

# NewsLink

24th May –31st May 2020



Churches of North  
Bradford on Avon  
& Villages

## Together in Prayer

Dear friends, on May 31st, Pentecost Sunday,  
let's be **Together in Prayer** as a Diocese.



As part of Thy Kingdom Come, the 10 day global wave of prayer that started on May 21st, Ascension Day, we are all invited to pray.

We can do this alone, with our family at home or with our wider family or church via social media or Zoom.

There are lots of creative ways to pray including resources for families. For a range of suggestions please go to the [resources section](#) of our website [www.nboachurches.co.uk](http://www.nboachurches.co.uk) and on the [website](#) <https://www/thykingdomcome/global/>.

In my reports to PCCs I am reflecting on events over the past two months and also posing the question of how in these times coming of the 'new normal' we might consider adapting our ministry and our churches to reflect future needs.

Cedric Pierce has started a discussion which I hope many of you will engage in. The discussion document 'An unexpected year:2020' can be found later in this Newslink. There has been a huge amount of discussion, and a wide range of views in the press and on social media on where we are as the Church of England, and how we shape our future. All views are important and valid so do please share yours.

As businesses start opening up again locally, I found this picture online from Hartley Farm. It reminds me of days out with the children when they were young. Climbing up onto the tractor and 'driving' it was always their favourite thing to do, along with feeding the goats of course! Happy days!



Finally, I want to say a big thank you to all the members of our churches who have contributed to our on-line services. If you would like to read or be part of them in some way, do let me know. It's good to have a range of people and voices and it helps build our sense of community.

Thank you also to those who have sent in articles, photos etc. for NewsLink. Do keep your contributions coming in.

Until we meet online on Sunday, I leave you with a favourite passage from Ephesians 3:14-21 which never fails to inspire me.....

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family<sup>[a]</sup> in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Stay safe, stay well and God Bless you.

Ann, Rector

## Benefice Online Service and Resources

The link to this Sunday's service, 'Ascension to Pentecost' is now available below. This will take you to the Benefice Youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kzq5foHCtFg>

It will also be available on the Benefice Website [www.nboachurches.co.uk](http://www.nboachurches.co.uk) Each week we will also publish your photos, Bible verses that have spoken to you, reflections and poems in Newslink or on the website. So please do send these to Ann Keating by the Thursday of each week.

If you know someone who can not access Newslink online and who would prefer a hard copy, please send their name and postal address to Ann Keating. We will post a copy to them by Royal Mail in line with the C of E guidelines for safe distribution.

*From Cedric Pierce*

### 2020: AN UNEXPECTED YEAR!

When Penny and I thought about what we might do this year, we had no idea that we would be spending at least the first half mostly at home. We pencilled in foreign trips, more volunteering at the Retreat Centre we go to in Wales, and I had planned to do some serious walking with friends. But a broken shoulder on December 30<sup>th</sup> and now Covid-19 restrictions have put paid to most of that, and life is not what we imagined at all!

But life has had its upsides. Penny and I have seen a lot more of each other which is still a blessing even after 45 years! We have been praying more together, which is good and we both like space and solitude of which there has been plenty. I have been walking locally and marvelling at the unfolding season, and we really do live in one of the most beautiful parts of England. We are so fortunate to be here! We miss our family and particularly the grandchildren, and our friends too, but overall we have not found the lockdown a bad thing and it has forced us to reassess our priorities and how we spend our time.

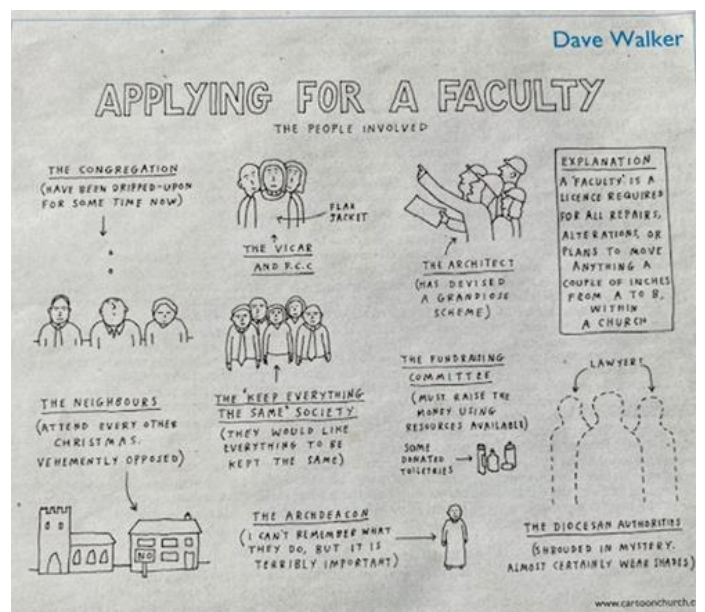
When the lockdown started the Archbishop of Canterbury said that from now on we were going to have to do church differently.

Personally, I have quite enjoyed the online services broadcast in our own Benefice and some that we have watched from other churches. It has broadened our perspective and shown us that there are different ways of doing things. I have had conversations with neighbours, too, which I would not have had if things had been normal and overall I think that people have been gentler with each other, and less demanding.

But what will happen when things get back to normal? Will we simply go back to as before? I can already feel the desire (or is it pressure?) to start my next long-distance footpath (The Ridgeway, as it happens) and I can feel all the other day to day activities starting to crowd in (in my case the PCC, magistrates courts and railway preservation). But if we just go back to how things were will we be missing something - or is God asking us to slow down, take life at a different pace and concentrate on what is important?

I wonder what the Archbishop meant when he said that we were to do church differently? We have been forced outside the church building and it strikes me that looking back to the beginnings of the Christian church, there were no buildings for them to meet in and they were forced to meet in homes and live a life which by any standards was quite radical. The church in those days seemed to be more about relationships and God doing incredible things than it was about rotas and buildings. I wonder what God has in mind for now?

I'm up for a debate about this. Is anybody else?



*From the Church Times*

## Lighting a Candle online

The Church of England now has a virtual candle that you can light as part of your prayers at this difficult time.



By lighting a virtual candle you are making space to pray.

During this time, when so many of us are at home, separated from those we love, praying for them and ourselves is important.

You might like also to light one on Sunday May 31st when as a Diocese we are joining together in a Day of Prayer. As a Diocese, prayer, along with service and growth, is key to our vision for a thriving Christian presence and all our Church meetings begin with the lighting of a candle and the saying of our Renewing Hope Prayer.

You might like to say this prayer with your virtual candle.

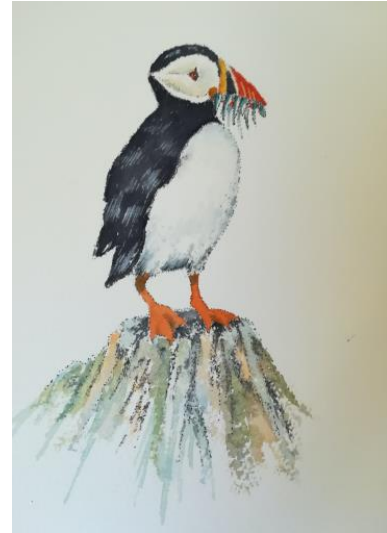
*God our Father, Renew our hope. By the Holy Spirit's Power strengthen us to pray readily, serve joyfully and grow abundantly, rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

From Ann Chapman

Missing my art group sessions, but most of the group are now sharing a photo each week and on our usual meeting day and time, we all sit down to paint the subject, afterwards sharing photos of what we've achieved. This week the subject was a puffin with a beak full of fish; thought you might enjoy my effort.

Keep well and safe,

Ann.



## Some comforting and inspiring verses from Mary Hewetson

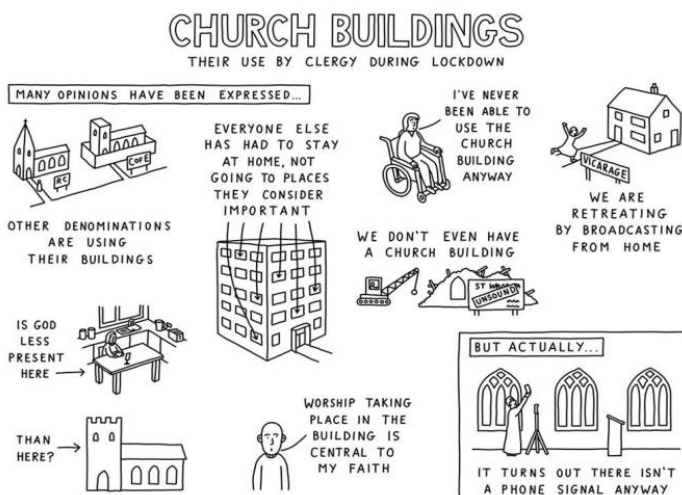
### Colossians 3: 12 – 17 (The Message)

So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

There is nothing like a few big bunches of grapes to set one on the road to recovery, especially when they are trodden, fermented and bottled.

Nothing is more beautiful than the love that has weathered the storms of life.

*Jerome K. Jerome*



From the Church Times

Here's a joke from Bishop Karen, for the IT-aware/ wary among us...



A shepherd was looking after his sheep one day on the side of a deserted road, when suddenly a brand-new racing car screeches to a halt. The driver, dressed in a designer suit, designer shoes, designer sunglasses, designer watch, and a designer tie, gets out and asks the shepherd, 'If I can tell you how many sheep you have, will you give me one of them?'

The shepherd looks at the young man and then looks at the large flock of sheep grazing and replies 'Okay'. The young man parks the car, connects his laptop to his mobile, enters a NASA website, scans the ground using his GPS, opens a database with 60 excel tables with logarithms and pivot tables and then prints out a 150-page report on his high-tech mini-printer. He turns to the shepherd and says, 'You have exactly 1,586 sheep here.'

Rather surprised the shepherd says, 'That's correct, you can have your sheep.' The young man takes the animal and puts it in the back of his car. Just as the man is about to drive off, the shepherd asks him: 'If I guess your profession, will you return my animal to me?' The young man answers 'Yes, why not?'

The shepherd says, 'You are an IT consultant'. 'How did you know?' asks the young man.

'Very simple' answers the shepherd 'Firstly you came here without being called. Secondly you charged me a fee to tell me something I already knew, and thirdly you don't understand anything about my business. Now please can I have my dog back.'

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**Do check the website as resources are added regularly and check Instagram and Facebook for all our latest news.**

From the *Church Times*

