

SOME IMPORTANT WEBSITES TO LOOK OUT FOR

Unity Update cannot be produced in paper version as the Church of England's guidance asks us not to deliver leaflets in large quantities to people's homes. Therefore this is purely an online version. Nonetheless the online world has special importance at this time. Here are though some very important websites that all should be aware of.

Children and Families work across the Team.

This is carrying on apace with various Facebook pages such as Whitstable Kids Team and lots of other resources being shared.

Red Zebra

Immense credit must go to all those within the wider Whitstable community, including those from our churches who have helped, in creating a network of support for those struggling at this critical time. Do ensure everyone you know who is vulnerable are aware of the resources available. The best website to find out what is available is www.redzebra.org.uk/whitstablecares

Other sites

Canterbury City Council have also recently published a really helpful resource too which is highly recommended as a way of supporting local businesses

www.canterbury.gov.uk/delivery

The Canterbury Diocese has very helpful information regarding to how churches should respond to the present crisis. It is also possible to subscribe to a weekly newsletter as well as follow the Calendar of Intercessions

https://www.canterburydiocese.org

From the Church of England website

https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle

https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer

ALSO RECOMMENDED

Lectio 365(developed by the 24-7 Prayer initiative and CWR https://www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional

Pray as you Go by Jesuit Media Initiatives (UK and overseas) https://pray-as-you-go.org/

UNITY UPDATE

MAY 2020

Rev David Vannerley writes:

You will not need me to tell you that we are passing through the strangest Eastertide that the Church has ever experienced. I must confess to a little shock about this because I had previously thought that the long history of our faith meant that it had already met pretty much every possible situation.

We do not know where we stand but we do know where God stands for he is faithful, even when we waver; he is loving, even when we forget to be; he is the God who saves, even when we resist that salvation. In these strange and uncertain times the call upon Christians is to respond to his faithfulness, his love and his salvation – and to show that through our deeds towards others at all times: even if it is at two metres distance.

This was supposed to be the last time that I wrote an editorial for Unity Update but that was when things seemed more certain ... like the date of my retirement, for example. I will still cease to be a Team Vicar as

planned but will then continue as minister of St John's into the recovery phase. Once public worship is restored I will help to re-establish the community life of St. John's for a little while, we will then have the chance to say 'Good-bye' and my *Permission to Officiate* will then be transferred to the Canterbury Deanery.

In the meantime, every blessing: He is risen, risen indeed: Alleluia! David

Please continue to worship with the Team on a daily basis!

Regular online worship in the form of the Daily Office takes place at 9am, 5pm, and 8pm (8.15pm Thursdays) led by the Team clergy and other members of our wider ministry teams from Monday to Saturday. This is via Facebook. Each church produces its own online content on Sundays. If you cannot access the church Facebook pages or the Whitstable Team Ministry Facebook page there are direct links to the pages from this website which should direct you there.

www.whitstableteamonline.org

Rev Rachel Webbley writes:

My main message to you all in this new-style Unity update is a huge Thank you! I have been so encouraged by the numerous stories from across the parish of ways in which you have been caring for each other, and growing in prayer and discipleship. We all have our down days, in spite of the lovely sunshine, and I know some of us are praying hard for healing and protection for loved ones. Nonetheless I am so encouraged by your stamina and faithfulness, and am confident that there will be many blessings that come out of this lockdown time. As you are aware, most church meetings are on hold for the time being, including PCC meetings, although I am planning for the PCC standing committee to meet in person in July. The APCM will now be held on Monday 5th October, you will all be very welcome to attend, and, God willing, it might be occasion for a bit of a party! All being well, Archdeacon Jo and other senior colleagues will be joining us on Saturday 17th October for a morning of prayer and discernment for the parish, more information will be available in the Autumn. Please make a note of these dates in your diary.

I want to thank all my colleagues for their work, especially Simon for setting up a new website that includes all the live-streamed worship from across the parish all in one place, especially Paulette for setting up a Facebook group to share encouraging



resources across the parish, especially David who is graciously staying with us as PTO after his licence ends in June to support us as we get through the recovery phase that will follow the lockdown. It is times like these when I become even more thankful for working in such a loving and gifted team. I am so grateful for the time and energy they have all invested in keeping in touch with you all and providing uplifting worship every week right from the start. Thank you also to Denise and Geoff who have faithfully added to our Morning and evening prayer pattern with Compline almost every evening, and to the children's and families ministers who are reaching out to our children in each church, and also sharing their work in the new Facebook group 'Whitstable Kids Team'.

Bishop Rose, Archdeacon Jo and our Area Dean Rev Carol Smith are keeping in touch in different ways, and have reassured us they are on hand to support us in any way we need. Meanwhile, the Diocesan communication team are keeping the Canterbury Diocese website up to date, and signposting the excellent Church of England website which is a hub of all kinds of useful material, both practical and spiritual: www.churchofengland.org

I also want to thank every one of you for praying for me and my colleagues. Your kind messages of encouragement and thanks really help us. God bless you all.

Rev Rachel C Webbley
Team Rector, Whitstable Team Ministry
Thursday, 23 April 2020

A MEDITATION 2020 by Margaret Arnold, churchwarden at All Saints

The tomb was empty, stone walls stood silent.
For a moment that place was filled with the scent of angels.
For a moment that place was filled with the holiness of Christ.
For a moment in time that tomb held the body of Christ.
That moment in time has been remembered for centuries.
That moment in time will be remembered today and for centuries to come.
The stone walls will always tell their story.
Our church today is empty, its stone walls stand silent.
But God is in our church sending his light through our stained glass windows.
Light that throws patterns of Christ's life onto the floor.
Light that throws beams of brilliance onto the empty chairs.
The silent stone walls and pillars of our church will tell our story,
For they are soaked in our prayer, in our music in our faith.
The church is empty but the walls hold our moments in time.
We hold these moments too,
For in this time, our worship, praise and prayer is in a different place.
It will be so, until we return.

Lack of space prevents a thorough reprinting of all church contact details but emails are as follows as this is an online version only of Unity Update

Rev Rachel Webbley – vicar@stalphege.org.uk

Rev Paulette Stubbings- seasaltvicar@gmail.com

Rev Simon Tillotson – tillotsons@gmail.com

Rev David Vannerley – vannerley@aol.com

Please do check the church websites for other contact details.

Ascension Day Service

This will be livestreamed on the Facebook Whitstable Team Ministry channel and also on the Whitstable team online website on Thursday 21st May 2020 at 7.30pm

To follow the broadcast search for Whitstable Team Ministry Resources on Facebook at that time on 21st May or if you prefer visit

www.whitstableteamonline.org

If you miss it it will still be available at both sites after the event