

South Wye News Sheet Easter 7 – 24th May 2020

Do you remember those big floral clocks that used to be a feature of seaside ‘proms’? Bright, manicured, immaculate beds, in a time when ‘environment friendly gardening’ hadn’t been invented but gardeners were plentiful – and cheap. Floral clocks have gone – but I seem to be working to a new version, the floral calendar*! I can’t quite keep track of the days and weeks. The diary in my ‘phone is next to useless, full of cancelled events and meetings – but the golden chain flowers are over, the copper beech is in full leaf and my hop plant has reached the top of its wire. So, this week, on the 21st May or the 8th day of honeysuckle blossom, 40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day.

Those are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. Jesus was seen by His disciples: on the road to Emmaus (my favourite story in scripture), by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses. Luke records the story of the ascension: ‘When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands – and blessed them.’ Jesus’ last act on earth was to bless His disciples. There is an added poignancy today in the description of their parting, at the moment when our meetings and our goodbyes are so regulated and restricted. ‘While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.’ (Luke 24:50-1) ‘I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...’ (John 20:17) Luke goes on: ‘they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.’ (Luke 24:52,53) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

My new diary system has some great advantages. It really helps to get some perspective when your calendar has a 200 year cycle as well as an annual one. The copper beech in the Rectory garden has seen houses built, clergy come and go, wars and disasters and fetes and celebrations. One day this strange time will also be history, taught to children who will by then presumably, be back at school. One day in the future that amazing tree will fall. But whenever that is, in this century or the next, the Gospel truths will still apply. The lives of the people of South Wye then might be as different from ours today as ours are from the disciples’ – but they will be reading the same Gospel, and applying its lessons to their lives and experiences just as we do. Like us, they will know themselves loved and blessed. Like them, we are called to take the Gospel out to the whole world. It’s a really good reminder, as we worry and fret about how to share the Gospel in today’s circumstances, that this isn’t a new question – and we won’t be the last to ask. Ascension Day, as we look forward to Pentecost, is a good time to ask ourselves “who will I tell?”

I hope that you find this newsletter useful – please do get in touch with any news that you’d like us to include. I hope that the TV, Radio and online listings are useful, but if there is a service or programme that you are enjoying that is not listed, let us know. There is a lot of information about *Thy Kingdom Come* and ways that we can all be involved and materials for families as well as a prayer journal which you might find helpful. I’d be very grateful for your help with the questionnaire at the end of the newsletter too. Thank you all – and please stay safe.

With every blessing

Anne

*Terry Pratchett’s version of the floral clock is worth a look too!

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Services online and on TV and Radio

Through the Week 8:00am and 8:00pm daily Morning and Night Prayer – from Ascension day to Pentecost we will be using Daily Prayer for Thy Kingdom Come. This booklet was distributed with last week's newsletter. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact the office.

Thursday 21st May – Ascension Day

Radio 4 5:43am Prayer for the Day - A spiritual comment and prayer to start the day with Father Christopher Hancock,

Radio 4 8:00pm A celebration for Ascension Day led by the Revd Dr Sam Wells and the Revd Marie-Elsa Bragg,

Messy Church Adventure – South Wye are part of the international Messy Church Adventure today – check out the Messy Church YouTube channel

Sunday 24th May 9:30am Eucharist for Ascension Sunday for South Wye

Telephone service: To listen to an audio version of the service, call 01432 806066 after 9:30 on Sunday – the service will be available for the whole week. This will cost you the same per minute as a local 'phone call. There is a message and then some silence before the service starts – don't panic, if you have heard the message then the service will start before long.

Or find a video of the service from 9:30am in any of these places

St. Peter's Facebook, St. Martin's Facebook and St. Martin's YouTube channel

Diocese of Hereford

Diocese of Hereford Facebook 10am with Rev Mark Johnson

Diocese Freephone Prayerline Dial 0800 304 7052 to hear a prayer

Church of England

National Weekly Service Facebook at 9:00am

TV and Radio on Sunday 24th May

BBC Hereford & Worcester 8:00am Sunday Worship

Radio 4 8:10am Sunday Worship, Living well while waiting Catherine Fox and the Bishop of Sheffield Pete Wilcox reflect on living well during this time

BBC 1 11:45am Sunday Worship Sunday After Ascension

The Very Rev Kathy Jones leads a service from Bangor Cathedral.

BBC 1 1:15pm Songs of Praise: Katherine Jenkins looks back on stories of faith from islands around our coastline, including Caldey Island

Radio 3 3:00pm Choral Evensong from Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

Prayer for the day: The Church of England website has audio and text of the Prayer for the Day

Hereford Cathedral has links to daily reflections from the Cathedral Clergy, Evening Hour and recorded services of Evensong on it's website

Daily Hope Phone Line 0800 804 8044

Daily Hope, is a free national phone line offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

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Prayers for the South Wye Community and the World

Those whose baptisms have been postponed and those whose weddings have been postponed

Those who are ill or in need of your prayers, including:

Glenys H	Graham M	Gaynor C	Pat A	Margaret M	Ann W
Marcia R	Oliver	Jodi W	Chrissie	Hana	Linda
Margaret D	Joe D	Nick D	Brenda B	Immie B	Harry
Lee	Roger	Seren W	Dot G	Emma	

Those who have died and those who mourn their loss:

Eileen E	Judith B	Sheila S	Graham J	Brenda M	Florence
John V	Elle-May	Peggy H,	Robert H	Peter H	Karl P

Families trying to cope with bereavement and funeral planning under the current restrictions

Anglican Communion Archbishop Justin Welby, all primates and bishops, members of the Anglican Consultative Council, the Secretary General, the Most Revd Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon, and staff at the AC Office in London and UN offices in Geneva and New York.

Hereford Communications staff in our diocese, and all who at every level of church life help share our stories of faith, discipleship and practice.

Porvoo England: Exeter; Norway: Nord-Hålogaland.

On this day that would normally honour John and Charles Wesley, pray for the Methodist Church here and worldwide.

Crops in much of Sub Saharan Africa have been attacked by swarms of locusts. Pray for those who will go hungry, and for those working on ways to control locust plagues.

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you.

In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. Amen.

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.

In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Community and Family News

We have sadly heard of the death of our friend Peter Hackett. Peter died peacefully on Saturday 16th May, aged 93. His gentle ways and loving dedication to his faith and his family will be very much missed by all who knew him. Under the current circumstances, his funeral will inevitably be a private service, but we will share details of his memorial service as soon as we are able to make plans. Please keep Glenys and their family in your prayers.

We have also heard of the death of Covid-19 of Karl Phelps who was a lay preacher here in south Wye. He was licensed as a reader on 27 June 1993 whilst he was living in Redhill. He and his wife June retired to Nottingham. Our prayers and best wishes go to June who is herself in a nursing home in Nottinghamshire.

On a happier note, we are delighted to be able to tell you that Jo Child, one of our Intergenerational Missioners, has been recommended for training for ordained Ministry, following a Zoom based Bishops' Advisory Panel. Jo will continue to work with us whilst undergoing her training and we wish her well for this next life adventure.

Hurricane Betty Leeson has flown back into town – it's really lovely to welcome Betty back from the States, where she seems, this time, to have avoided too many extremes of nature – unless you count a global pandemic of course. Welcome home Betty – see you on the other side of your quarantine.

A message from Brenda Bayliss (and Urban!) Thank you for your good wishes and get well wishes. I



came into hospital last Tuesday 12th May on the edge of having Sepsis. I had two infections one chest and the other in my leg which they think is the primary infection. If everything goes to plan I will be going home Wednesday 20th May. I know you will be wondering what has happened to Urban. He spent two days with Rev Anne and Lulu then he went on his isolation holiday to Wales. The picture is taken at the top of the old orchard which used to be mostly cider trees – though there are none left now. I can just remember making our own cider. Then after we use to pick the apples and take them to Abergavenny Market and meet the producers from Somerset Cider. We weren't the only farmers that sold apples to them. This went on for quite a few years. We used to have a barrel of cider off them.)

Dot Gilbert is still in Wye Ward in the County Hospital. It's not possible for anyone to visit at the moment, of course, but Dot would welcome cards or letters. We continue to hold Dot and her family in our prayers.

Many happy returns to Marcia on Thursday! Happy Birthday.

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Thy Kingdom Come

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

Since its start in May 2016, just three and a half years ago, God has grown Thy Kingdom Come from a dream of possibility into a movement. In 2019 Christians from 172 countries took part in praying 'Come Holy Spirit', so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

This praying together has been across our diversity and differences as every person, household and church are encouraged to pray in their own way. Whilst an astonishing 92% of people said they were praying for family and friends to come to faith in Jesus, and 40% of those taking part in 2019 did so for the first time, we recognise there is much more we can do together to help Thy Kingdom Come be fully in the lifeblood of the Church.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness

After the very first Ascension Day the disciples gathered with Mary, constantly devoting themselves to prayer while they waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Like them, our reliance on the gift of the Holy Spirit is total – on our own we can do nothing.

Through the centuries Christians have gathered at that time to pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit. 'Thy Kingdom Come' picks up this tradition. Over the past three and a half years more and more worshipping communities have dedicated the days between Ascension and Pentecost to pray 'Come Holy Spirit'.

We are praying that the Spirit will inspire and equip us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our friends and families, our communities and networks. It has been amazing how many varied ways there have been in which people from every tradition have taken up this challenge. The effects have been remarkable.

It is our prayer that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves, and respond and follow Him. Specifically, we again invite each and every Christian across the country to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

Whether you have joined in 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, we invite you to take part this year – along with churches from over 65 different denominations in 178 countries around the world.

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"In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities." *Archbishop Justin Welby*

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth. When he had said this...he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight... Then they returned to Jerusalem... and were constantly devoting themselves to prayer... When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.. and that day about three thousand persons were added." *Acts 1, 2*

"In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities." *Archbishop Justin Welby*

Resources for Thy Kingdom Come <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

The Prayer Journal for the 11 days has poignant reflections, Bible verses and actions
The free Thy Kingdom Come App* has daily videos, bible readings, reflections, and podcasts from N.T Wright.

The Thy Kingdom Come Video Library also has over 200 videos to download, including reflections and testimonies from influential Christians such as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, His Holiness Pope Francis, as well as many others.

Prayer and Care – Thy Kingdom Come

Care for those you are praying for, pray for those you are caring for

During these difficult and trying times, we believe that now more than ever, presents an incredible opportunity for the Church worldwide, to unite in prayer so that our family, friends and neighbours will come to know the love and peace of Jesus Christ for themselves. One of our Key themes for Thy Kingdom Come is prayer and care. As we are praying for those we love to come to know the hope and love of Christ we also are encouraging all to see how they can show God's love towards them. By caring for them. Here are 5 ideas on how we can care and love those we know, even when we are socially distanced:

1. Keep up contact. Make a phone call, send an email, letter or card saying that you are praying for them at this time.
2. Keep an eye out for the anniversaries of life events. Make that phone call to let people know you care.
3. Send a small gift or book purchased on line, maybe insert life words etc.
4. Serve where you can in delivering groceries or medications.
5. Make sure the people you pray for know how much you value them by whatever means you can find.

Thy Kingdom Come

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Thy Kingdom Come - *The Very Reverend Bob Key, the Anglican Communion Lead reflects on the Biblical basis of 'prayer and care' from the book of Acts.*

Thy Kingdom Come is about change: the great change that occurs in a person's life when they accept Jesus as Lord and welcome him as Saviour, Master and Friend. Scripture assures us that at that moment they become part of the Kingdom of God's beloved Son. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" writes St Paul (2 Corinthians 5:17). So, we pray each year between the Ascension and Pentecost that families, friends, communities and countries would come to know the saving love of God in Jesus Christ. When we do that, we are following the example of the disciples in Acts 1:14 who, in a revolutionary ground-breaking manner united in constant, heartfelt world-changing prayer.

The prayer led to practical planning. The group, in a totally culturally-relevant way, appointed a replacement for Judas Iscariot and waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit who will drive them out of their comfort zone into the city whose authorities had condemned Christ to declare the Good News of God's transforming love in the death and resurrection of his Son.

The Change of Kingdom is not the end, it's the beginning of lifelong, life-enhancing transformation. At the launch of Thy Kingdom Come the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, noted the huge issues we are facing including Covid-19, climate change, poverty and selfish apathy. All those things bring into sharp focus the world's need of Jesus and the call of God on us to pray for transformation and, as Christ calls us into his Kingdom, to become agents of that transformation in the world he loves.

The prayer of Acts 1:14, broke down cultural barriers, prepared for Pentecost, and gave birth to worldwide evangelism. Against the background of this pandemic, God calls all those who have received his saving love for themselves to be channels of his Kingdom in the world; men and women who demonstrate and embody God's transforming love to bring real change to the lives of those in greatest need. In his commentary on Acts, John Stott put it like this:

"It is part of the responsibility of Spirit-filled believers to alleviate need and abolish destitution in the new community of Jesus."

As we continue to read Luke's story of the first Christians, those whom their enemies soon describes as the ones who had "Turned the world upside-down" (Acts 17:6) we see that preaching the Gospel wasn't done in a vacuum. Peter and John notice the lame beggar at the gate of the temple and heal him in Jesus' name. Poverty in the church was noticed and assuaged by sacrificial sharing and very careful organisation. When those who spoke only Greek were being missed out of the food distribution in Acts 6 the Apostles thought it important enough that Stephen and six others are appointed to sort it out and ensure transparency and fairness.

In fact, when Peter and John have been arrested and threatened by the Sanhedrin in chapter 4 they respond with a prayer for more opportunities to preach and to show the power of God in transformed lives touched by the Good News and power of God.

The Archbishop I always think of as the founder of Anglicanism, Thomas Cranmer, who was the agent of the reformation of the Church of England and ended up giving his life for the Gospel of Christ showed the link between conversion and transformation in a letter he wrote to Henry VIII in 1538. He said this:

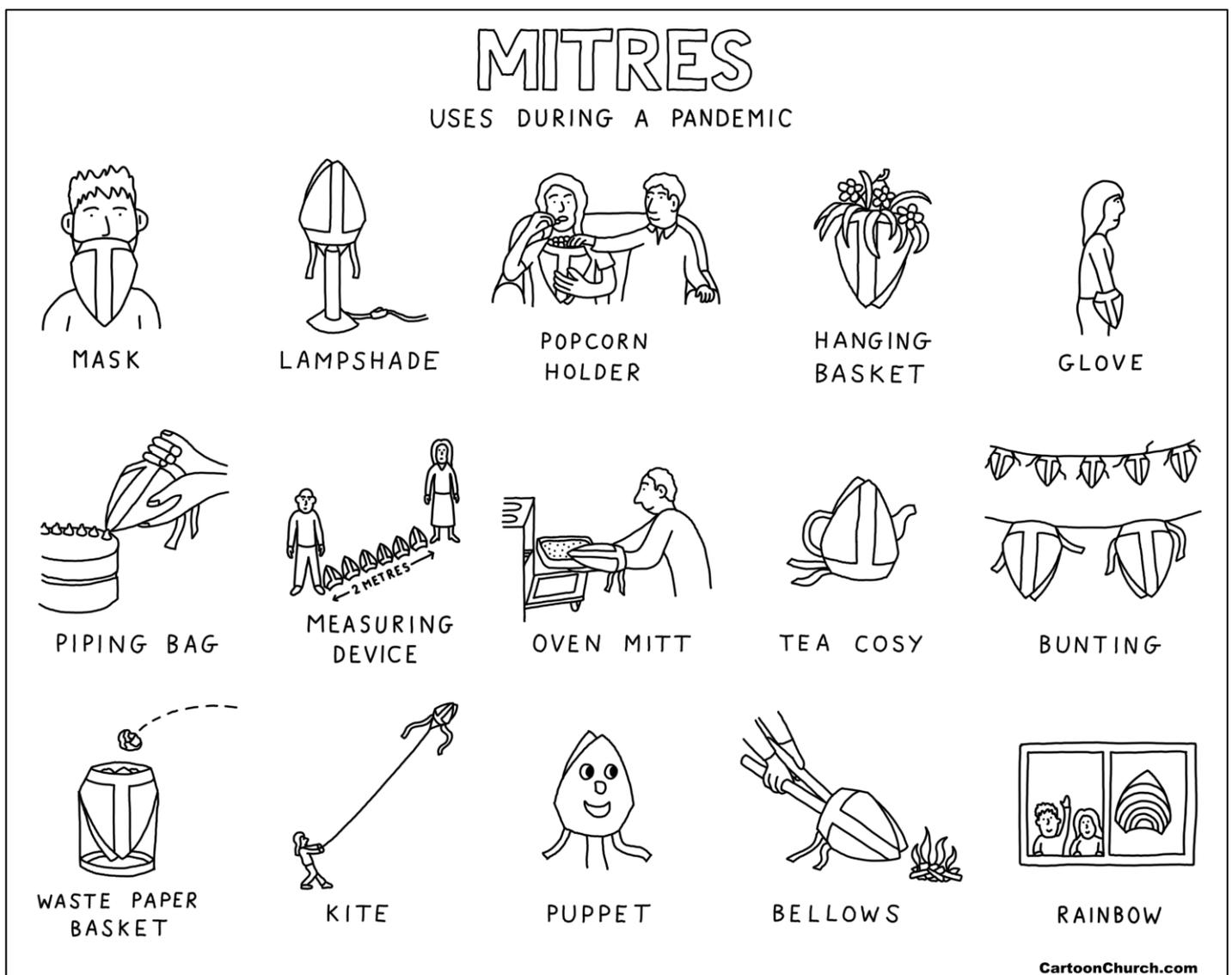
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“If the profession of our faith of the remission of our own sins enter within us into the deepness of our hearts, then it must kindle a warm fire of love in our hearts towards God, and towards all other for the love of God - a fervent mind to seek and procure God’s honour, will, and pleasure in all things - a good will and mind to help every man and to do good unto them, so far as our might, wisdom, learning, counsel, health, strength, and all other gifts which we have received of God will extend.”*

Prayer and Care go together in Thy Kingdom Come because they go together in the Scriptures. They go together in the story of the Acts of the Apostles which, of course, continues the story of Jesus who when faced with a hungry crowd told his disciples to give them something to eat.

Whether it is influencing those who shape the global economy so that the poor do not pay the price of the pandemic, or checking on the elderly, the lonely, the sick and the exhausted, we are called to notice the needs with the eyes of Jesus; to love the needy with the heart of Jesus and show practical care with the hands of Jesus. We are called to pray that people are changed by Jesus and become those who in their turn help turn the world the right way up.

*The Very Revd Robert Key,
Anglican Communion Lead,
Thy Kingdom Come*



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On the Covid Frontline

Nigel Beeton works in Radiology in a hospital in the East of England. He is writing a weekly diary of his life at the hospital.

Weekend 15th May

You can say what you like about the coronavirus, it has certainly brought some colour into our lives! This morning I encountered one of my colleagues. Starting from the top, she was wearing a bright yellow visor, a pale blue regulation issue surgical mask, bright pink scrubs and bright orange clogs. She looked like one of those rainbows that we now see all over the place!

I can assure you that her bright pinks scrubs did not come through the NHS supply chain! No indeed, those scrubs were put together and stitched by a member of the public.

Scrubs, for those of you not addicted to Holby City, are pyjama-like outfits of trousers and top which do nothing for your figure (mine's a hopeless cause anyway) but which are cool to wear and easy to keep clean. The idea is that you can change out of your day clothes and into scrubs and vice versa so you are not carrying bugs into or out of clinical areas. They were originally worn in the operating theatre environment, hence the term associated with 'scrubbing up' for theatre. Their use had become considerably more widespread but the advent of the requirements for PPE in the covid situation put enormous pressure on demand for scrubs, and our existing stocks quickly ran out. It was the same story across the NHS.

But the public have responded magnificently. Carol, my wife, sews, and in fact she has made us both masks that we can wear when out and about (but not at work). It took her a while, and of course she's at work nursing so doesn't have the time to make scrubs, but I would think that a set of scrubs must take several hours to make.

The hospital has put one of those wire cages on wheels in the front entrance so that donors can put their home-made scrubs into it. There's a poster on it thanking contributors most effusively but otherwise it's just a bare wire cage. So these paragons of home sewing, after all these hours of cutting, stitching, overlocking and elastoplasting the occasional cut finger, just drive up to the hospital and deposit the fruits of their labours into a wire cage.

I think that is true charity. No formal thanks, no prize for producing the most scrubs, no smiling grip and grin photos in the local paper (grip and grins are out for the duration anyway). Just the simple satisfaction of knowing that you are making a real difference to the working lives of staff facing the greatest challenge of their health service careers. (It's certainly been the greatest challenge of mine, and if any twenty-somethings setting out on their careers will have to face worse, then I tremble at the thought.)

If you, or someone you know, has been sewing scrubs, then on behalf of all of us, may I say:

Thank You!

Nigel Beeton

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South Wye Church during Lockdown – your views

As we look forward to the possible changes to restrictions on church services, I thought it would be useful to have some feedback on the services that have been offered over the last few weeks. I'd be grateful for any comments on the format, the structure and the content of our virtual services, so if you would like to email or call with your feedback, that would be great. If you would like to complete the questionnaire below, please do and return it to the office. I'm trying to cover all the options and possibilities, so please don't interpret these questions as referring to specific plans – they are just about trying to work out what might be possible and popular within any new guidance that emerges. Don't feel you have to answer every question, but it would be really helpful if you could answer as many as possible.

Anne

- 1 How many people are part of your household at the moment?
- 2 How would you describe your household at the moment:
 - a. I'm living alone
 - b. There are two of us here, from the same generation
 - c. There are two or more of us here from two generations
 - d. There are three or more of us here from three generations
 - e. Other (please describe)
- 3 How would you describe your usual (pre-lockdown) churchgoing:
 - a. I come to St Martin's or St Peter's at least twice a month
 - b. I come to St Martin's or St Peter's a few times a year
 - c. I would like to be able to come to St Martin's or St Peter's but my health, work or lack of transport prevent me
 - d. I usually go to a different church
 - e. I very rarely go to church
 - f. Other (please describe)
- 4 How would you describe your on-line experience before lockdown:
 - a. I use the internet for work and my social life – I can't imagine being without it
 - b. I use messaging and email and enjoy using social media all the time to keep in touch with family and friends
 - c. I use email and social media (sites like facebook and WhatsApp) but it doesn't come easily
 - d. I use email but don't enjoy using social media
 - e. I don't have internet access at home
 - f. Other (please describe)
- 5 How do you usually use the internet (if you do)?
 - a. On my mobile phone
 - b. On a tablet (like an iPad)
 - c. On a laptop
 - d. On a desktop computer

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- 6 Which of the following services and events from St Martin's or St Peter's have you joined since lockdown? Please tick all that apply:
- Holy Week and Easter Special Services
 - The Sunday Service at 9:30 on Sunday Morning
 - The Sunday Service, later on that day or another day
 - Morning Prayer and Night Prayer at 8am and 8pm
 - Morning Prayer and Night Prayer later on that day or on another day
 - Candle Prayers from Church
 - 'Walks and Talks' on Facebook
 - 'Chat from Home' on Facebook
 - Tuesday Zoom Coffee Morning
 - Thursday Zoom Bingo
 - Messy Church at Home
 - Souperstars at Home
 - Other (please describe)
- 7 How do you usually take part in these services and events? Please tick all that apply:
- Over Facebook
 - On YouTube
 - On Zoom
 - Over the Telephone
- 8 Are there any comments or observations you would like to make about the services or events that you have taken part in?
- 9 If you usually share our Sunday Service at home, how do you watch it?
- We gather as a household to watch the whole service
 - We gather together as a household, although we don't all watch the whole service
 - I sit down on my own to watch the whole service
 - I have the service on whilst I am doing other things
 - I watch parts of the service and skip others
 - Other (please describe)

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- 10 Are there events or services that you would like us to start offering online?
 - a. Bible Study
 - b. Prayer Groups
 - c. Courses – such as Pilgrim
 - d. A guided 'Quiet Day at Home'
 - e. Other (please describe)

- 11 Are there any comments or observations that you would like to make about the weekly newsletter?

- 12 When we can gather in worship once again, what will you be most glad to do again?
 - a. Share Communion
 - b. Fellowship with friends
 - c. Sing hymns
 - d. Be back in the familiar church building
 - e. Other (please describe)

- 13 Our main on-line Sunday service is Communion. Some Churches (including Hereford Cathedral) have decided not to stream Communion until they can gather with a congregation again. How do you feel about this? Would you rather that we had a non-Communion Service on Sunday? How does it feel to have not been able to receive Communion for 8 weeks?

- 14 Is there anything else that you would like us to know about your experience of our services, events and communications during lockdown or our plans for the future?