



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



<https://www.bhdchurches.co.uk/>

News from the Parish – 8th November 2020

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them."*





Moving Forward in Faith

Well these are strange times indeed. As you are aware, we are now under another lockdown and this means that much of the external life of the church will be suspended until further notice. This includes public worship, home and hospital visitations, work in the schools and other in-person meetings. This is no doubt going to be difficult. I suspect most of us like going into our churches, we like fellowshiping with our brothers and sisters in Christ, we like to see the good news of Jesus Christ move forward and that is most frequently done through the type of personal contact that is forbidden right now. So, no doubt there are difficult days ahead.

When presented with a challenge such as this, one that does not allow us to play to our strengths, and continue in our accustomed ways, there are typically two ways to respond. The first (and I will confess this one comes most naturally to me), is to basically put life on hold and conserve energy, waiting for the opportunity to return to life as normal again. This is not bad, for many of us it can be good to take a rest from time to time. The second is of course, to try to learn new ways and exercise muscles which are often not used when we play to our strength. Let me encourage us to embrace the latter course during the lockdown and in doing so, we might discover what God has in store for us.

Let me share with you the 'working plan' for the continuance of ministry in the parish.

First, I want to encourage each of us in our homes to develop and grow in our lives of prayer and devotion. One of the dangers in being members of a Christian tradition that relies heavily on a beautiful liturgy, is that we can sometimes overlook our personal and family prayer lives. But even when church is on, we are intended to meditate upon the scriptures and spend time in prayers in our homes. So let's take this season to work on that. This can look quite different in our respective homes. Perhaps it is through the discipline of the Daily Office as seen in the Book of Common Prayer, or a simplified version thereof. Or it could be simply reading the scriptures and spending time in prayer. We might also add the reading of a spiritual classic into the mix. Let me encourage you to take time to plot a spiritual course to take you through this time of lockdown. In due course I will send out some materials that you might find useful, and please feel free to be in contact if you would like some help with that.



Second, let us commit to strengthening the bonds of Christian fellowship during this period. For many, especially those who live alone, this will be a lonely time. So let's be diligent about keeping in contact with each other through calls or the dreaded ZOOM. But more than just a cheery hello, let us commit to praying for one another and asking about how we might pray specifically for each other. Perhaps we might develop a scheme for ensuring that no one is neglected through this period. If someone is good at such things please let me know. But rather than allowing our Christian friendship to go dormant for this season, let us use this time to intentionally strengthen it.

Finally, I am going to do my best to provide some video prayer and devotion to supplement your own private disciplines. At this point I am unclear about the format, I don't think replicating church services online is the most effective. But I will try very quickly to sort out how to provide some regular teaching and encouragement for you while we are apart. This is a learning curve for me, so please be patient as I fumble through.

We will get through this. Moreover Christ's church in Buxted and Hadlow Down will get through this and I pray that as we do things a bit differently we will grow together in the grace of God and discover spiritual riches which we have previously overlooked.

CPM+

Church services

As you will be aware, despite appeals – both personal and legal – the current state of national lockdown has meant that services in our churches (other than funerals) cannot take place.

Our churches remain open for personal prayer, and we aim to keep them open during daylight hours. We welcome you to each and every one of our churches and ask that you respect both social distancing and hygiene during your visits. May you find comfort at this time.

Plans are afoot for a short recorded service of prayer and devotion to be made available each week (or even more regularly), so watch this space.



Remembrance Sunday

There will be no formal services this Remembrance Sunday, but wreaths will be laid at the memorials at each of our churches and we hope that – at some time during the day – people will have a chance to make their own act of remembrance.

Please note that at 11.00 on Wednesday 11th the two minute silence will be observed at St Mark's, as usual, with maroons being set off. The senior year group at the school will also be in attendance and will arrange flowers on the war graves.

We hope that, this year as in previous years, we will all have time to pause at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, to perform our own act of remembrance.

Readings for this Sunday

Readings for this Sunday are :

Wisdom of Solomon 6: 12 - 16

1 Thessalonians 4: 13 - 18

Matthew 25: 1 - 13

Prayers

In our prayers this week we continue to pray for Norman Longley, Jeremy Clark, Lindsay and Wilbs George and Jane Godfrey. We also remember all those known to us who require our prayers.

If you know of anyone that you would like added to the list, please do get in contact.

Parish Finances

The income of the parish has been hit hard this year, both in terms of the level of regular freewill offering from collections at services and the lack of opportunities to raise funds from events and occasions. We are digging into our reserves, but this is not sustainable.

Much of the work on the fabric of the churches has been funded from restricted or designated funds for each church (albeit that some are almost spent out), so our immediate need is for the day to day running of the parish.



If you are able to make a donation, then it would be gratefully accepted :

- Our bank details are : *HSBC* Account: *Parish of Buxted & Hadlow Down PCC* A/C No: *11454064* Sort Code: *40-45-32*. If you wish to gift aid then please ask for a form from the Treasurer (treasurer@bhdchurches.co.uk)
- Alternatively, the Planned Giving Scheme is where you can make a monthly direct debit and Gift Aid is automatically calculated. You can sign up by telephone (0333 002 1271) and all you will need are your bank details and the Parish name (Parish of Buxted and Hadlow Down) and our PGS number (which is : *103080519*).

Thank you, in advance.

Providing support

Should you need pastoral support, please contact Rev Pete Molloy. His contact details are :

Email : bhdrector@gmail.com

Phone : 01825 733103

His day of rest is Monday, so the churchwardens (and his family) would greatly appreciate if you could allow him this time and only contact him if there is something urgent. If in doubt, please try one of the churchwardens.

And finally

The words "*They shall not grow old*" come from the poem "*For the Fallen*" by Robert Laurence Binyon (1869-1943), published in The Times newspaper on 21 September 1914.

The verse that follows is :

*"They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam."*