

## Parish Notices Sunday 24th May 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.

**Wed:** National and Local Government and all those with authority; Family and Friends of Frederick Howells, whose funeral will be led by Simon Winn at Chiltern Crematorium.

**Thu:** Shop workers, suppliers and all involved in the distribution of food and basic supplies; Family and friends of Neil Hadfield, whose funeral will be led by Tim Yates at Tylers Hill Cemetery.

**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

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The Parish Office will be closed on Monday 25th and Wednesday 27th May. Open until 12.30pm on 26th, 28th and 29th May.

**Parish website address:** [www.greatchesham.org.uk](http://www.greatchesham.org.uk) **Parish Office:** Tel: 01494 783629  
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Dear friends,

In one of his weird and wonderful visions, Zechariah hears these words: “*Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit*” says the Lord Almighty (Zech 4:6). These words are addressed to Zerubbabel, the governor (King) of Judah who has returned from exile to lead God’s people and re-build the Temple in Jerusalem. They are an important reminder that his task is the Lord’s work which will only be accomplished in His way and in His strength.

In the West, since the industrial revolution, we have seen such remarkable advances in the means of production, in political organisation, in commerce and business, in science and in communication technology. As a result we have enjoyed the benefits of greater levels of health and wealth and comfort (for which we are grateful to God), and yet with it has come an illusion that we are in control and can accomplish anything. A global pandemic punches a big hole in that illusion, but the nature of human pride suggests that once a vaccine has been found, it won’t take long to reassert itself.

As those shaped by our culture, this illusion of self-sufficiency can seep into the church. Instead of relying on the Lord, it is possible to look elsewhere. In a Parish where we are blessed with financial resources, with good organisation, with a wealth of human ability we might be tempted to trust in these things to keep the church going through difficult times. And so we need to hear the words of the Lord Almighty for ourselves, “*Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.*” The prophecy of Zechariah points beyond the rebuilding of the Temple to the building of God’s Church, established by another King, Jesus, which is sustained and grown by His Spirit, to shine as a light in the world.

This week we had the joy of our first ever “virtual” PCC meeting, with around 30 of us meeting from our homes. Praise God for the blessing of technology, for the opportunity to make decisions about our finance, and for the wealth of talented PCC members – these are all gifts from Him for which we are thankful. However if the work of the Parish is to survive and indeed thrive now, and into the future, we must keep humbling ourselves and acknowledging our dependence on the Lord, as we seek Him in prayer, walk in His ways, and keep in step with His Spirit. As we look away from ourselves and fix our eyes on Jesus, then we can be confident that He will continue to build His Church that we might shine in our town and villages.

With love in Christ,

John Shepherd