



The Seeker

handleychurch.org.uk



#2 2020

The church magazine for **St Mary the Virgin, Sixpenny Handley with Gussage St Andrew and St Rumbold's, Pentridge**

Who's who?

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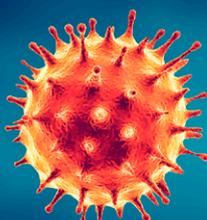
Churchwardens

St Mary's with Gussage St Andrew

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COVID-19 Coronavirus

We are now living in fast moving times as a result of COVID-19 with the situation changing on a daily basis. As a result of recent government announcements, all church events and activities have been postponed until further notice, this includes all church meetings, Choir, Magnificafé, Teddy Bears, Breakfast Church, Men's Breakfast and Bible Study Group.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York have made an announcement that ALL church services will be postponed until further notice. However this does not mean the work of the church will cease as we are all part of the Body of Christ. Firstly our daily prayers and study of scripture should continue. To aide this I will be looking at how to do a daily live stream on social media, most probably via Facebook. I will also send out the gospel reading for the day along with a prayer and any specific prayer requests for your to include in your own prayers via our electronic mailing.

I will ensure that our churches open on a daily basis. If you do visit any of the churches for personal prayer and reflection then please observe the guidelines by keeping at least 2 metres away from any others in the building and please wash your hands thoroughly after any visit.

I will be working with local village leaders and our Benefice Churchwardens in the setting up of care for those who are self-isolating for whatever reason. Though we maybe in our homes on our own we should not feel isolated. Brothers and Sisters this time of trial will past and we must place our trust in God and in one another.

Blessings Revd Canon Richard Hancock



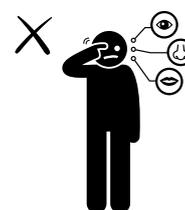
Cover Your Cough



Dispose of Used Tissue



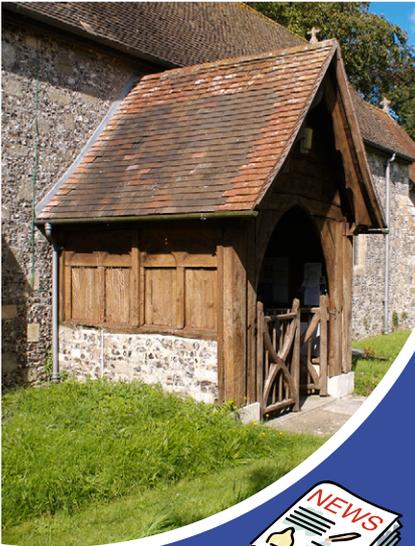
Wash Hands with Soap



Avoid Touching Eyes, Nose, and Mouth



Avoid Close Contact



**News items
and articles welcome!**

**Please drop them in to
the Vicarage, or email;
ask@handleychurch.org.uk**

Thanks!

Now you can!



Flatten those crisp packets and bring them to St Mary's church

Remember!

If you would like to give your child a good start in life, talk to the vicar about a christening.

If you are getting married, you can get married in your local church if you live in the parish or have some other link.

And if a loved one dies, please talk to us about how the church may be able to help.

Contact the vicar for more information. We are here for you.

In full colour

A full colour PDF of The Seeker is available from our website.



DIARY OF A COUNTRY PARSON

APRIL

Psalm 121 v 1-2

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains — where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

It's been a long damp and miserable winter and just as we are looking forward to spring, we are hit with the worries of the Coronavirus. In these continuing times of difficulty and worry how can we stay positive and more importantly maintain a sense of wellbeing and community?

When faced with the unknown, as human beings we instinctively become fearful about the future. Human nature can often then lead us to behave in ways that we would not normally consider. A selfish streak can appear where we feel driven to look out for number one regardless of the cost to others, panic buying is a symptom of this and is often illogical. The irony is that we are social and communal creatures [which can be problematic with viruses] but we are actually better off if we work together and support each other rather than go it alone.

Jesus understood this as he spent three years teaching his disciples to be dependent on one another. He also knew that when fear and trauma arrived their first reaction would be to flee and to try and go it alone. As predicted, this happened in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested, and the disciples fled, fearful for themselves. However the teaching and love that Jesus had imparted soon kicked in and it wasn't long before the disciples were back together supporting one another and confronting their fear together. They were also empowered by the Holy Spirit and faced not only the might of the Roman Empire but also the authority of their own people.

When trouble and fear appear, we may also blame God for the problem or pray that somehow, he will simply wave it away. However, God through Jesus has given us the solution to the problems we face stick together, trust in God. Jesus gave his disciples two clear instructions or commands. Love God with all you heart, mind and strength and love your neighbour as yourself. The first two

verses from psalm 121 emphasizes the need to place our trust in God and to follow what he has taught as through his son.

I, like you am worried as to what the impact of this virus could be on my family and friends, but I am more concerned about the impact a breakdown in society could have where we are driven by selfish overreaction, not helped by the media stoking up fear. Even based on the worldwide figures of the Corona Virus you are much more likely to die in a road accident than from COVID-19 and I don't see the media telling us to throw our car keys away. Life is a risk and over the years we have become more and more risk averse. As a result, when unexpected trouble comes, we find ourselves controlled by fear and unable to cope.

We are stronger together. Saying "I will be alright" does not seem to have as much strength as "We will be alright". If as human beings [God's children] we can learn to trust and support each other as Jesus taught us, we have a much better chance of coming out of difficulties that life throws at us. Our parents or grandparents knew this living through the war. They were equally fearful of the unknown but soon learnt that sticking together was a much better bet.

I hope in our communities over the next few weeks and months we can look out for each other particularly those who are on their own. If people do find themselves isolated or worried please do contact me at the vicarage by phone and as a church community, we will do our best to help.

As Corporal Jones would say "Don't Panic!"

Revd Canon Richard Hancock