

Parish Notices Sunday 2nd August 2020

Please pray for:

Mon: The NHS, and those working in social care and in our local residential homes. John Shepherd taking the funeral for the late Brenda King .

Tues: Our local schools and their staff teams, as they have a break in August, and plan for return in September.

Wed: National and Local Government and all those with authority, making decisions about local lockdowns and economic support;

Thu: Volunteer organisations supporting the most vulnerable – FoodBank, CAP Debt counselling, Community Fridge, the FoodLife project, etc

Fri: Small business owners, and others facing redundancy or other particular financial 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 now open 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.

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Dear friends

It was wonderful to see those images of Captain Tom Moore being knighted by the Queen with sword outstretched (an interesting technique for social distancing as someone commented!). The 100-year-old was recognised for his efforts to raise millions of pounds for charity during this global pandemic. Not everyone will have his stamina, but it's a reminder that one is never too old to be useful.

In our age, when youth is idolised and so often it feels as though the elderly are left on the scrap heap, I love the reminder of Psalm 92: *“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, ‘The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.’”*

The Bible honours those in old age and recognises that “bearing fruit” can continue for a lifetime. We see this very clearly in our Parish, and we are enormously grateful for the gifts, energy and servant hearts of the many over 70s who serve in the life of the Parish, and who have been continuing to serve during the lockdown period. As the church unlocks and activities resume in person, we have been considering the following government advice: *Certain groups of people may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions. Individuals who fall within this group are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household.*

In the light of this advice, recognising that other guidance uses the term “strongly advised”, the Clergy and Parish Wardens would encourage those who are over 70 to take very seriously the government advice before volunteering for public ministry; however acknowledging wide differences in health, personal perceptions of risk, and personal desire to serve, we don't want to take away that opportunity for those more senior to be involved in ministry. Whilst not closing down the opportunity to serve, we also want to make clear that no one over 70 should feel pressured in any way to return to church gatherings or to serve in a public ministry until they feel entirely comfortable to do so. A ministry of prayer and encouragement from home will be of huge service to the church.

Praise God that He is building a Church that is multi-generational, and that everyone is equal in His family. Let's be continuing to pray for unity across the generations, and whatever age we are, that God might help each of us to be faithful in prayer and fruitful in service, for the glory of Jesus.

With love in Christ,
John