

From Edward:

One question I'm getting asked a lot at the moment is 'When will the church reopen?' and the honest answer is 'I really don't know.'... In fact, the really honest answer is 'I really don't know, and the prospect fills me with terror!'

Current, tentative, guidance from the upper echelons of the Church of England says that churches will begin opening again to the public no earlier than the 4th of July, and even then (if it is even then) the reopening will be in a strictly limited way on the proviso that robust social distancing and hygiene can be maintained.

...This is the aspect that fill me with terror: Schools and shops are being able to open in limited ways following comprehensive risk assessments and high professional measures of cleanliness and enforcement of distancing, and this is a resource that the vast majority of places of worship don't have access to: We rely on volunteers, and we often struggle to find people with appropriate combination of time and talents to maintain our beautiful building even in the times when we're not at the mercy of a global pandemic.

In trying to contemplate where we even start with the (probably very long) road to reopening I've quickly come to realise that I'm not a highly skilled professional deep-cleaner (in fact, even my amateur housework leaves something to be desired), and I'm also not an epidemiologist...

However, that is not to say that there are not some in the St John's congregation and community who may well be extremely gifted and skilled in ways which would help us prepare for the time when we can, in whatever limited form, open our doors again.

One lesson to be learnt from the wider opening of schools earlier this week is how sudden the call to reopen can feel and I think it is important that we manage and prepare ourselves in such a way that we can minimise the shock of being 'thrown in at the deep end' as far as possible.
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One of the themes of Trinity Sunday is that of *community*. The Father, Son and Spirit exist in oneness with each other, and call us to join them in that divine community. I am sure we have people in our community whose voices would be most beneficial in preparing for the next steps with the required safety and standards we need – and if that's you, I want to hear from you! My hope is that we can form a 'Road to Reopening' Working Party to meet virtually and consider not just the *problems* we will be facing, but also lend their expertise to identifying *solutions* – if you know that I'm talking about you, then please, please send me an email!

Stay safe!

Edward

Pentecost: Ren's short service for Pentecost, recorded at St Barnabas Joydens Wood, is still available through [the St James North Cray website](#).

Needing support?: The current global situation is a cause of anxiety and worry for many of us. If you need someone to talk to, spiritual support, or if you are looking for assistance with shopping or collecting medication please contact Edward at fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com or call 01322521786.

Suspended Sermon: Edward's sermons are available [here](#). This week's sermon is entitled 'St Patrick's Breastplate'.

Giving: St John's continues to need your support financially throughout the current emergency. If you wish to give regularly please use the standing order form attached to this email or for a one off giving please use our [JustGiving Page](#). If you have a social media presence please also help us out by sharing this link.

EasyFundraising: If you're shopping online please remember you can give to St. John's by shopping via [our Easy Fundraising page](#). There is also a link from our website.

Social Media: Remember you can engage with us on Facebook ([/stjohnsbexley](#)) and Twitter ([@stjohnsbexley](#)).

Reg Haddaway RIP: Reg's funeral will take place at 2pm on the afternoon of Tuesday 9th June, the funeral can be 'attended' via Live Webcast which will continue to be available between Tuesday 16th June and Thursday 13th August. The service can be accessed through www.obitus.com with the username *kemnal7632* and the password *117861*. Please log-in in advance of the 1.58pm start time.

Bexley Interfaith Forum: The Bexley Interfaith Forum has produced a Newsletter with reflections from different faith communities across the borough. A copy is attached to this email.

Memory Cafe: For anyone in Bexley Borough living with dementia and those who care for them, to offer friendship and support, the *Christ Church Erith Memory Cafe* will take place over Zoom on Thursdays from 10.45am-11.45am. For access details please contact Christchurch Erith Project Worker Jacki Clement at cceprojectworker@hotmail.com.

Rochester Cathedral: Rochester Cathedral celebrating Choral Evensong [via their website](#), using material produced prior to lockdown.

Prayers for use during the Coronavirus Outbreak: The Church of England has produced a booklet of prayers to aid devotions at home during the current crisis. It is available [here](#), along with other prayer resources and advice (scroll down the webpage for the booklet).

Daily Hope: The Archbishop of Canterbury has launched a free national phonenumber with hymns, reflections and prayers to enable worship from home throughout the lockdown. Details are available [here](#) and you may wish to pass the information on to those you know who cannot access resources online.

Domestic Abuse: As you will have heard, the current situation has seen an unpleasant increase in incidences of Domestic Abuse. Bishop Simon has commended recent advice issued by the national church in response to this and details can be found [here](#)

Bexley Team News: The weekly newsletter connecting us with our sister churches across the Bexley Team is attached to this email.

Toddler Church Fun!: Children's activities continuing to explore the story of Joshua are attached to this email.

Devotional Pattern: Readings for the forthcoming week, with suggested hymns, prayer intentions and questions to consider are attached to this email.

This Week Please Pray For:

...Edward, as the anniversary of his licensing passed uncelebrated on Thursday 4th June and for his continuing presence as our team vicar.

...the people of the United States and all who are adversely affected by racism.

...the sick in need of our prayers, Barbara, Rob Soar, Mavis Johnson, Samantha Pout, Ray Mace, Marie Berry, Maggie Rankine, Ann Harlow, Joyce Forrest, Dorothy Samuel, John Beddison, David Watkins, Nicola Johns and any others known to you.

...all currently suffering with Covid-19.

...the recently departed, Keith Parry, Jean Antenbring, Ray Miller, Ken Burghall (Pr), John Harrington, Reg Haddaway, Florence Russell, Leslie Nash, Yvonne O’Nions.

...those whose anniversaries fall at this time Margaret Fudger, Anthony Sutton, George Roscoe, Bernard Wright, Dorothy Belton.

...residents living in and around our parish.

Lord God, creator of all people,
May your Son who suffered the inhumanity of the cross,
Comfort us in our anxiety and our horror,
In times that take our breath away.
May your Holy Spirit inspire us to repentance and to action
In dismantling the virus of racism
From within the Church, our nation and our world. **Amen**

Prayer by the Rev’d Canon Jeremy Blunden; Rector of St George’s Beckenham and Bishop’s Adviser for Black & Minority Ethnic(BAME)

Our Safeguarding Statement can be read at

<http://www.stjohnsbexley.org/safeguardingstatement.html>

If you or someone you are concerned about is in immediate danger, please call the police on 999

<https://bexleywomensaid.org.uk/>

<https://mensadviceline.org.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/domestic-abuse-and-covid-19>

