

## Parish Notices Sunday 19th 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 the Summer term ends and as further planning is done for September.

**Wed:** National and Local Government and all those with authority; for a meeting of a small group of Townbridge sheltered housing residents with members of the team, for prayer and fellowship in St. Mary's 'prayer garden.'

**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

Last week John wrote of the need for patience and love as we take the first tentative steps to reopening our church buildings for services. The closing of our buildings for a 'season' was a sudden and dramatic change. The reopening will be less sudden and less dramatic but will still mark our move not back to the 'old season' but to something new and different. There will be familiar landmarks but new places as well as we take the positive things we've gained during lockdown in the future. There will, of course, be many unknowns, but the Bible shows that it is not the first time that the people of God have faced challenges and unknowns, and probably won't be the last!

The Old Testament lectionary readings for the weeks since Trinity Sunday have been from Genesis and tell the story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We've heard of the three visitors to Abraham and Sarah, and birth of Isaac. Then it was onto the birth of Isaac's children Jacob and Esau and how Jacob secured his father's blessing and his brother's inheritance! This week we hear one incident as Jacob flees from his irate brother and sees in a dream a vision of a ladder to heaven. Jacob is very much venturing into the unknown. He only knows what he is leaving behind not what God has for him in the future. We can read on and see he'll find a wife (well actually four), become wealthy, upset his father-in-law, flee again, be reconciled to his brother, and suffer the sadness of losing his wife Rachel as she gives birth to Benjamin before we start in the story of Joseph! But through all of this Jacob is not alone! God is there with him through the twists and turns of his complicated life. And it is in this week's lectionary reading that Jacob hears God's promise to be with him:

*<sup>15</sup> "I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." (Genesis 28:15)*

In our uncertain times this is a great promise for each of us. God promises to watch over us, to bring us back, to not leave us alone until he has completed all he promised. Things may be different, and our church services may seem strange, but God is there unchanged and unchanging. The passage from Genesis continues

*"When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it." (Genesis 28:16)*

As we find our way through the future, and when we have time to pause and look back, then like Jacob we will see that God always watches over us, he does not leave us alone, and he is there even when we are unaware of him and we too will say "Surely the Lord is in this place".

Tim Yates