

## Parish Notices Sunday 26th April 2020

### Please pray for:

**Mon:** The NHS and amazing Health Care Workers

**Tue** Teachers who are continuing to keep schools open, and will have to continue through school holidays; Family and Friends of Joy Moseley whose funeral will be led by Tim Yates at Chiltern Crematorium today; Family and friends of Valerie Revel whose funeral will be led by Geoff Houston at Chesham Cemetery today

**Wed:** National and Local Government and all those with authority.

**Thu:** Shop workers, suppliers and all involved in the distribution of food and basic supplies.

**Fri:** Small business owners, those facing particular economic challenges;

**Sat:** Church leaders, nationally and locally - our witness in Chesham and the villages.

## Clergy Contact Details

Revd John Shepherd- john@theshepherds.org.uk Tel 01494 784372

Revd Josh Bailey- associate@cheshamchurch.co.uk Tel 01494 783629

Revd Chris Gercke - curate@cheshamchurch.co.uk Tel 01494 783498

Revd Tim Yates - tim.yates3@btinternet.com Tel 01494 772914

Revd Simon Winn -rev.simon.winn@gmail.com Tel 01494 773318

The Parish Office remains operational. Lynette will be based there. Please contact by telephone or email but please do not come in person.

Dear friends across the Parish,

*“You have searched me Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.”* So begins the much-loved Psalm 139, which reminds and encourages us of God’s intimate knowledge of our lives, His constant presence with us, His Sovereign hand over all that happens to us. David doesn’t claim to understand everything, but he knows that wherever he goes, God’s right hand will hold him fast.

I hope that you are aware of God’s presence with you in the midst of the continued challenges of this Covid 19 pandemic, with the news that the lockdown could continue for an extended period. It is something that we are all facing, but it affects us all in different ways. Someone put it like this – *“we are all in the same storm, but we are all in different boats”*. For some it’s like being in a small dinghy being violently thrown around – physically, emotionally, financially; for others it’s like being in a large liner which is rocking up and down, unpleasant but with minimal inconvenience; some will feel like they are frantically trying to keep afloat with so much to do; others perhaps now getting bored sitting in their deck chair. We can’t get physically close to one another, but Psalm 139 reminds us that God is with you in your boat.

Knowing God’s presence, we want to keep reaching out to others. It was good to speak with Lynette in the office, who was volunteering at the Community Fridge on Wednesday. Over 160 clients in one day coming to obtain fresh food, many with heart rending stories of their incomes being lost as businesses close and parents struggling to provide for their children. Praise God for initiatives in the midst of the storm which love people in practical ways in the name of Jesus – like the Community Fridge, the rapidly expanding Chiltern Foodbank, the Storehouse Project, and the countless spontaneous acts of practical love being shown.

On Monday mornings we meet as a Parish staff team, and it has been good to listen to one another. In the next couple of weeks we plan to circulate another edition of News from across the Parish, so that we can all hear a little more about what is going on in all the churches. It is a great joy to be part of a strong team, in which we are able to love, encourage and pray for one another.

I love this quote from Charles Spurgeon that I heard this week. *“God is too good to be unkind, too wise to be mistaken. If you cannot trace his hand, then you can trust His heart”* Spurgeon was not writing about a virus pandemic, but about any kind of suffering that we face. We may not be able to understand everything about God’s purposes for all that is going on, but Psalm 139 reassures me that I can know His right hand will hold me fast.

With love in Christ, *John Shepherd*