



From Edward:

Please humour me in allowing me to share three frustrations from the past week (or alternatively you can scroll down to the notices):

The engineer who was due to upgrade our broadband was a no-show on Thursday and after chasing around BT's complaint system (Remember that Sermon I preached a few weeks ago about being kept on hold on the telephone? Oddly prophetic...), it is now scheduled for next week instead. Thankfully as Sunday's 10am Zoom service is a Team event it's not contingent on my internet connection. If you want to attend and missed the email with the details earlier in the week then please email me ahead of the service (fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com) and I'll forward them on.

Here in the Vicarage we were dismayed to see statistics showing that by Wednesday Bexley was the *fifth highest* London Borough for the number of positive Covid-19 tests per 100k of the population. A further look at the Council's ward-by-ward breakdown (Available on [this website](#) if you click the 'dashboard' button) shows the St Mary's & St James's to be especially high. This is unpleasant and sad news, but the frustration comes when we cast our mind back to when the London Boroughs collectively entered Tier 2 when so many voices claimed that as infection rates Bexley and Bromley weren't as high in other boroughs we shouldn't be subject to the same restrictions? ...And now our borough's infection rate is increasing exponentially! Where do we think our infection rate would have been if, as a local community, we would have been more diligent in observing restrictions when we entered Tier 2? If we hadn't behaved as if Covid only happens to other people? We are due out of this present lockdown on the 2nd of December, but the tier we emerge into is entirely down to how safely we can conduct ourselves between now and then: As I say, very frustrating!

And finally, for those of you who follow the internal wranglings of the Church of England, Monday saw the publication of the [Living in Love and Faith](#) report on the inclusion (or lack of it) of LGBTQI+ individuals in the life of the church. Whilst this does present a welcome opening of dialogue and acknowledgement of past failure there are frustrations surrounding the report, which are lamented in this week's sermon. Hopefully this Tuesday's *Living In Love and Faith* Zoom conference, hosted by the Rochester Diocese MOSAIC group will present a more optimistic response to the report. Places for this are still available and detailed below.

On the positive: Donald Trump lost the US Presidential Election (not that he seems

to have noticed it yet), my son's had a good start to the half term, and my crochet's coming along pretty well!

Stay Safe!
Edward

Services are Suspended until 2nd December at the earliest, but St John's is open for individual prayer on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Team Zoom Service: The Bexley Team Ministry will be holding services on Zoom at 10am on Sundays in Lockdown. The login was sent out through this mailing list earlier in the week. Should you need it resent, please contact a member of clergy.

Needing Support: Team pastoral support is being coordinated by Assistant Curate Rev'd Matt Hodder. If you, or someone you know, is requiring assistance with accessing food, medicine, essential shopping or other need (or simply wants a chat!) please contact Matt on 07889873125 or matthodder10@gmail.com.

Living in Love & Faith Conference: In response to the forthcoming publication of the *Living in Love & Faith* report, which seeks to help the Church of England understand better the current questions surrounding gender, sexuality and identity, the newly formed Rochester MOSAIC group (Movement Supporting Anglicans for an Inclusive Church) will be holding a Zoom Conference on the morning of Tuesday 17th November. Places are still available at www.livinginloveandfaith.eventbrite.co.uk. A flyer is attached to this email.

Suspended Sermon: Edward's sermons continue to be available [here](#) and become live from Sunday mornings onward. This week's reflection is entitled 'I Think It's Going to Rain Today'.

Lockdown Labyrinth: Attached to this email is the pattern (and photo), along with some prayer resources for a *Lockdown Labyrinth*. Suitable for any level of crochet-ability: This is can be a Lockdown Project and Devotional Resource to accompany the ongoing Month of Prayer.

Daily Psalm: Throughout this period, Team Curate Rev'd Matt Hodder will be sending out a Daily Psalm over email or WhatsApp to provide a sense of prayerful togetherness across the four parishes. To participate, please contact Matt on matthodder10@gmail.com or 07889873125.

Situations Vacant: We have a number of roles and activities which require volunteers to assist with the running and growth of our church. Please see the attached 'Situations Vacant' pack and contact Edward on fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com if you would like more information on any of the positions advertised.



Remembrance of the Fallen: The pre-recorded Act of Remembrance, filmed at the Village War Memorial prior to the current lockdown restrictions, is still available to view via our website: www.stjohnsbexley.org.

Bexley Foodbank: Our Foodbank Donation Point remains open and you can bring your donations when the Church is open on Sundays and Wednesday. You can also give financially [here](#).

Parish Office: Tuesday office hours have been suspended due to Covid Tier-Two restrictions. We will reinstate our usual times when we return to Tier-One, in the meantime, for Baptism and Wedding enquiries, please email Edward.

Church Open: St John's is open during the day on Sundays and Wednesdays for Individual Prayer. Please collect a laminate card from the table by the door and leave it in your pew.

Track & Trace: In order to support the NHS in containing the spread of Covid-19, we are keeping Track & Trace information for those who enter the building. There are three ways to give your data:

- 1: By scanning the QR code displayed in the building using the *NHS Covid-19* App.
- 2: By completing the slip provided and placing it in the Track & Trace box (please use your own pen).
- 3: By emailing Edward (fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com) directly with your name and the date and time of your visit. Please mark the subject header: St John's Visitor Track & Trace.

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](#)).

Talkline: If you're feeling lonely, isolated, stressed or anxious *Counselling Matters Bexley's* new *Talkline* offers free, non-judgemental counselling and support and can also give you information on other relevant services. Freephone: 08000472600 or email mail@cmbtalk.org. The line is open from 5pm-9pm every week day and 9am-9pm on weekends and bank holidays.

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 have been celebrating Choral Evensong [via their website](#), using material produced prior to lockdown. Please also see the Cathedral website for details about the Cathedral's reopening plans.

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!: We are still considering how to safely hold our Toddler Church in line with social distancing and hygiene requirements. We are grateful for your patience and support during this time. Toddler Church activity packs from last term are still available on our website. If you would like us to produce further resources in a similar style then please email Edward.

Devotional Pattern: Readings for November with suggested prayer intentions are attached to this email.

Face coverings: Please be aware that it is a requirement that face coverings must be worn in places of worship unless you have a legitimate exemption. Thank you for your cooperation.

Christmas Hampers

To support families in our communities who are most in need over the Christmas period, The Bexley Team is proposing to gift a food hamper to families in our local schools who receive free school meals or have specific needs. Please see the Team News for further details.

Public Libraries Consultation: Public libraries provide a vital hub for resources and connection and cuts to library services can have a catastrophic impact on the whole community, not least the most vulnerable. Bexley borough has opened a consultation on the future of library services across the borough, please consider having your say [here](#).

This Week Please Pray For:

... Those who suffer as a result of homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.
... That our Church may be welcoming and inclusive to all.
...all currently suffering with Covid-19.
...all are who continuing to shield or self-isolate.
...the sick in need of our prayers, Gill Rogers, Carol & Peter Amura, Margaret Quick, Gladys Verran, Mavis Johnson, Samantha Pout, Ray Mace, George Berry, Marie Berry, Maggie Rankine, Ann Harlow, Joyce Forrest, Dorothy Samuel, John Beddison, David Watkins, Nicola Johns and any others known to you.
...the recently departed.
....those whose anniversaries fall at this time, Hilda Williams, Arthur Ellard, Ernest Didier-Garnham, Leslie Waghorn, Gladys Ellard.
... And all the fallen of war including those named on the Village War Memorial.

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.*
Amen

(Reinhold Niebuhr: 1892-1971)

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>