

NEWSLETTER

Local News from Ravensthorpe, Cotton & Teaton

Message from Rev'd Allison Twigg

We are certainly in extraordinary times and I do hope you are all managing to keep well and stay safe.

As you will be aware, **ALL CHURCH SERVICES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED** for the time being, but church is not cancelled and we are doing our best to be creative in our offerings and find a new way of moving forward. Worship in Church may have been suspended but Church is definitely not cancelled!

In the media we hear a lot about 'Social Distancing', I think they are the wrong words. Let's think about 'Physical Distancing', let's still be social, talk to each other, keep in touch.

These are strange times but it is good to remember that 'Church' isn't buildings or meetings, but people. As we go forward let's make sure that we go together. In their advice, the archbishops have asked us to 'radically rethink' how we do church in this time.

We already have good contact with our parishioners through the Uplands Group of Churches Weekly Mailing that gives us a reflection on the scripture and the pew sheet. These can be read every week. I have spent time putting together a *Worship at Home* service for people to use alongside Bible Readings. I am printing a few of these for distribution to those who do not have email but here is a link to the booklet so that you can print and use at home if you wish. For the links to these, and other information, go to www.uplandsgroupchurches.org.uk and to the *Uplands Weekly Mailing*.

Links to the *Worship at Home* booklet and the *Worship at Home Bible Readings*, can be found on the uplandsgroupchurches website. On Sunday through our Facebook page – 'Uplands Group Churches' I will be live streaming a Sunday Service. This will take place here in Spratton at 9.30am. There must be no physical congregation but you can watch the service and join in with the responses at home too. We will be using Common Worship in Lent as our Service Book and our Pew Sheet as planned. Here is the link to take you to the group: www.facebook.com/UplandsGroupChurches. The links to the *Common Worship in Lent service booklet* and the *Pew Sheet* can also be found on the Uplands group website.

Although we are not streaming Morning Prayer - several people from our group are joining in with Morning and Evening Prayer through Facebook from Cuddesdon College, where I trained for ordained ministry, it is lovely to see people from the Uplands in that group. You can join in with this at 9.00 in the morning or 5.45 in the evening. The group is called Cuddesdon Live Streamed Prayer: www.facebook.com/groups/2907888119258041.

If you would like help in setting up a Facebook account - we have several people in the Uplands who would be glad to help with that.

Of course if you prefer on a Sunday there are many churches that already stream the Sunday Service through their websites - as suggested on last week's email.

Radio 4 broadcast a Sunday Service at 8.00 on Sunday mornings which can also be accessed through BBC Sounds, and Radio 3 broadcast Choral Evensong weekly on Wednesdays at 15.30 and on Sundays at 15.00. And there is always Songs Of Praise on Sundays at 13.15 on BBC1. Allegedly, from this Sunday the BBC are showing a Sunday Morning Service – with the first being led by the Archbishop of Canterbury. You can also join in with Church of England Daily Prayer through your Smart Speaker. (Alexa)

We encourage you to check on your neighbours, especially those who don't have access to the internet. Pray with them on the phone, check they have everything they need, and safely help them out if you're able and we are encouraging those members of our congregation who are fit and well to participate in their village networks that are gathering people and resources to help those who are self-isolating. Please pass this information on to those who do not use computers or email as they may need help in accessing available support. Local businesses are also offering home delivery for those self-isolating: Creaton Shop, Saul's Butchers, The Witch and Sow and also The Kings Head are delivering and these are just the ones I am aware of.

Many of us that have been in supermarkets this week have been horrified by the empty shelves and the struggle to buy basic staples for ourselves. The situation is made worse for those who struggle to feed their families. The withdrawal of a free school meal for children in need as the schools close will also be catastrophic for some families. If you are able please continue to support our local foodbanks.

In addition to this, with the help of Lesley Tomalin and Anne Strudwicke, we are trying to establish pastoral phone links for those that may be isolated and do not have email, or those for whom we have a particular pastoral concern - if you can think of anyone in these groups please do let me know. The Pastoral Team will also be busy contacting members of our congregations to help maintain contact and help to keep an eye on those we usually see regularly. The Prayer Chain will also continue – if you would like to be prayed for confidentially by our dedicated band of prayers do please be in touch. Our Pastoral Team and Prayer Chain can be reached through the administrator uplandsgroupoffice@gmail.com or by contacting Rev Allison directly so please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Unfortunately in addition to suspending our services we have now had to postpone or cancel all of our community groups and planned Easter Activities. This does also mean that we have to postpone our APCM's.

Worship in the churches of the Uplands Group

In light of the Government guidance around non-essential contact, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued advice that public worship is suspended until further notice. Churches should be open where possible but with no public worship services taking place. Reverend Allison will be able to provide further details as soon as it has been released - we await advice from the Diocese and the wider Church of England as to the length of this suspension of services.

Unfortunately, St Denys Church, Ravensthorpe, is closed until further notice, even for personal prayer.

CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Associate Priest: Rev'd Allison Twigg 01604 846099 revallisortwigg@gmail.com

The Uplands Group Office: uplandsgroupoffice@gmail.com Website: www.uplandsgroupchurches.org.uk

Pastoral Visits and Care: If you would like to talk to someone, or know anyone who would welcome a home visit, please telephone Anne Strudwicke on 01604 743389

If you would like to receive the Uplands Group Weekly Mailing, please contact our administrator, Katrina Jones: uplandsgroupoffice@gmail.com

COVID-19: Support for Residents in Ravensthorpe, Coton & Teeton

A number of people in the village have contacted the Church, the Parish Council and the Village Hall offering community help and support in various ways. Exactly what help is not yet clearly defined and to some extent will depend on what is needed and asked for, and what is possible. It is all very new and "a work in progress". Over the next couple of weeks this will become much clearer. We may even produce an interim Newsletter informing people of what is available, if that will help. Bob Pike has kindly offered to co-ordinate this for the time being and, thus far, has (approx.) 15 people who have offered to be available. For now, Bob has asked that the following be included in the Newsletter:

How can you offer help?

- Contact your neighbours by phone or with a note so that they have someone to turn to. If they are elderly or high risk, please check regularly if they are ok.
- Join a group of volunteers able to fetch items or assist others in the village by emailing ravensthorpe2020@gmail.com with your name & address.

How can you get help?

- Acquaint yourself with the NHS guidelines found here: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19
- The Chequers in Ravensthorpe can supply milk, bread, eggs and much more. They can also provide cooked meals - a great service! Collection to be arranged. Call 770379.
- The Guilsborough shop will accept orders by phone from anyone self-isolating. Call 743541. Collection to be arranged.
- If you need an item of shopping or a prescription collected, or other assistance email ravensthorpe2020@gmail.com or call Bob Pike 771277 – we will try to help.

VILLAGE HALL

On March 18th the Village Hall ceased all activity due to the announcements from the Government that week. The RVH Committee will review the situation on April 17th. At this time, it seems unlikely that the hall can restart activity before the end of April.

We apologise for the inconvenience and disappointment. The Annual General Meeting of the Village Hall, set for Monday April 20th will be postponed.

LONG BUCKBY LIBRARY

With the coronavirus epidemic, the library in Long Buckby will be closed for the time being. Books will not be due during the closure period.

ADDITIONAL CHURCH NOTICES

APCM is suspended until further notice;
Bus Stop Tots is suspended until further notice;
Brunch @ 11 is suspended until further notice.

Pastoral Care:

If you would like to talk to someone, please telephone Anne Strudwicke on 01604 743389

FOOD BANK: PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN

The Chancellor has outlined measures to ensure that at least a proportion of weekly wages will be covered by the Treasury for working people and that there will be some increase in benefit payments. This is good news but doesn't ensure that all families, some already on very low incomes, will be able to keep food on the table.

I am asking for everyone to share some of what we have in cupboards/larders. This village has been supporting the hungry for 5 years but NOW is the time of greatest need. We have been told that vouchers will be issued to children on free meals, but as yet I don't know what that means. With children at home (no breakfast clubs and no school lunches) the demands on parents will be greater than ever.

It is vital that we pull together and help those who are less fortunate. We will continue to collect food items and deliver them to the Food Bank.

I'd like to add a personal thank you to those who support the Food Bank throughout the year, you know who you are and I send heartfelt thanks. If each household can donate just one item of long lasting food – tinned mainly- we can help those who are less fortunate. If you are unable to get the food to me, phone me (numbers at the bottom of this) and we will arrange to collect it – details of how and when later. Cash donations – direct to food bank via the website www.restorenorthampton.org.uk click on donations and follow the instructions. (Geoff and I are in lockdown for medical reasons but I can organise despite not being able to do anything physically).

Yvonne Childs: mobile 07917346200; home 01604 770988

THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACES FOR LEISURE AND EXERCISE: THE PLAYING FIELD AND OTHER PUBLIC SPACES

The government directive relating to containment of the COVID-19 issued on 23rd March (see www.gov.uk), included the closing of "communal places within parks, such as playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms". Consequently, within the Playing Field, the Children's Play Area is sadly now closed until further notice and cannot be used. Similarly, the Field itself cannot be used by groups and will therefore not be available for hire or used for any group activity until further notice. The Pavilion will remain closed too.

Nevertheless, the Playing Field Committee wants the field to continue to provide and open space for people to use and enjoy, but it is absolutely crucial that it is used within the government guidelines of what is permissible. One of the "limited purposes" people are permitted to leave their houses for is "to take one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle – but this can only be taken alone or with members of your household". You may choose to use the Playing Field (or other public spaces in the village) for this reason. However, please note that this "cannot involve more than 2 people at any one time", and also that those two people are required to maintain a distance of 2 metres between them.

As you can see, the guidelines themselves raise various questions relating to possible contradictions and 'what-ifs'. We can assume that the room for interpretation will narrow down over the coming weeks, but for the moment it is crucial that we take a conservative line in our interpretations in the best interests of everyone in our community. We do not want to be forced into a situation where the use of the Playing Field becomes untenable due to the government directive being ignored or flouted.

THE CHEQUERS 01604 770379

Are you self-isolating and need good, cooked food?
Or just fancy a take-away?

Between 12.00 noon-1.30pm and 6.30-8.00pm daily, just call us on the above number and place your order. You can pay over the phone or with cash. A completely contactless collection is available.

You can choose from the following: Steak & Ale Pie; Steak & Ale Hotpot; Chicken, Ham & Leak Pie; Pheasant Hotpot; Cottage Pie; Lasagne; Chicken or Lamb Curry with rice; Fish & Chips; Burger & Chips.

All served with veg/ chips as appropriate.
Only £8.00 each (all subject to availability).

Shop sales & Off-licence sales also available: shop open between 11am—2.00pm; and, 6-8.00pm.

Please ring and place an order for shop goods.
(All of the above will remain subject to "further notice").