

April 2020
THE DIARY OF ST MARY
DROYLSDEN

*A welcoming all-age community growing and sharing
God's love*



For times and details of worship please see centre pages

Associate Minister

Reverend Nancy Alexander 371 9667

Curate

Reverend Sue Ball 682 1439

Church Wardens

Pat Catterall 370 0039

Beth Cutler 285 1472

for I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord"
Jeremiah 29 v 11

LOVE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

As I write the news media is dominated by the coronavirus COVID-19. The doom-hungry nature of most newsrooms has, for once, been matched by an eager audience. Like adverse weather, an epidemic has the potential to harm everyone. Fear of it triggers an involuntary feeling of vulnerability and leads to rumour, panic and unrealistic imagination. Whilst the stock piling of hand sanitizer and soup is understandable, the stock piling of toilet paper is less so! The possibility of contracting the disease from someone yet to display any symptoms has produced a reaction close to panic in some quarters. Whilst self-care is not selfish, every cough or sneeze in the workplace, on public transport, or at school — and this is the season of coughs and sneezes — is now perceived as a potentially fatal threat. At the time of writing, the confirmed cases in the UK stands at 373 and appeals to keep a sense of proportion are unlikely to succeed, since they assume that the general public can behave rationally about something as visceral as fear.

I read an article in the Church Times and thought I would share its message with you all.

1 John 4:18, reads perfect love casts out fear. So, what then, does perfect love look like in this situation?

First, the love needed to fight the virus is communal. Although self-isolation is an individual act, it should be recognised by neighbours and colleagues as an act of sacrificial love for the community. A wish to look after oneself during your illness but crucially the desire that you do not help to pass on the virus to others. Please remember that communication is key, you should advise your GP if you are unwell, and your friends so that we can monitor the well-being of one another. We can support those isolated through technology. Use it to our advantage, telephone, Skype, Facebook etc. There is no knowing whether the UK will need to impose the sort of restrictions on travel seen in China, Italy, and elsewhere, but any large-scale outbreak will make great demands on neighbourly love.

Second, this love will be manifested in honesty. We rely on the NHS and our Government to be transparent. Not withholding information whilst also avoiding creating unnecessary panic. We have been advised on how to prevent the spread by rigorous hand hygiene etc. And our Archbishops of Canterbury and York have advised to refrain from the shared cup at Holy Communion and a verbal sharing of the peace and there may be other changes ahead. All this is aimed at keeping us safe. Ignorance is a prime driver of fear, as is inaction. Were a serious outbreak to occur, clear information about what people should do, both to protect themselves and to help others, is the way to prompt the best response and then to act on that advice.

Finally, there must be mercy. Humans, like all other mammals, have for ever been used as walking Petri dishes by viruses and bacteria. The idea of containing a disease in our major cities is certainly a challenge. People may behave with the utmost caution and responsibility and yet still pass on the virus unwittingly.

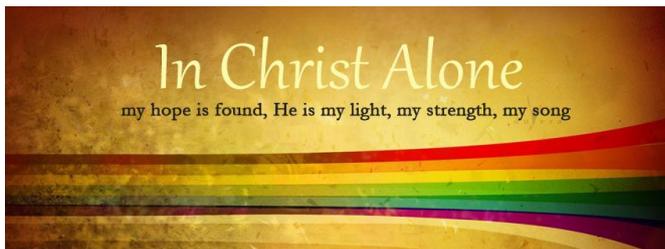
These are wise words from the Epistle. It may be that our lives will change considerably over

the coming months and we should be prepared practically, but also in how we continue to share Jesus' love in a society where fear is likely to dominate. And let's not forget the power of prayer. Please pray for our NHS medical professionals, and government decision makers. Pray for those who are already isolated and concerned. Pray for people who are at greater risk. Pray for miracles. And pray for the church to be the non-anxious presence that witnesses to the peace of Christ that lives in us.

Keep safe

May God bless you and keep you

Rev Nancy <><



Update on St Mary's Interregnum -Vacancy

In our last update we confirmed that the vacancy at St Mary's had been re-advertised. The closing date for applications was the end of February.

Following the closing date we received notification that no applications were received. The vacancy will again be re-advertised.

We are all disappointed that there have been no applications but we must trust in the Lord that his plans for St Mary's will be fulfilled in His time and not ours.

The leadership team have planned our services up until the end of June and we thank both our own and the visiting clergy for their ministry with us.

We are supporting each other week by week and should be encouraged that we are seeing new faces at our services whilst welcoming our regular and longstanding congregation. We look forward to the spring and summer months in Love for one another and trusting that we can fulfil Gods purpose for each one of us and our community.

GOD Our Father

You have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be His Body in this place;
Send us your Holy Spirit, at this time of uncertainty and change,
to fill us with vision, energy and faithfulness in prayer,
that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community;
And guide with your heavenly wisdom those who are to choose a new
Incumbent for this parish, that the one whom we receive

may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people:
ready to serve us with joy, to build us up in faith and to lead us by example
in loving obedience to your son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Pat and Beth

The Belarus Fund Charity

This is a local charity set-up by a few people who went out with Operation Christmas Child distributing shoeboxes in Belarus in the early 2000's

They saw the plight of many families and children effected by the long lasting genetic problems caused by the Chernobyl Nuclear Reactor blowout in April 1986. They set up the registered charity and worked with Belarusian Christians who in turn had contacts with residential homes for the elderly, social workers working with poor families or struggling with medical disabilities.

They used to drive out in a SUV laden with goods to distribute. They made up many shoeboxes for the elderly and for young children and for several years piggybacked them on OCC lorries going to Belarus. These days they fly out twice a year and take out basic medical goods.

Last year they appealed for money justqivinq.com/crowdfundinq/varvara to send Varvara a 5 year old Belarus girl with Harlequin Ichthyosis, a severe skin disorder to go to Austria for specialist treatment. Recently speaking with the member who set it up, they have raised 13,000 euro another group 40,000 euro so they are almost at the 58,000 required to send Varvara with her parents for her specialist treatment/operation.

In mid April three of the members will fly out to Belarus taking with them a suitcase full of Sudocrem and VapoRub. You may have seen a box in our church room collecting these items. I had planned to collect throughout March but will leave until Sunday 4th April then take our contribution to The Belarus Fund.

Thank you - John Sporne Small - Medium or Large Tubs please



Time Not To Worry

There are two days every week, about which we should not worry—two days, which should be kept free from fear and apprehension. One of these days is yesterday, with all its mistakes, cares, faults and blunders. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control; all the money in the world cannot bring back yesterday. We cannot erase a single word we said, for yesterday is gone.

The other day we should not worry about is tomorrow, with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promises and poor performances. Tomorrow's sun will rise either in splendour or behind a mask of cloud—but it will rise. Until it does we have no stake in tomorrow, for it is yet unborn.

That leaves us only one day—today. Anyone can fight the battle of one day; it is only when we add the burdens of those two eternities, yesterday and tomorrow that we break down. It is not the experience of today that drives one mad. It is the remorse and bitterness for something that happened yesterday, or the dread of what may happen tomorrow.

Vivian Shaw



MOTHERS' UNION MEETING

Tuesday 7th April at 7.30pm –This meeting has now been postponed

At this meeting Meryl Crummack was to have been admitted as a member of the Mothers' Union.

Nightstop UK provide a lifeline for young people in crisis. Nightstop UK is led by the youth homelessness charity, Depaul UK, part of Depaul International, a group of charities working to tackle homelessness around the world. Nightstop prevents homelessness by placing young people aged 16-25 years old who are at risk of homelessness, into the homes of trained and vetted volunteers in the community.

Volunteers across the UK offer their spare room for the night, a hot meal, washing facilities, breakfast and a packed lunch in the morning. By doing this, they can change someone's life. How does it work?

1. A young person experiencing homelessness has nowhere to go.

2. They find out about Nightstop through statutory and non-statutory agencies, or self-refer.
3. Nightstop assesses the young person, takes references, contacts available volunteer hosts.
4. They are placed in the home of a trained and vetted Nightstop host for the night.
5. Young people are given their own room, a shower, a meal listening ear, breakfast, and a packed lunch in the morning.
6. Nightstop works to find suitable long-term accommodation for young person.

Beyond providing shelter, it can have a lasting impact on the young people it supports.

At our last meeting we agreed to supply a Nightstop box or boxes as our 2020 project, in addition to the work we are doing in support of Tameside Hospital Medical Assessment Unit and the Neonatal Unit.

Mildres

Good News!

So often in short supply these days, but today 13th February, I have made a delivery of food and clothing to a charity we support (the nature of the news means no names) the staff were elated after a full year of trying to help one young woman, they had now got her to a place in her life where she was ready to go into detox and managed to get her a place No mean feat!

The smiles were a yard wide when telling me, they had been to Primark to buy P J's and other necessities, so I was really pleased to be delivering food, ladies socks, undies and toiletries which hopefully will help make this lady's very hard journey a little easier.

I hope you are as thrilled as I am to be a part, and supporter of a charity that will so obviously never give up and is prepared to go the extra mile.

I also hope you realise how very important your support is to our homeless brothers and sisters.

Barbara Walton

The New Brownie Program

At St Mary's Brownies and Rainbows we have now started on the new program. When we say 'new' it was introduced in September 2018, but units were allowed to continue with the old program until June 2019 to use up any existing material and badges.

The new program consists of 6 Theme Awards – Know Myself; Express Myself; Be Well; Have Adventures; Take Action; Skills For My Future.

To achieve a Theme Award each Brownie must complete 1 Interest badge, 1 Skills Builder badge and 240 minutes of Unit Meeting Activities. Each Theme Award has a choice of 3 Interest Badges, 4 Skills Builder badges and approximately 360 minutes of Unit Meeting Activities (with more being released throughout the year in packs).

Each Interest Badge has 3 actions to complete; each Skill Builder has 5 actions to complete and everything has to be logged and dated on the database for each Brownie to show the action or activity has been completed.

Interest Badges include: – Express Myself – Baking; Painting; Performing

Have Adventures – Archaeology; Aviation; Space

Skills Builders include: - Express Myself – Communicate Stage 2; Communicate Stage 3; Innovate Stage 2; Innovate Stage 3

Have Adventures – Camp Stage 2; Camp Stage 3; Explore Stage 2; Explore Stage 3

The Brownies have just complete Express Myself with Communicate Stage 2, Performing and lots of Unit Meeting Activities including Sensory Stories, Kite Fighter; Magic Museum; En Pointe.

For 2020 we are just starting our Skills for My Future Theme Award.

Wendy Moorcroft

Brown Owl



Easter Prayers



Lord this Easter

We ask Your Blessing

As we rejoice in the wonder of Your rising again after death

For you have promised

That we too can rise again
And be with You
To share Your joy
Thank You Lord
For sharing with us on earth
So that we can share with You
In Your Heavenly Kingdom
Amen

Lord, when You rose from the dead
You greeted Your Disciples with the gift of Your Peace
Lord may Your Peace embrace us also
Fill our spirits
Fill our minds
And fill our hearts
That we may stay close to You
This Easter and always
Amen

Ann Holland



Embrace the Middle East is a Christian charity with over 160 years' experience helping people of all faiths and none to free themselves from a life of poverty and injustice. Together with local Christian communities we're bringing lasting change to the Middle East through healthcare, education and community development projects.

Our vision:

Lives and communities in the Middle East transformed by the compassion of Christ.

Our mission:

To partner with Middle East Christians as they bring healing and hope to all who face poverty and injustice.

Faith in Action

[Faith in Action](#) is our strategy that outlines how we will build stronger relationships with our Christian partners, expand into new countries, help more disadvantaged people, challenge poverty and injustice and inspire churches, volunteers and supporters to join us to:

In our new strategy, Faith in action, you will read how we will build stronger relationships with our Christian partners, expand into new countries, help more disadvantaged people, challenge poverty and injustice and inspire churches, volunteers and supporters to join us. - See at: <http://www.embrace.org/faithinaction#sthash.IX1OGacX.dpuf>

Transform the lives of vulnerable and marginalised people across the Middle East, enabling them to live life in all its fullness

Strengthen and encourage Middle East Christians as they bring about positive change in their communities

Challenge injustice, poverty and exclusion in the Middle East through targeted advocacy and campaigning.

We are continually encouraged by the stories of hope and transformation that our partners share with us. We hope the stories you read here will encourage you too.

Embrace provides bursaries for children at 17 Christian schools in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza.

We want to extend this scheme to help more children get the education they deserve.

Children like Karim whose father died suddenly of a heart attack. Karim has been living with his disabled mother and two sisters in one very small room. Despite sleeping on the floor every night, Karim says, 'It is true, we are very poor, but we are happy together and can manage with whatever God provides, thanks to him!'

Karim dreams of being an aerospace engineer; he loves science and maths. When speaking of the bursary he receives from Embrace he says, 'I am lucky and sincerely hope they will continue helping me to start in school in the coming years.'

The Coffee Morning in April was to be in aid of Embrace, hopefully the this will now take place later in the year.

April 2020

**In accordance with Church of England guidelines,
all Church Services have been suspended until
further notice.**

Shine on us Lord
As the sun rises at dawn
To bring light to the world
So You rose that Easter morn
The True Light
To shine into the darkness of our lives
You bring us fresh hope
In the wonder of Your love
A love so powerful
That not even death itself could overcome
Risen Lord we thank You
Amen
Ann Holland



The Church of England has commissioned The Big Church Survey to enable churches all over the land to share ideas and reflect on how individual churches are helping people grow in faith, discipleship and in mission.

At the moment the survey is to be conducted during a set week in either May or June but given the current Coronavirus situation that may change although many people can complete the survey online, many would rather use good old fashioned pen and paper so I will keep everyone informed as best I can.

All members of our Church congregation can take part, from the oldest to the youngest (there is a survey form for under 5's to draw a picture of what they like best about church).

Please take part, it's your chance to help to influence where the Church is going when looking at growth and where you feel you fit into the great scheme of things.

If you would like to have a look at the website before hand visit:

<https://www.bigchurchsurvey.org/questions-and-answers/key>

Please don't do anything yet, as all completed survey's have to be put against St Mary's own reference number.

I will keep you as informed as I can

Christine



Do *you* know

someone who will go hungry tonight?

.....someone with a

cash flow crisis who is struggling to feed their family?

...or maybe that someone is you?

The Droylsden & District foodbank is here to help. For information on where to go for a foodbank voucher, please phone:

07473 452813

Your call will be treated with respect and in strict confidence



A Palm Sunday picture to colour. "The next day a great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord - John 12 : 11-12

