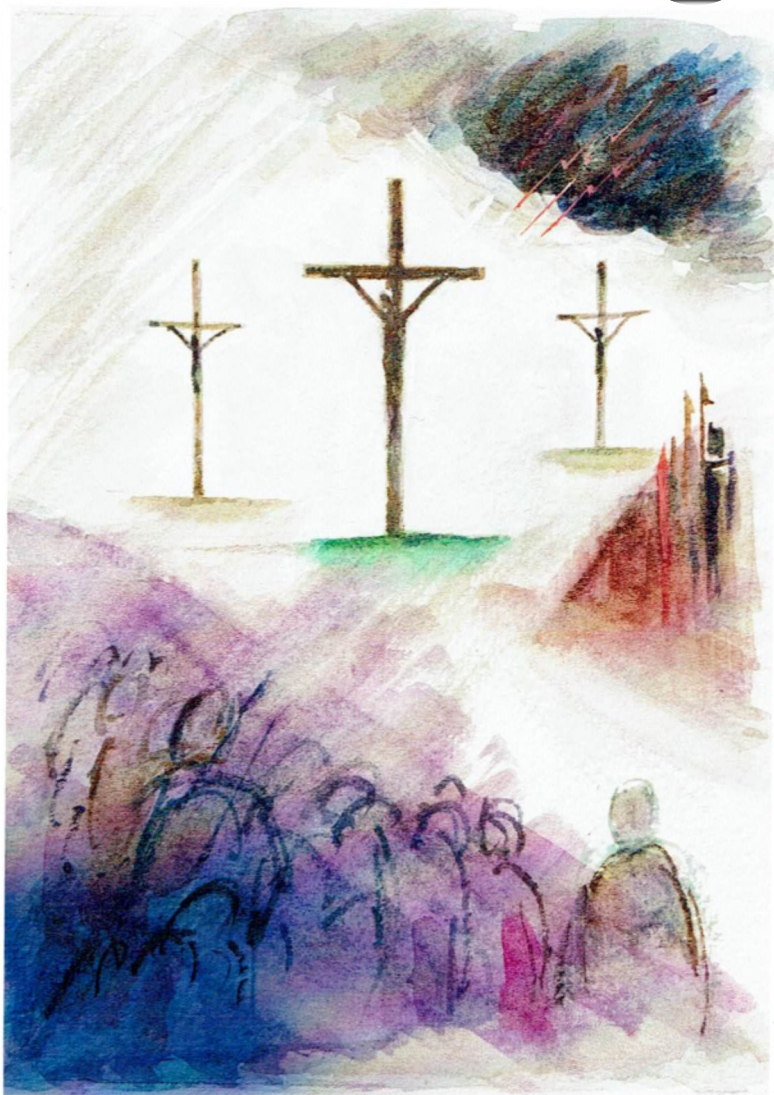


St Helen's Magazine

April 2020

50p



St Helen's Church

Ashby-de-la-Zouch



Loving God, loving others, loving the world

Parish Directory

(The dialling code for these numbers is 01530 except where stated)

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 ♦ Website: sthelensashby.net ♦ Flagstaff Team: www.flagstaff.org.uk

Parish Magazine deadline ...

Next month's deadline is midnight on **Friday April 24th**
 And the magazine will be published on **Thursday April 30th**

April 2020

Editor Writes ...

Thank you to Robert Doling for offering to do the magnificent and evocative painting for us for this month's front cover.



I saw another thought-provoking work of art in a newspaper article at the beginning of March, and had the vague notion that it would make a good subject for my April editorial. It was by Mexican artist, Pedro Reyes, and he had turned 1,527 guns into shovels to plant trees. I liked its echoes of, 'They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.' It also chimed with the concern we all have about climate change.

Do you remember how climate change was in the news all the time way back then? But along came the coronavirus, COVID19, and everything changed. For the Chapman household this crisis has an unexpected silver lining - our daughter Holly, who lives and works in China, is back at home 15 years after moving out to head to uni. Read her perspective on this arrangement on page 9. On page 4 Reverend Mary is spotting some other 'silver linings'.

Another is the improvement in the world's air quality. NASA's Earth Observatory has released fascinating satellite images taken of China during February showing the dramatic reduction in pollution, initially around Wuhan, but spreading rapidly across China as millions of people were forced to make dramatic alterations to their everyday routines. By the end of March more than a fifth of the world's population was under lockdown and making similar changes. How ironic that a respiratory disease is causing the earth to breathe a sigh of relief.

I hope the changes to your daily routine are going well. We're finding time to play board games (read about an expert who could help on page 12), to exercise regularly, and to be more inventive cooks - there's a recipe worth a try on page 14. If you are enjoying more time for reading, this magazine is handy, especially the fascinating article from Jen Gilchrist on page 24. And of course there are the on-line church services - information on what's coming up in April is on page 16.

The whole world is having to get used to change. For words of encouragement on how a large organisation can do things differently, see the extracts from the Archbishops' recent letter on page 10. And read about the huge changes at Ashby Youth For Christ on page 26.

Jill Chapman 



Revd Mary Writes ...

My dear friends

I am writing just four days after Boris Johnson asked many of us to self-isolate and all of us to practice social distancing. In those few days, it feels that the world has changed hugely, at least for now. People are queuing for food, however unnecessary this might actually be, sport is cancelled, schools are closing their doors, perhaps for months, and we have less freedom to socialise. This is no doubt that this feels extremely costly to us - to so many business, to zero-hours contract workers, to us. It *is* costly.

And yet, I wonder whether we can look for blessings in these times, too. Perhaps the reduction in traffic will enable us to hear the birds sing more clearly. Perhaps being unable to travel to exotic places will help us appreciate the here and now. Perhaps focusing mainly on one view will enable us to trace the unfolding of the seasons more closely.

I wonder, too, whether this might be a time of reconnecting with friends whom we have always loved, but whom, in our busyness, we have not spoken to for a long time. Could you aim to pick up the phone each day to a much-missed friend or relative?

And could you reconnect with yourself? - remember the things you loved doing before you came too busy, take up that hobby you always wanted to try, become creative in the kitchen, or the garden, or at your sewing machine?

And could you deepen your connection with God? - take up the rhythm of prayer that our churches have adopted and in that prayer, find rest for your souls?

I'm not saying that this is not the toughest of times. It is. I'm not saying that this is going to be easy. It won't. But in it, what grace can we find, what joy, what comfort? Take a deep breath. Be. Connect. Create.

With much love

Revd Mary

Keeping in touch: We now have a team of volunteers who are keeping in touch with everyone who has given consent for their telephone numbers to be shared. Please do let Revd Mary know if you become unwell so that she and others can pray especially for you.

Practical help: We have another team who is only too happy to do shopping or pick up medication for anyone who can't or shouldn't go out. If you would like their help, please don't hesitate to ring Revd Mary and she will get a volunteer to help you. All the volunteers are trusted members of our church family.

Food Bank: Ashby distribution centre is open Monday and Wednesday 9-10 am, and Friday 2-3 pm.

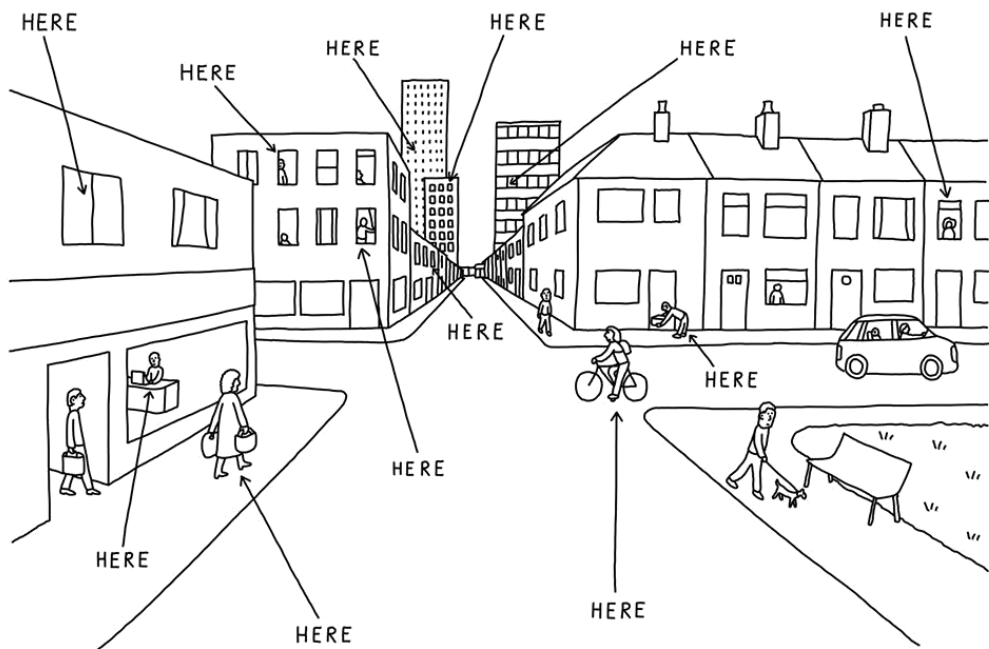
The Duty Manager will have an overview of social distancing.

While our church is closed donations may be left in the porch of Holy Trinity church.

Telephone Support Team for the town

Revd Tim Phillips is liaising with Dr John Addison, the senior partner at Castle Medical Group, to organise an offer of 'phone support to people who are self-isolating. If you are interested in volunteering, please go to trinityashby.net/phone-support-team.

WHERE THE CHURCH IS



Brian Robertson

It is with sadness we announce the death of Brian, suddenly at home on March 11th. He had retired from St Helen's knowing he had developed motor neurone disease, a particularly cruel - and progressively degenerative – condition.

Prior to entering the ministry, Brian had studied molecular sciences at university, but never used it as a career.

With his wife, Viv, he led a Christian support group for students in this country, and then in India, where their second child, David was born.

On returning to this country their lives centred on Holy Trinity in Leicester, where gradually Brian did more and more. Encouraged by the rector, Brian then trained for a full-time career in the Church of England, ultimately coming to us at St Helen's.

Our sympathy goes to Viv, Rachel and David.
DEO GRATIAS

Betty Cawte

From the diocesan website:

The Bishop announces the death of The Revd Brian Ainsley Robertson, aged 69, on 11 March 2020. Brian was ordained in 1994 and served his curacy in the parish of The Martyrs, Leicester. He then served as Team Vicar of Oadby St Peter and St Paul and as Team Rector of the Ashby and Breedon Team Ministry. He was also Rural Dean of North West Leicestershire. Brian retired on 31 October 2014, and then held the Bishop's Permission to Officiate. He leaves a wife Vivien, a son David and daughter Rachel, and grandchildren.

.....

We give thanks for the life and ministry of Brian Robertson. A graveside burial service was conducted by the curate of St Denys on Tuesday March 31st at 12.30 pm but, because of coronavirus restrictions, could be attended only by Brian's immediate family: Viv, David and Rachel, and Brian's brother Geoff.

Viv hopes to arrange a Thanksgiving service later in the year, when restrictions are lifted. While we cannot attend Brian's funeral in person, we can support Viv and the family by asking God's strength and comfort for them at this sad and difficult time.



People Behind Our Products

When we see the array of fairly traded items on display it is very easy to not appreciate that there are people behind the production of each one – A single Lanka Kade wooden animal passes through 12 pairs of hands during its production. Each of those people not only receive a fair wage for their work but also has good working conditions, giving them job satisfaction and a knowledge that their employment is valued.

Screen printing was historically a male dominated profession but a fair trade commitment is to promote equal opportunities. So Lanka Kade's producers have trained women to screen print toys.

Ashby Town Centre Traders had planned for an Easter Egg Hunt to take place on Saturday 11th April, when our window display would have been full of these brightly coloured toys, possibly printed by one of the women recently trained; Chandani, Radhika or Inaka. Something to look forward to later in the year.

Once this difficult time is over and the nation's shops are open again, please consider, whenever possible, using businesses in Ashby's town centre - every sale, regardless of value, will be appreciated.



Mandy McIntosh

fair2all and Chair of Ashby Town Centre Traders

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Let US build your dream garden or maintain it

When a Millennial moves in with her Baby Boomers

As a millennial, if you listen to the media, I am currently conforming to type. I am living at home, 'scrounging' off my boomer parents.

Currently all foreigners are banned from China, the country I work in, so it looks like I might be locked down with the parents for a while longer.

We are all trying to adapt to our new online lives. I have been pleased to have been able to help dad set up his piano pupils online lessons (by providing my phone) and mum with her online 'House Party' registration. The new ways of communicating and connecting with people have been innovative and exciting.

I am not someone who is good at trouble shooting computer problems ... but between us we are all muddling through.

We have daily walks, eat together, support each other and generally keep each other sane. It is a strange time, but we are focusing on the positives.

We are enjoying the reducing number of cars on the roads, the family of crows building nests outside the window and the news stories about the kindness of people.

We are also relieved that my grandparents are safely locked-down next door. We wave at the window and drop off food on the doorstep. We speak on the phone rather than in person...two meters apart is challenging with people who can't hear and refuse to wear hearing aids.

My dad's rhubarb crumble and my mum's fish pie are also moments of happiness. We have also ordered crumpets shaped like Easter Bunnies. In these difficult times, we have to seek out happiness in whatever form we can find it and be grateful for what we have.



Holly Ann Wood

DC WOODWARD, MRCVS

Veterinary Surgeon

Mon-Fri 8 am–7 pm | Sat 9 am–12 noon | Sun 9.30–10.30 am

All consultations by appointment

24 hr Emergency Service

Ivanhoe Business Park Smisby Road

01530 412035

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Some extracts from the Archbishops' letter to the Church of England, sent on March 17th



We wanted to write to you today to offer you advice and encouragement at this very difficult time for the whole of our country.

Thank you for all that you do and will continue to do as disciples of Jesus Christ and ministers of the Gospel. We recognise what a very unusual and painful time this is for everyone and we want to stress that we are praying for you all and are very grateful for all that you are doing.

It has always been the historic vocation of the Church of England to be the church for everyone. William Temple, one of the great Archbishops of Canterbury and York of the last century, is often quoted as saying that we are the one organisation which exists for the benefit of its 'non-members'. As the challenge of the coronavirus grips the world, and as the Government asks every individual and every organisation to rethink its life, we are now asking the Church of England in all its parishes, chaplaincies and ministries to serve all people in a new way. Public worship will have to stop for a season. Our usual pattern of Sunday services and other mid-week gatherings must be put on hold. But this does not mean that the Church of England has shut up shop. Far from it.

Being a part of the Church of England is going to look very different in the days ahead. Our life is going to be less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday, and more characterised by the prayer and service we offer each day. We may not be able to pray with people in the ways that we are used to, but we can certainly pray for people. And we can certainly offer practical care and support. Please do carry on supporting the local foodbank and buy extra provisions for it. Ensure the night shelters wherever possible are kept open. There are many very encouraging schemes happening right across our country in communities to focus on caring for the most vulnerable, so do continue to play your part in those.

Then by our service, and by our love, Jesus Christ will be made known, and the hope of the gospel – a hope that will counter fear and isolation - will spread across our land.

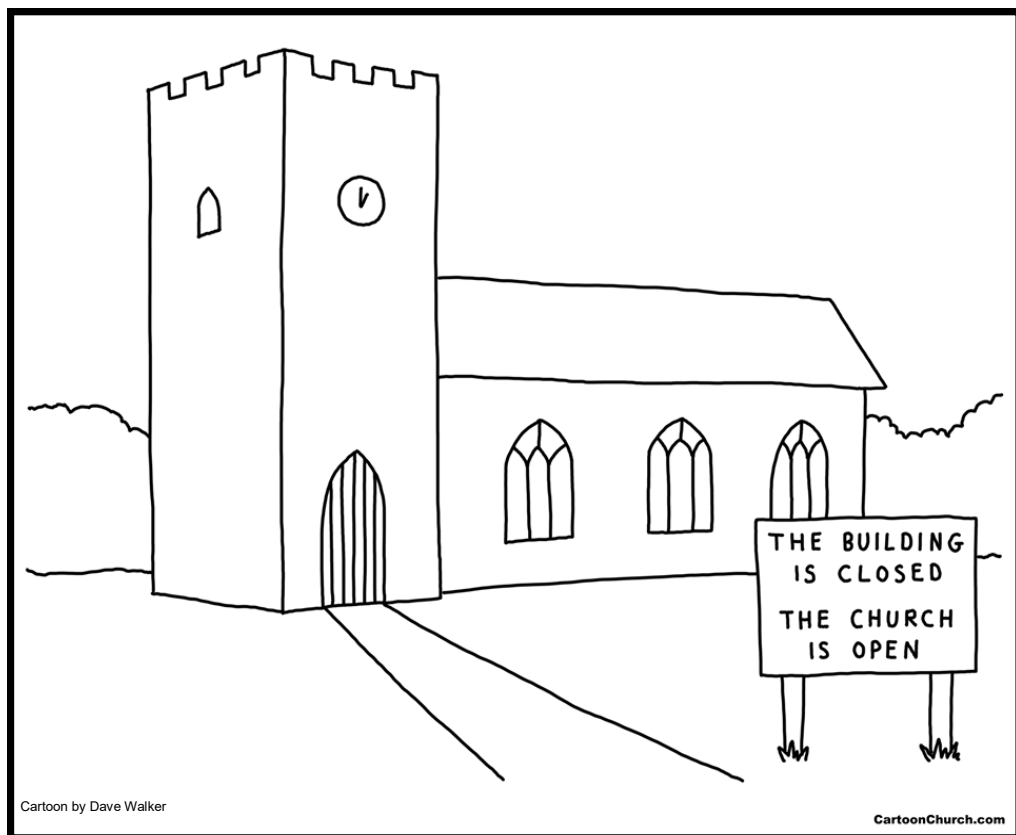
This is a defining moment for the Church of England. Are we truly a church for all, or just the church for ourselves? We urge you sisters and brothers to become a different sort of church in these coming months: hopeful and rooted in the offering of prayer and praise and overflowing in service to the world.

Please, therefore, join us in this great challenge; and pray for our Government and nation, for each other, and especially for those who work in our health and emergency services.

With every blessing,

+Justin Cantuar

+Sentamu Eboracensis



Reach out today, Lord

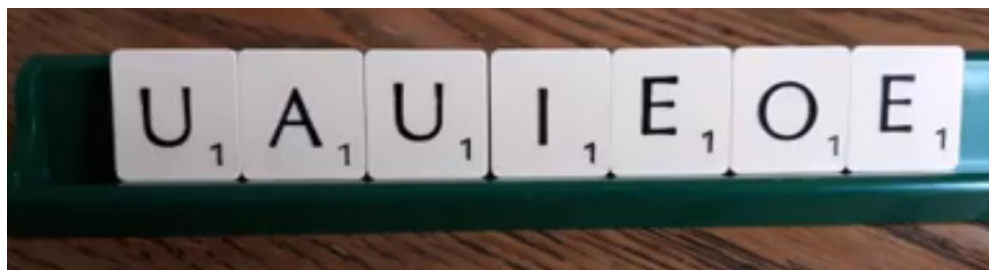
Two things which will help us get through these weeks of lockdown are surely prayer ... and board games. Some of you may already know the writer Nick Fawcett. I follow him on Twitter, and discovered that he has written prayers specifically in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, which Kevin Mayhew Publishers, have produced as a free e-book. It contains 52 prayers asking for strength, encouragement and support, as well as help for loved ones and the wider world. They describe the prayers as 'honest, down-to-earth and heartfelt, a great resource to help you articulate what you are feeling and bring you hope in these difficult days'.

I contacted Nick and he was happy for me to include one of his prayers in our magazine. He also let me have a little biography:

'Brought up in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, Nick Fawcett served as a Baptist minister for thirteen years, and as a chaplain with the national charity Toc H for three, before deciding to focus on a writing ministry, backed up by editing, both of which he continues with today, despite wrestling with myeloma, an incurable cancer of the blood, that places him in the highest possible risk category during the current coronavirus crisis. He lives in Wellington, Somerset, with his wife, Deborah, and has two children, Samuel, now living back in Wellington with his partner, Hannah, and Kate, studying for a Master's Degree at the University of Manchester. Delighting in the beauty of the West Country, Nick and Deborah love nothing more than walking stretches of the South West coast path at weekends, though for the coming months, like so many, he will be isolated at home to protect his health. His aim, increasingly, is to write material free of religious jargon that reaches out to people of all faiths and none.'

More of Nick's prayers and poems can be found on his twitter feed and on his website: nick@nickfawcett.uk. And the board games? He is also the author of Can I Have a Word? a guide to winning word games. It even includes the answer to what to do if you have all vowels in Scrabble.

Jill Chapman



Reach out today, Lord, to the frightened,
anxious about themselves
or their loved ones.
Hold them and help them.

Reach out to the isolated,
the lonely,
the vulnerable
Hold them and help them.

Reach out to the sick,
those wrestling with the symptoms of coronavirus,
those whose situation is complicated by underlying health
conditions.
Hold them and help them.

Reach out to those ministering to the afflicted,
offering support, comfort and treatment as best they can,
but hampered by limited resources and the scale of the crisis.
Hold them and help them.

Reach out to the bereaved,
those already mourning family and friends,
their love and companionship snatched from them.
Hold them and help them.

Reach out to those affected financially –
those who have lost jobs and livelihoods,
the future they took for granted now under threat.
Hold them and help them.

Reach out to the countries of our world most affected –
Italy, France, Iran, Spain, China, South Korea, Spain, the United
States,
Germany, Switzerland ...
and the United Kingdom –
and to the many places elsewhere in the world seeing an
increase in infections,
and likely soon to be faced by imminent catastrophe in turn.
Hold them and help them.

Reach out, Lord, to a world in need,
a world teetering on the edge of chaos,
on the brink of disaster.
Hold us,
and help us all.
Amen.

Bread Beyond Borders

The Refugee Council recently sent me a Bread Beyond Borders pack which included a tea towel, and recipes for various breads—Sri Lankan pol roti, Iranian barbari, Eritrean himbasha, Yeminite malawach, and Syrian pita. Bread making has to be an ideal activity for these stay at home days, so here is the recipe for pol roti:

Ingredients:

- 260g plain flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 100g desiccated coconut
- 260ml water
- 1 sliced onion (optional)
- 1 finely sliced green chilli (optional)



Method:

1. Sift the flour into a large bowl. Mix in the salt and coconut. If you are making with the onion and chilli, add at this pint.
2. Slowly add the water to the dry ingredients while mixing and kneading with your hands to form a dough
3. All the dry ingredients should be incorporated into the dough and it should not be sticky. If the mixture still sticks to your hands or the edges of the bowl the mix is too wet so add some more flour.
4. Using a medium heat, pre-heat a skillet or flat pan with a small amount of oil (you can use coconut for extra flavour).
5. Separate the dough into 8-10 balls. You can use a small amount of oil on your hands to help stop the dough sticking as you do this.
6. On a flat surface, use a rolling pin to flatten one of the balls into a flat disc. Add to the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side until it starts to brown.
7. Set aside and repeat until all the rotis are cooked.

The Refugee Council is continuing to support refugees during the spread of Covid-19, adapting services for the phone and online. For more information on their work, their website is www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Jill Chapman

Hand washing with psalm 51



Have mercy upon
me, O God



after thy great
goodness



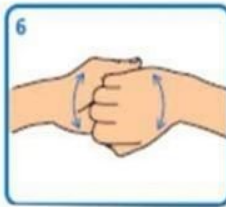
according to the
multitude of thy
mercies



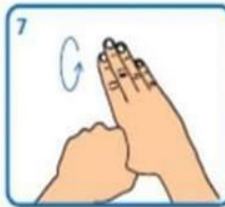
do away mine
offences.



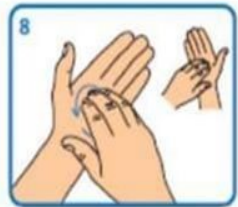
Wash me thoroughly
from my wickedness



and cleanse me
from my sin.



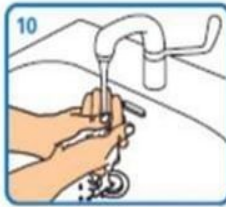
Thou shalt purge
me with hyssop,



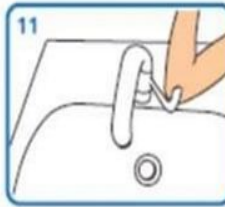
and I shall
be clean



thou shalt
wash me,



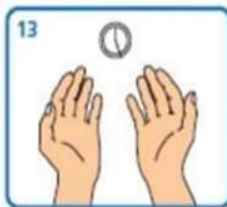
and I shall be
whiter than snow.



Make me a clean
heart, O God



and renew a right
spirit within me.



Hand washing should take
15–30 seconds

Services

Online worship services

On 17th March, the Archbishop of Canterbury announced that all public worship would be suspended for the time being, due to the Covid-19 outbreak. We have been working hard to find how we can still worship together, but remotely. We have set up the following pattern of worship:

- Every morning -
Prayer for the Day posted on Facebook at around 8am.
- Every evening -
Night Prayer (Compline) streamed live on Facebook at 9pm.
- Every Wednesday -
a simple service streamed live on Facebook at 10am
- Every Sunday -
a simple service streamed live on Facebook at 10.30am

Live services are on the 'St Helen's Church Ashby de la Zouch' Facebook page. Recordings of all services are there and on the website.

There are orders of service on the website or, if you would like any of them to be sent to you, please email Jill Chapman at the 'virtual' Parish office (sthelensashby@gmail.com)

Holy Week Services

- Maundy Thursday - Live on Facebook at 7.30pm
- Good Friday - Live on Facebook at 7.30pm
- Holy Saturday - No services – a day for personal reflection
- Easter Sunday - He is Risen! Live on Facebook at 10.30am

Lectionary Readings

12 Apr 2020	Easter Day	Bible Readings: Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 28:1-10
19 Apr 2020	Easter 2	Bible Readings: Acts 2:14a,22-32, John 20:19-end
26 Apr 2020	Easter 3	Bible Readings: Acts 2:14a,36-41, Luke 24:13-35
3 May 2020	Easter 4	Bible Readings: Acts 2:42-end, John 10:1-10

Outside Broadcast

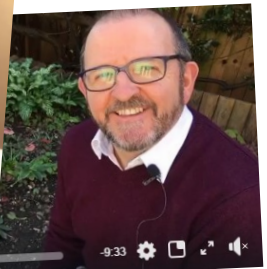
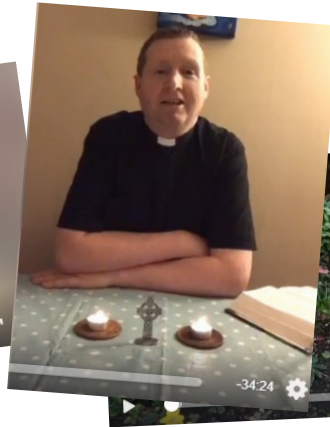


Who would have thought this lovely image that appeared on our screens one morning ...

... was so hard won



Our other broadcasters:



Social Distance Like a Wesley

Avoid all the people you can
By all the means that you can
In all the ways that you can
In all the places you can
At all the times that you can
As long as ever you can

Gone but not Forgotten – Ashby's former shops

It must be two years ago now when I noticed a mention on Facebook that the house on the upper corner of Upper Church Street used to be a shop owned by a Mr Jinks. It made me wonder how many other Ashby shops had disappeared either through demolition or by being turned into something else, usually a private house.

I asked for help on the Old Photos of Ashby Facebook Page and to date there have been over a thousand comments. Most of them lost sight of the original question and started talking about shops in Market Street that have changed, or about other old memories of Ashby but I still managed to collect quite a few memories about Ashby's former shops and I'll share some of them with you here. Maybe you could add some more!

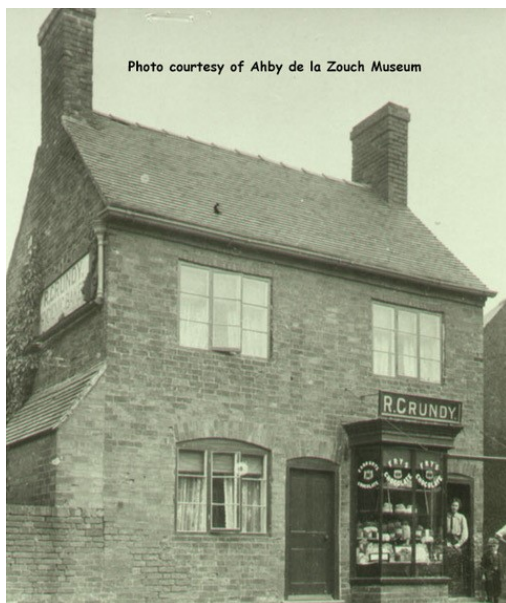
People had very fond memories of Vincent Jinks who kept the shop that is now the first house in Upper Church Street. The shop sold hams, cheese, general provisions including sweets and did home deliveries in a Morris Minor Traveller. One person remembered him singing "Dinah, is there anyone finer," whenever she went in the shop and he certainly had a very impressive full name: Vincent Obi Oriel Kettel Jinks.

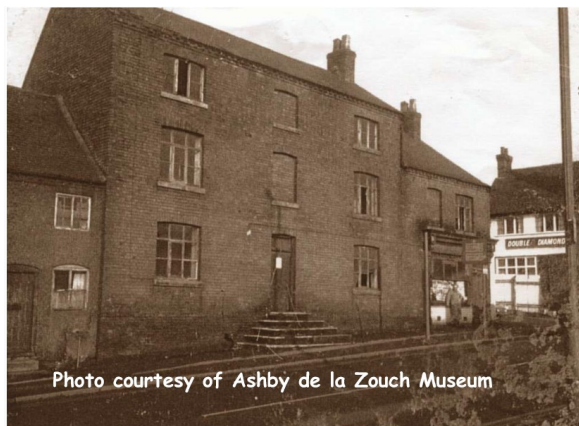
There were at least two more shops in Wood Street at one time. There was once a large house that stood in what is now the entrance to the former Matchins Yard. This large three-storey house was known as "the farmhouse". It was demolished in the early 1950s along with the shop next to it. The shop was a general store. Mr Cox of Old Parks Farm used to sell

eggs there. Trade directories of 1881 and 1900 show it to have been the premises of Benjamin Cheadle the butcher.

Further down on the same side was another shop belonging to R Grundy. Judging by the sign in the window it sold chocolate amongst other things. There was also a shop, now demolished, where the garden is at the top of Market Street/bottom of Wood Street, which sold groceries.

Lower Church Street once had several shops. The clockmakers with its characteristic bow window is now a B&B Guest House. Another bow window-fronted house on the





opposite side of the road may have been Tickners sweet shop, remembered by many, or Tickners printers next door. The house which currently has the cream frontage looks more as if it used to be a shop and, I believe, was once the Co-op.

Another private house which, I think, you would never guess used to be a shop, stands back from the road in Prior Park Road, next door to the so-called

“Priest House”. This double-fronted, fairly modern looking house was once a shop called Joyce and sold tea amongst other things. I think, even today, it is called Twinnings.

Quite a few people mentioned Dicky Boyes shop on Willesley Estate which is apparently now a private house. One contributor said “I used to love going there on my way back from Willesley school daily. Happy days !! Another said, “My grandma Rosa Smith lived across the road in the old people’s bungalows. There was a hairdressers next door at one time. Shampoo and set ladies came out stiff with hair spray.” One contributor said “I remember when his shop burned down and he carried on trading from the garage. Poor bloke was in tears as he was serving people. The Estate people supported him through that! I was in my teens. Must have been about 1972/3”

There were once three “corner shops” on Smisby Road. One commentator claimed that the one nearest the dairy (now also demolished) was the best and several other people agreed. Apparently Ivan and Hazel Tebutt owned it at one time, followed by Ray and Mary Arnold. One commentator said “I used to go there with my Dad for a 10p mix when I was little,” and another added “I loved that shop too. We would have a Friday treat from there, usually a 30p mix.”

At least one person referred to Yeoman’s Bakery on Leicester Road and several people remembered “Tony Robey’s newsagents on the corner of Lower Packington Road and Tamworth Road. The Rickshaw Restaurant on Tamworth Road used to be a Post Office.

There are probably quite a few more that I have not had space to mention. In the days before supermarkets and widespread ownership of cars, people relied on these handy little shops that they could nip out to. We are lucky in Ashby though that despite the rise of the supermarket, we still have independently owned shops in Market Street and long may they thrive!

There's Method in Her Madness

Aksa's neighbours thought she had gone mad. Her elderly husband was no longer able to work with her to farm maize. And when Aksa's sister became ill, Aksa had to provide for her family as well as her own children.

That's why Aksa, who lives in a poor rural village in Tanzania, decided to learn to farm in a different way. Instead of digging up the soil in rows, she dug out small holes a set distance apart and filled them with ash and animal droppings – rather than using chemical fertilizers. Then, she covered the planted seeds with leaves to keep them moist, just as she'd been taught by Tearfund's partner, the Anglican Diocese of Mpwapwa. They're helping people like Aksa to farm in a more effective way, a process they call 'Farming God's Way'.

People thought she had lost it. She became known as 'the crazy lady'. But when Aksa's maize crops started to grow higher than her neighbour's they were amazed. Others were envious...In fact; Aksa noticed that some of her crops were going missing overnight. She gave some of her excess maize to neighbours and asked them to pray for her to catch the thief.

Aksa remembers the next night well. It was Good Friday. Hiding nearby in her field, she spotted the thief.

She chased down the man and caught him. Aksa took him back to his home to explain himself to his wife. She was speechless. So Aksa took the man to the local government office and told them how he had been caught stealing her maize. But Aksa asked them not to take any action as she had decided to forgive him.

Aksa thanked her neighbours for praying for her to find the thief. 'God showed me who was taking my maize,' she says. No one has dared to take maize from Aksa ever since. Instead, many of her neighbours have decided to learn to farm like Aksa. 'They told me they want to be crazy like me,' she says.



Please Pray

- Give thanks for Aksa who persisted in providing for her family even when everyone around her thought she was crazy.
- Lift up women and girls all around the world. Pray that they will have a voice and be given equal respect and opportunity.

Pray that we, as Christ-followers, acknowledging that every person is created in the image of God, will be at the forefront of making our world a place where all people are valued equally.

Mandy McIntosh, Article taken from One Voice – Tearfund's regular email to encourage supporters to pray and give thanks for what is being achieved by partners enabling people to lift themselves out of poverty.

For further information see www.tearfund.org

Mandy McIntosh

Gethsemane

by Rowan Williams

Who said that trees grow easily compared with us? What if the bright bare load that pushes down on them insisted that they spread and bowed and pleated back on themselves and cracked and hunched? Light dropping like a palm levelling the ground, backwards and forwards?

Across the valley are the other witnesses of two millennia, the broad stones packed by the hand of God, bristling with little messages to fill the cracks. As the light falls and flattens what grows on these hills, the fault lines dart and spread, there is room to say something, quick and tight. Into the trees' clefts, then, do we push our folded words, thick as thumbs? somewhere inside the ancient bark, a voice has been before us, pushed the densest word of all, abba, and left it to be collected by whoever happens to be passing, bent down the same way by the hot unreadable palms.

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Sadly, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, Mothers' Union events in March, and for the foreseeable future, have been cancelled or postponed.

These are difficult times for everyone, with normal life disrupted to an extent that most people will not have seen before, and an overarching sense of anxiety about the future, for ourselves, our families and the world.

Mothers' Union Worldwide President, Sheran Harper, has sent a message of encouragement to us all, which you can read in full online at www.mothersunion.org. I have reproduced part of her message here:

'My beloved MU Family across the ocean, and from near and far,

I greet you with the love and courage of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour because He is our strength, our hope and our solid rock. In times like these I encourage you to **take heart** and **do not fear** because the Lord, your God is by your side – an ever-present help in times of trouble.

In the book of Joshua, Chapter 1 verse 9 we read,

I hereby command you: be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Amen.

As members you are bold and brave, full of courage and compassion, and so very loving and just like Esther you stand daily on the frontline calling for an end to injustices and advocating for all that supports stable families and communities.

You have been busy in these acts of love but now many of you are being called to be quiet and to self-isolate in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus. You will discover that there is still so much we can do as members because as a movement we are ideally placed to support and act in this time, but only within the health advice given by your respective governments.

Now here are a few practical ideas to start with:

- Pray and intercede for everyone including the health care professionals, the sick, the isolated, the bereaved and all those

directly involved in finding a cure for this coronavirus.

- Pray and spend time listening to God, strengthening your relationship with him, reading his word and sharing it with others.

.....

As I close, I leave you with the encouraging words from 2 Corinthians Chapter 12, verse 9-10. Such reassuring words.

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.’

I hope that, like me, you will find Sheran’s message helpful.

Also online are prayers for the current situation, ideas for ways we can help others and links to resources to help us keep our minds active, until we can meet together again.

Beryl Stephens

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St. Corona

I first became aware of the Coronavirus Covid -19, at the end of January. China seemed a long way away, though I did have a couple of friends who had relatives in China, and so the threat seemed at least tangible.

At the time I was working in a GP surgery. The possibility of infected patients in this country started to dawn on people. The guidelines seemed to be that if they had flown in from anywhere risky they should be isolated. It seemed to me, in Edinburgh, that if they were in an aeroplane from an internal flight it was at least possible that they could be infected from someone transferring from another flight internationally. At that point it did not occur to anyone that a far more hazardous situation would be if the health care professionals themselves were infected. On the 11th February a Brighton GP hit the headlines. He was infected, the surgery shut, and deep cleaned.

By this time pretty pictures were circulating in the news. The coronavirus had lots of spikes sticking out from a central nucleus. It was hard to think that this could be deadly. Corona beer took a massive hit prior to the Chinese New Year festival which cost them £132 million in lost revenue. Somewhere, someone had made the connection between the name of the beer and the disease which was now killing hundreds of people a day, and had spread.

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Meanwhile back in Germany, apparently pretty quietly, the staff at the cathedral in Aachen have been working to restore the shrine to St Corona for the last year. There may even be two Coronas, and the Aachen one may not be real, but if she was she died a gruesome death at the age of 16. She had been married to an Imperial Roman Soldier who was stationed in Damascus Syria, where she was born in either 161 or 287, though the Catholic martyr records dates her death as in 177.

Otto III brought her relics back to Germany in 997 and they were kept in a tomb for a thousand years before being found during an

excavation in 1910. They were then moved to a three foot tall, 220 pound shrine made by a prominent goldsmith based in Aachen called Bernhard Witte.

The church states that the shrine was in storage for 25 years before being brought out to be restored last year. The effort to do this has been bankrupting the workshop which has employed 45 people. The shrine itself is beautifully detailed and made of gold and ivory and is in the shape of a Byzantine church with a cruciform structure, the end of which forms an ornamented 12-part dome.

This is all detailed in a Greek account, which fails to tally with the Latin one which claims she lived in Marseilles and Sicily. However for whatever reason she began to be revered in northern and central Italy in the sixth century, as a way of deepening the faith. She is also revered in Bavaria and Austria, with two churches dedicated to her, and outside Vienna where there are two towns named Sankt Corona. Some relics of the martyr were taken to Prague Cathedral in the 14th century.

Why all the fuss about someone who may not even be real? Well, apparently it is because ... wait for it ... the German church claims that St. Corona is the patron saint of resisting epidemics. This has been disputed by academics, who claim the church is just jumping on the bandwagon and Corona is in fact invoked in connection with superstitions involving money, and her crown symbolic of money and treasure.

The question is, if she is the patron saint of resisting epidemics, why have we only heard about her now several months too late? The German church says her shrine will be on display once the pandemic is over...





Ashby YOUTH FOR CHRIST Newsletter

Ashby Youth For Christ Registered Charity No: 1058434

Please pray for the young people that usually come to our groups or whom we coach / mentor, who may be feeling 'out on a limb' right now, that they come to know Jesus as this time, whether it's from remembering what we have said to them, or verses we have had them memorise from the bible. Pray that they will know that they are not alone.

Please pray that in the absence of groups, our young people will hunger and thirst for the word of God. Pray that whilst all appears so uncertain they would be convicted of the certainty of God and his words.

Please pray that the young men who attend Wednesday afternoon football, and who will miss the connection, input, exercise and fun. Pray especially for those who are extra sensitive to being disregarded and undervalued, that they will understand, and know the truth that they are highly regarded and of great value to those who matter.

Please pray for the young men and women who attend Rock Solid on Friday evenings. Pray they would remember the refreshing words they have previously heard at Rock Solid and that they would meditate on them and grow in their confidence and joy at God's love and majesty.

Please pray for students and pupils, their parents and their teachers. Please pray for those young people who were due to sit GCSE or A-level exams this summer who won't be able to and are suddenly in a world of uncertainty and potential anxiety; and for home-schooled pupils as they face distractions from studying, separation from school friends, boredom and demotivation.

Please pray for parents suddenly faced with a challenge they never



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anticipated and for which they can feel under-skilled, uncertain and fearful of their children being left behind their school peers; and for teachers and tutors and support staff as they learn new ways of working with and for their students.

Please pray for those young people who are at danger from the internet - those who without focus and in search of comfort or entertainment may wander the internet without sufficient supervision.

Please pray for those young people who have, for most of their lives, been used to a physically free range social life, who may be disconnected from education, training or (legal) work, and are now being asked to stay at home. And for the parents of these young people, who are not used to closely supervising their teenage children.

Please pray for the police who face the unenviable task of ensuring that virus unfriendly behaviour is practised.

When face to face, group work and schools work had to be suspended, AYFC staff produced online resources and videos for people to access. Pray that this provided fresh water for thirsty souls.

It has now been decided to layoff paid staff, using the government's "furloughed workers" scheme. Please hold Helen, Vernon, Katie, Kate and their families in your prayers at this time, and the future of AYFC when they can return to the work that Christ has called them to.

Please pray for all of Ashby, that we would be gifted with faith to trust the only one who can deliver us. Pray we would know his strength to love those we are tempted to hate, and his love to stand firm against the real enemy.

Who among you fears the Lord
and obeys the word of his servant?
Let the one who walks in the dark,
who has no light,
trust in the name of the Lord
and rely on their God.

Isaiah 50:10

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Quotes for the Month

'Wash your hands like a Judean governor who doesn't want to deal with Jesus any more.'
Unfundamentalist's Facebook page, March 1st

'In order to give your hands a thorough washing, you need to scrub them with soap for about 20 seconds. This is approximately how long it takes to say the Lord's Prayer.'
Tim Chesterton, Twitter, March 4th

'Jesus was always determined to make those who society sees as outsiders be insiders.'
Rev Canon Mpho Tutu van Furth, a daughter of Desmond Tutu, The Guardian, March 4th

'We must remind ourselves Jesus is in every person we serve.'
Elizabeth Mae Magill, Liberal Christians Facebook page, March 4th

'In comes this wishy washy Church of England thing that James I had been putting forward. It's a national tradition for us. Wishy washy is very much our brand.'
Historian Greg Jenner, You're Dead To Me podcast, March 6th

'Revd Richard Coles ... was once described as the "atheist's favourite vicar"'
The Guardian, March 9th

'There are ever more creative replacements for the handshake or the affectionate hug: personally, I make the sign of the cross. It works well unless I'm carrying a cup of coffee and my bag.'
Canon J John, Fears Hearts and Clean Hands, March 10th

'In the present situation, in which we find ourselves living more or less isolated, we are invited to rediscover and deepen the value of the communion that unites all the members of the church ... united to Christ we are never alone, we form one body, of which he is the head.'
Pope Francis addressing virtual worshippers, March 15th

'We must be a radically different church for now – but one that's hopeful, prayerful and committed to serving others.'
Archbishop of Canterbury @JustinWelby, Twitter, March 17th

'You know this thing about reciting the Lord's prayer to ensure handwashing is done for long enough? ... was wondering whether traditionalists will have a lower infection rate because their Lord's prayer is longer.'
Father, Didymus, Twitter, March 19th

'When this is all over, the question the country will ask of the church will not be "How professional were your podcasts? How slick your live-streaming?" Just "When I needed a neighbour, were you there?"'
Rev John White, Twitter, March 19th

'We really need to get over this idea that church has to be physical. God isn't. Faith isn't. Prayer isn't. Worship isn't.'
Premier Christianity, Twitter, March 19th

'Our worship may be a bit different for now. But Jesus is the same today as He was yesterday, and will be tomorrow.'
Archbishop of Canterbury, Twitter, March 20th

'When you do church online, every seat can be the back row.'
Church Dad Jokes, Twitter, March 22nd

'This is the Lentiest Lent I ever Lented.'
The God Article, March 27th

'Never did the clocks going forward mean less.'
Revd Richard Coles, Twitter, March 29th

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