

Parish Notices Sunday 28th June 2020

Please pray for:

Mon: The NHS, and those working in social care and in our local residential homes.

Tues: Our local schools and their staff teams, as children return and as further planning is done for September.

Wed: National and Local Government and all those with authority; Family and friends of Cath Alexander, whose funeral will be led by John Shepherd at Chiltern Crematorium this afternoon.

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

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

Chapter Two

Community Bookshop for preloved books opens 29th June at 10 High St, raising funds for the Hospice of St Francis.

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Dear friends,

Psalm 146 begins, *“Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life!”* The Psalm is a great song of praise for God’s people to sing. We all have many reasons for praise and thanksgiving (even in the midst of sadness and struggle), and this week has provided more reasons in the life of our Parish.

It was wonderful to hear the long-awaited announcement last Sunday of the appointment of our new Team Rector, Edward Bowes-Smith, who will begin his ministry at St Mary’s and in the Parish on Sunday 20th September. It will be great to welcome Edward, with his wide experience of ministry, having established and grown a strong evangelical church in the city of Lincoln, and planting a new church under his leadership in recent years. It will be a joy to welcome his wife Liz, and their children Hannah (21), Joshua (19) & Hester (14).

It was also very good to hear the government announce the possibility of re-opening our churches for public worship from July 4th. I know of one young couple who have been waiting to get married who are rejoicing this week that their wedding can go ahead! We’re still awaiting detailed guidance from the government and the national Church, and though we will be cautious and careful in how we begin to gather again, there is some light at the end of the tunnel. Clergy, wardens and DCC’s will be reflecting and planning on how and when to move forward in their districts (NB the St Mary’s Prayer Garden has been a wonderful example of creative thinking to enable the community to have a space to pray even when buildings are closed).

There is much to be thankful for, but it is important to note how Psalm 146 continues in verse 3: *“Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save”*, but instead, verse 5: *“Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.”* It would be good to remember this, as we welcome a new Team Rector, even one who brings many gifts and much experience, that we would not place undue expectations on him or his ministry. Likewise, as we invest time and energy in making plans for the future re-opening of buildings, we would do well to know that our hope lies not in our planning or personnel, but only in the Lord our God.

This should also shape our prayers for the Church families in Lincoln, who will feel a great sense of loss and anxiety as they face the future without Edward and Liz, especially in the uncertain times that we are living in. Let’s pray that they might experience the comfort of God’s Spirit, and that both they and us would know that our help is the God of Jacob, and we would put our hope in God alone.

With love in Christ,
John Shepherd