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News from the Parish – 2nd May 2020

May was going to be a very busy month in the Parish. For the last year Keith Revoir had been working on preparations for the St Mary's Open Day & Craft Fair on 16th, being bigger and better than previous years, whilst Jeff Lloyd-Roberts was developing plans for a VE-75 celebration at St Margaret's and the Friends' annual golf day was due. The Buxted Ball was also scheduled, as well as a wedding at St Margaret's. Last week would also have seen a Mad Hatter's tea party in Hadlow Down.

The best laid plans

This got me to thinking and I looked up the phrase (moving on from the John Steinbeck novel), to Robert Burns' "To a Mouse, on Turning Her Up in Her Nest With the Plough, November, 1785"

*The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!*

The disappointment in the cancellations of the events ("grief an' pain") will be temporary as we can, and will, re-plan for future dates, when we can join together once again, "For promis'd joy!"

Situation coming vacant

Our PCC Secretary, Richard Stanton, has let us know that he and Christina are downsizing and moving to a bungalow, most probably in the Autumn. He has been an invaluable support in making sure that the Churchwardens try to keep to the straight and narrow, but we will need a new PCC Secretary – so please do contact Richard or one of the Churchwardens if you feel that you could help.

New Bishops

It was announced this week that we have two new appointments in the Diocese of Chichester. The Revd Ruth Bushyager, currently Vicar of St Paul's, Dorking in the Diocese of Guildford will serve as Bishop of Horsham. The Revd William Hazlewood, currently Vicar of the United Benefice of Dartmouth and Dittisham in the Diocese of Exeter will be the next Bishop of Lewes.



Prayers

Let us pray for the leaders of the Church; that they will always draw near and listen to those who are struggling at this time, and speak words of hope and understanding.

We pray for the Government, NHS, and all carers in these challenging days

We pray for the depressed; that through their sorrow they may be helped to bear the fruit of the Spirit which is joy.

We pray for all who are ill and at the point of death.

For those who have recently died in hospital, in residential care and in the community. We give thanks for those who cared for them and surrounded them with love. May those who mourn find comfort and support.

Services

As forewarned last week, we are including some readings in this newsletter, and are starting with your churchwardens (and John Marsh)! We need more volunteers, both to read (you can just record your voice and pictures will be added) or ideas for other contributions. Without volunteers you may, like John Marsh, be volunteered! (**STOP PRESS** : We hope to have an animated Lego Good Samaritan next week)

Whilst there are no formal services in any of our churches, you can watch and listen to broadcasts from other places. In particular you may wish to join the Diocese at : <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/liveservices/>. Other sources (and resources) can be found at the Church of England site <https://www.churchofengland.org/>, or from the BBC and other broadcasters.

Three readings for this week :

Acts 2 : 42 -47, read by Paul Dillon-Robinson

Psalm 23, read by John Marsh

John 10 : 1 – 10, read by Duncan Irvine

These can be found at : <https://youtu.be/FIX8eqIHxkl>



Moment of Reflection

With thanks to Fr David Milnes :

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

This Sunday is sometimes known as Good Shepherd Sunday because of the Gospel of the day. Jesus is the true shepherd who calls us by name and leads us to the pastures of eternal life.

Gospel John 10:1-10

Christ is the true shepherd of the sheep and the gate of the sheepfold. Through him we enter into the fullness of life.

I can remember seeing a Christian tombstone in one of the Roman catacombs. On the tomb is engraved the image of a shepherd sitting underneath a tree; in his left hand he holds a shepherd's crook, in his right he holds panpipes. A reclining sheep gazes at him. The difference with this image is that it was pagan in origin, but the early Christians understood that, pagan or Christian, a shepherd has a unique relationship with his sheep. The pagan image became that of Christ, the shepherd in whom the sheep find pasture beneath the tree of life – the wood of the cross.

Just as these early disciples gave meaning to a pagan symbol, so pagan festivals were superseded by Christian feasts, as in the case of Christmas and Easter. In the present age it sometimes seems that a reversal has taken place and that the meaning of Christian celebration has been lost.

What should be our response? As Christians, we are called to participate in the work of the Good Shepherd. There should be nothing preventing us from having at least something of that Spirit-filled courage of the early Church and remaining, as we hear in the Acts of the Apostles, *'faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood and the breaking of bread.'* (Acts 2 verse 42 – appointed for this Sunday).

Christ's message is always one of hope, offering light even in these dark and difficult days.

*Loving Father, in these days of Eastertide, increase our faith and our hope in the resurrection. **Amen.***



PARISH OF BUXTED & HADLOW DOWN
ST. MARGARET THE QUEEN • ST. MARY THE VIRGIN • ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST

Village Magazines

Despite everything, the Buxted Messenger and Hadlow Down magazine have been produced and distributed for May. As the Buxted Messenger is our parish's publications, particular thanks to Linda Mason and her team for all their work on this (and other) editions, and for the continuing support of the advertisers.

Providing support

Fr David Milnes has offered to provide spiritual support, by email and telephone, and we know that a number of you have appreciated this. His details are him at : FRMILNES@aol.com or 01825 830076 .

But do you, or someone you know, want pastoral support of any kind? Or, alternatively, would you like to offer support; be it just a voice at the end of the telephone? Please let your churchwardens know.

And finally

If you have any news, views or thoughts that you think could be added to this newsletter, please do get in touch, and if you know of anyone who isn't on my mailing list, please let me know.

Is there anything more that we can, or should be doing for you? Please let us know cw@bhdchuches.co.uk

