

## Parish Notices Sunday 26th July 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 further planning is done for September.

**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.

### Parish Holiday Club

As we won't be able to meet in person this coming summer for our Church holiday club, the Parish of Great Chesham have decided to run an online club.

It will be open to children of all ages, with a youtube video broadcast everyday, alongside activity packs, a scavenger hunt and a zoom movie night!

So join us for a journey of discovery into God's wonderful world.

Bookings will open on Monday 13th July via this website: <http://www.cheshamparishholidayclub.co.uk>

We will need lots of helpers to cut out crafts and put together the activity packs before the week and anyone up for filming slots to include in the week. Please email Hannah if you'd like to be involved.

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

**Parish website address:** [www.greatchesham.org.uk](http://www.greatchesham.org.uk) **Parish Office:** Tel: 01494 783629  
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Dear friends in the seven churches across the Parish of Great Chesham

I was surprised (and pleased) to be asked to write the reflection for the parish notice sheet again this week as it gives me an opportunity to expand on some of the thoughts from last week as well as some of John's thoughts from the week before.

Two weeks ago, John wrote of the need for patience and love as we take the first tentative steps to reopening our church buildings for services. Then last week I wrote of God's promise to be with us as we journey into a still unknown future as we start to meet together for worship. We're not alone in making these steps and last week a number of the staff team joined with clergy from the Deanery and Bishop Steven and Bishop Alan to look at how we not only plan for the future but support each other as we take our tentative steps into the 'new normal' both as churches and as wider communities.

As churches we know we must step carefully into that future. Whilst we must keep within the guidelines and we must look after each other, we also long to meet together for worship, to encourage each other, and to support each other, to share a meal together! And here is our dilemma – we need to step from safety into the unknown. We need to look to the future knowing that many in our churches cannot yet make that step forward for many reasons. And in the 'lockdown' we've become very conscious of isolation and the challenges it brings and come to understand the challenges that some in our churches who are less mobile or have health issues have faced for many years. Now through prayer and reflection and carefully planning we need to move forward together as a community of God's people, united in our commitment to '*Love the Lord [our] God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*' (Matthew 22:37 Deut. 6:5).

But as we step forward into the future as people of God, we know that our journey takes us into a wider community, our town. It takes us beyond our churches that we are called to serve. When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus added that we are to '*love our neighbours*' as well as our God. And the new normal is proving an immense challenge for many in our town as jobs are lost and finances become strained to breaking point. Sadly, this is not just one or two people but many hundreds and Foodbank and the Community Fridge have seen demands risings 2 or 3-fold over the last few months. For some the situation will improve but for many it will be a long and difficult time and as we rejoice in our opportunities to worship together we must not forget that "*...faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.....I will show you my faith by my deeds*" (James 2:17-18).

So, let's step together into the unknown with "*our eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*" (Hebrews 12:2)

Tim Yates