures may be introduced following government announcements. Our main aim is to keep everyone safe: therefore please don't attend a service if you are in any way unwell.

Details about services and other events will be published on the church website, the Facebook pages for St. Peter's and Holy Innocents Church and also on our noticeboards. Information will also be published in our weekly pew sheet and a few copies can be found in the church porch. If we can help in any way, please do get in touch with me or with our churchwardens Pat or Irene. Contact details can be found elsewhere in the Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Yours in Christ,
Manette

Rev'd Manette Crossman, Vicar of Great Barton and Thurston
Tel. 01284 787554 - Email: revmcrossman@gmail.com

PRAYER HELPLINE

If you or someone you know needs prayerful support, you can ring one of the following numbers.

We offer a listening ear and will offer to pray for and with you.

Rev'd Manette Crossman - 01284 787554

Alf Nightingale - 01359 231155

Christopher Wells - 01359 231573

HOME COMMUNION AND VISITS:

Unfortunately these have all been cancelled until further notice.

St Peter's Church contacts

Rev'd Manette Crossman

01284 787554 revmcrossman@gmail.com

(Manette's day off is usually Monday)

You can contact:-

Joy Bolwell for Baptisms 231301

Pat Sadler for Weddings 230865

Irene Churchus for Funerals 230652

Secretary: Gillian Bush 271704

Treasurer : Catriona Addison 07931 199721

Churchwardens: Irene Churchus 230652

& Pat Sadler 230865

More information about the **Benefice of Holy Innocents Church, Gt. Barton and St. Peter's Church, Thurston**

can be found on Facebook or on our joint website



www.greatbartonandthurston.org.uk