

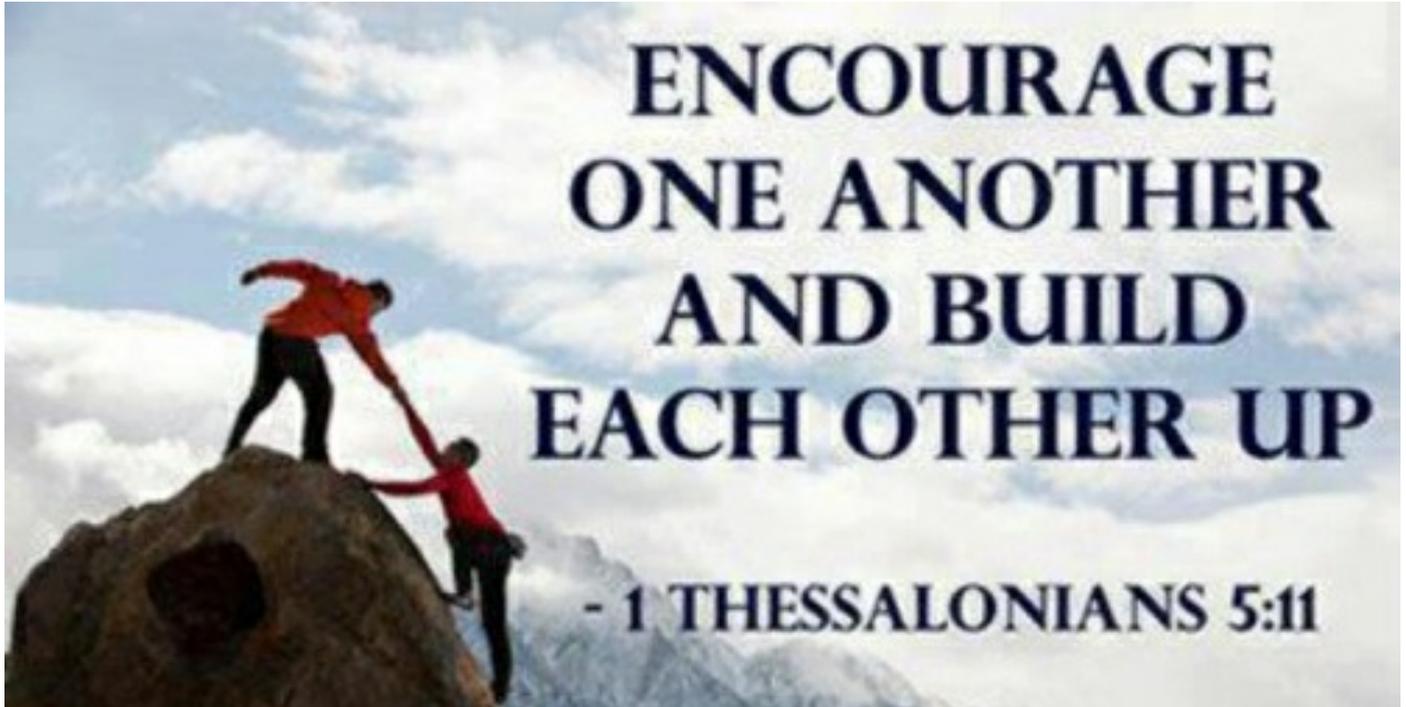
APRIL 26TH 2020

ISSUE 1



St. Agnes with St. Paul and St. Barnabas

SAINTAPB NEWSLETTER



A thought from Rev'd Sue (curate)

I have been so encouraged by the way in which everyone has been living out these words of Paul in these current times. Thank you for encouraging and strengthening each other through your prayers, phone calls, texts, and post. We may think our contribution to caring for others during the coronavirus outbreak is small, but God takes our prayers and encouraging words using them mightily for His glory. James chapter 5 reminds us of this as we read that “the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well” and the prayers offered by the righteous are powerful and effective”.

As you pray could I ask you to particularly remember:

- Those who are ill or finding isolation especially hard because of their mental health.
- The St Paul's Building Project which is with the town planning department at present.
- Rev Kirstie as she settles into her new role as interim Vicar (she is helping us whilst the plans to appoint a new Vicar continue to be delayed.)

Being Good News in your Street.

I have been inspired by the different stories I have heard recently about the different things people are doing to encourage and care during lock down.

I have seen videos of gymnasts somersaulting dressed as Spiderman as children watch from the windows of their homes. I wonder if you like Bishop Steven been inspired to place a candle in your window to show that you are praying, (in my case it is a picture of a candle sellotaped to the windowpane). Or, like me have you chatted to your neighbours more than usual or even met new neighbours as you join the Thursday 8 pm clap for carers? Surprisingly, the sparsity of supermarket delivery slots has also resulted in neighbourly goodwill, as I have noticed people phoning their neighbours to offer to add any needed essentials to their delivery. It is amazing how God takes the little that we can offer and use it for His Glory, we see this in the following article written by Kobus.

Easter 2020 at Longcroft Gardens, Reading



In the week approaching Easter with the Covid-19 virus lock down in full swing, I (Kobus) thought about doing something for our neighbours. We had heard about the “real Easter egg” and had found that they were available in Supermarkets. The real Easter egg is special in the sense that it is made of Fair trade chocolate, but more importantly it contains the Easter message of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection in very simple language with pictures in a booklet in the chocolate box.

We had trouble finding the Easter eggs, they were on the bottom shelf of the store, and we had to go on our knees to collect the 13 boxes we needed. Carrying those 13 boxes home after the walk was a challenge!

On the Saturday before Easter we fixed our own message to all the boxes, as we wanted to add a personal touch, and then just around 07:30pm we distributed them. To our surprise all accepted them and gave good reactions. There was one house where the door did not open and we left the Egg outside and checked an hour later and then could alert the occupants that they missed the handing over, but they also accepted it.

About an hour later we got a message through our door from our neighbour next door who said ‘..After such a lovely, kind and warming gesture from Kobus and Gerda this evening, we thought it would be nice to hold a social distancing coffee morning in the close tomorrow...’. That happened on the Easter Sunday when we all brought as suggested our own coffees, teas, and chairs. We set in couples or singles just as each household was composed, and 10 out of the 13 occupied houses participated. It was a nice sunny morning and there was a lot of chatter from 10:30 till midday, when everybody broke up to return to their own homes. We were by several people thanked for the gift and we continue to pray that the Easter message may bear fruit in our neighbour’s lives.

The Power of Prayer

We must never underestimate the power of our prayers.

*"Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God,
and a scourge for Satan."* ~ **John Bunyan**

In prayer we have our most important weapon against the devil's schemes

The following prayers have been taken from a helpful booklet of prayers for use during the coronavirus outbreak that the Church of England has produced. They can be downloaded from our website.

www.saintapb.org.uk.

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and
the fearful
and lift up those who are brought
low.
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate
us from your love
in Christ our Lord. Amen

Gracious God
Give skill, sympathy and resilience
To all who are caring for the sick,
And your wisdom to those
searching for a cure.
Strengthen them with your Spirit,
That through their work
Many will be restored to health.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Before the ending of the day
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love,
would keep
Your watch around us while
we sleep. Amen

Praise to the God of All Comfort

'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God' (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Dear Church Family,

I too, as your 4 week old 'interim priest in charge,' wanted to encourage you with Gods words of comfort and I hope you find the little booklet we have enclosed helpful.

I am slowly working my way round contacting everyone by email, phone and social media, there are so many ways these days, some which are relatively new to me like social media, but we are supported well by Amy our Parish Administrator who is multi-talented and a real blessing to us!

It is wonderful to have Sue Cady, our curate, back after compassionate leave and I for one am very thankful for her support and encouragement.

Let us continue to pray for Sue and the family, also for the Honor family, the Welch family and all those recently bereaved.

As we continue in these unsettling days of lock down where bad news seems to be on every broadcast may we draw comfort and strength from Gods word, the bible, and in particular the psalms which were often written in times of adversity. Let us be good news as we continue to comfort one another by phone calls and messages for we are Gods family, brothers and sisters in Christ, saved by His most precious blood.

On a personal note I feel God's heart for the parish and that he wants to say 'I love you, I have not forgotten you' and I believe he is preparing the way for a new vicar for you, a person who will show you His great love for his church and community . Hold onto His words in Deuteronomy 31.8 *'The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.'*

Please can I encourage you to join together as one church in Christ across the parish as we meet over zoom at 11.40 every Sunday.

And I look forward to the day when we can all meet face to face. In the meantime, continue the good work you are doing, comforting, and encouraging one another and I am praying the Lord himself will comfort and strengthen you in your faith.

With love in Christ,



Reverend Kirstie Dolphin

(Interim priest in charge)

Stay Connected...

We have a range of online meet ups taking place throughout the week. We would love for you to join in with them if you can. All meet ups are via **www.zoom.us**.

Tuesdays - Fridays 9am Shift, Youth + Community prayer and share

ID: 31178996622

Wednesday 2pm Bible Study

Bible study home group - focusing on the book 'Prayer An Adventure with God by David Healey'

ID: 715 203 0997

Wednesday 7:30pm Bible Study

Small Group with bible study on God's Grace

ID: 457 100 723

Password: 715922

Sunday gathering 11:40am

ID: 725 2572 6527

Any changes to these gatherings will be on the website and sent via email.

Ways you can help

If you would like to donate to the parish and our work during this time:

- You can set up a standing order (see website: <http://www.saintapb.org.uk/generosity/giving-and-serving/>)
- You can now donate via text. You can donate any whole amount by:

Text 'SAINTAPBx' to 70085 (x being the amount you wish to donate)

Example: 'SAINTAPB5' would donate £5

If you need to contact us please remember that the Parish office is still open in the mornings.

Parish Office Phone: 0118 987 4448

Email: saintapb290@gmail.com

Website: www.saintapb.org.uk

Face book page: saintapb

Rev Kirstie Dolphin Mobile: 07710225413

Email: revkirstie@gmail.com

A service of Night Prayer

(You may wish to light a candle and have some reflective music playing in the background)

The eternal God is your refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Deuteronomy 33.27

Opening Sentences

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a
perfect end. Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord
who made heaven and earth.

Pause and reflect on the day that is past.

Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.

Suggested Psalms

Psalms 27, Psalm 91

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Suggested Bible readings

Jeremiah 14.9

Matthew 11.28-end

1 Peter 5.6,7

Prayers and Lord's Prayer

Merciful God, we entrust to your unfailing
and tender care this night
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there to hold us safe.
Comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us
through the silent hours of this night,
so that we who are wearied
by the changes and chances of this fleeting world,
may rest upon your eternal changelessness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.
The Lord bless us and watch over us;
The Lord make his face to shine upon us
and be gracious to us;
The Lord look kindly upon us and give us peace.

Amen.