

Bath Abbey Community News

Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter 2020

Friends of Bruce Arnold will be sorry to hear that Bruce died on Saturday 28th March. Bruce sang in the Abbey Choir for a number of years with his daughter, Rachel. Please hold Bruce's wife, Irene, in your prayers along with their children, Michael, David and Rachel and their family at this difficult time.

Eleanor Van Zandt. We were saddened to hear of the sudden death of Eleanor a few months ago. We have been advised that Eleanor's family have held a private cremation. We continue to pray for Eleanor's family.

The Church's prayer for Palm Sunday

Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Church's prayer for Easter Day

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity. Amen.

Pastoral Care: Please let us know whether you have particular needs at this time, and we will try to match you up with someone who can help. If you are fit, able and under 70 and are willing to help someone who is vulnerable please also get in touch with us. Email us at churchwardens@bathabbey.org. **In case of emergency** you can phone the office on 01225 422462 and there will be a message which will give you details on who to contact. *Liz and James*

A prayer for our NHS staff, from the Revd Narinder Tegally, RUH Chaplain:

The Lord bless you and keep you safe in this time of uncertainty
The Lord make his face to shine upon you in the dark times
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and all those you care for
The Lord give you his peace and surround you with his love and protection today and forever more. Amen.

Ministers: Every Member

Rector: The Revd Canon Guy Bridgewater

Abbey Missioner: The Revd Stephen Girling

Associate Priest: The Revd Evelyn Lee-Barber

Associate Minister: The Revd Ken Madden

Youth & Families Minister: Tim Norton

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Derek Smith – DSmith@bathabbey.org
(Tel: 07943 179194)

The Abbey Office, 11A York Street, Bath BA1 1NG Tel: 01225 422462

Email: office@bathabbey.org Website: www.bathabbey.org

THE ABBEY OFFICE IS CLOSED FOR THE TIME BEING, PLEASE RING THE ANSWERPHONE IN THE EVENT OF A PASTORAL EMERGENCY

At a time of fear, uncertainty, grief and exhaustion, the annual remembrance of Holy Week and Easter takes on special significance. We remember so much more than moments in history. The life of Christ reveals the heart of God for his world and the way he calls us to live. We have already witnessed extraordinary acts of kindness and self-sacrifice. Christ shows us that this is not just the way for some, but the way for us all - it is the way of God that leads most truly to fullness of life and joy in eternity. As we continue in isolation, to pray and to serve, hold onto the goodness and grace of God and worship and pray with us. The Lord Bless you and keep you.

Our Archbishops have challenged us to be a radically different kind of church: ***"Our life is going to be less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday and more characterised by the prayer and service we offer each day"***:

- Through the Abbey website you can access:
 - **Special services for Holy Week and Easter**, we encourage you to join with the principle services at the time indicated to give a sense of corporate worship even though we are not physically gathered together.
 - A daily **thought for the day** for encouragement and engagement with both the Christian year and national and global events.
 - A daily **musical item** from one of our choirs.
 - The facility to send in a **prayer request**.
- Our Abbey Clergy are here for **support and prayer**. Please ring the Abbey office for the emergency pastoral number, available on the answerphone.
- We are all encouraged to **care and be cared for** by family, friends and neighbours, nobody needs to remain a stranger, nobody should feel completely isolated and alone. Please look out for others.

Holy Week and Easter. For a list of our Holy Week and Easter services and reflections, please follow this link: <https://www.bathabbey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Easter-and-Holy-Week-2020-FINAL.pdf>

Resources for Home Worship: We have put together a document signposting resources for your worship at home. You can download this from our website: <https://www.bathabbey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Resources-for-Home-1.pdf>

BathAbbey



NOTICES

Sunday 10.30am come for Coffee! Bring a mug of coffee and catch upon opportunity for a 30minute catch-up after the Sunday service. This week we are trialling 'Zoom' as a way of having parish coffee. It's easy to download Zoom onto your device- search via google and follow the instructions. Then all you need to do is click on the hyperlink below to join for coffee - give it a go! (Don't forget that only one person can talk at a time with this system and you will need to enable your audio and video as you enter the meeting- don't worry- lots of people are using it who thought they were totally IT illiterate!) Hope to see you there! *Time: Apr 5, 2020 10:30am, using this link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/141133748?pwd=S3czcW9KNGNLZWpRNU1NejRBZUZvdz09> (Meeting ID: 141 133 748 Password: 995218)* Evelyn

2020 Vision & Stewardship Update. Huge and warmest thanks to all who have already returned the two response forms, renewing your commitment of time & talents, and of weekly financial giving, to make possible the Abbey's mission as laid out in our 2020 Vision.

The pandemic broke just as we were about to mail out the Vision & Stewardship materials, to those on our Electoral Roll who hadn't yet been able to collect them from Church. In the current unsettled circumstances it seems appropriate to delay that mailing beyond the expected peak of the outbreak, and also to extend the response period beyond Easter Day (as originally requested), leaving it open-ended for the time being.

Meanwhile, as everyone will realise, closing the Abbey means that most volunteering opportunities are sadly now on hold, and also that removal of visitor donations is expected to put great strain on our finances.

Regarding the latter challenge, those who have received the 2020 Vision pack will know that we are hoping to recruit 100 more members to our Planned Giving scheme, and also to encourage each current member to prayerfully consider a step increase in their weekly standing order. This would mean that the Abbey is able to pay its regular parish share to the Diocese, without dependence upon visitor income. If you are in a position to respond already that would be a very great help, but otherwise we will be in touch again when the pandemic situation is clearer. Thank-you. *Guy*

Supporting others in Prayer: It is always important that the church is praying, and we are setting up a new way to enable prayer requests to be sent to a team of intercessors. If you would like to join an Abbey intercessory prayer team, please email evelyn@bathabbey.org. Team members will receive prayer requests via email, initially co-ordinated by Evelyn. Prayer requests can be sent via an email address prayer@bathabbey.org or passed on directly to Evelyn. Please let your family, friends and neighbours know that we are available to pray directly for any needs. The team will be led by one of the Abbey clergy, with specially appointed members.

Contact Groups. The Clergy and Churchwardens are very grateful for the support that leaders are offering to those in their groups. If there is anything else that we can help you with please contact us through the Abbey Office office@bathabbey.org (or phone the answerphone for an emergency number).

If at this time of social isolation you feel in need of spiritual comfort, and inspiration, then Premier Christian Radio broadcasts 24/7 and can be found on digital radio and online at www.premier.org.uk. The station provides a range of programmes featuring reflections, prayer, discussion on contemporary issues, Biblical teaching, in depth analysis of national and international news from a Christian perspective, as well as worship.

Helping others in the wider community: If you are able / healthy and under 70 you might like to volunteer as 'Compassionate Community Connector', through the BANES 3SG website. After application approval you will be contacted by a local organiser. This will be working with those who fall outside the 1.5m most vulnerable but have been locally identified as in need.

Make your own Palm Cross. As we won't be picking up our Palm Crosses as normal at church, you might like to make your own. You can download an instruction sheet for making Palm Crosses out of paper or card here: http://request.org.uk/teachers/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/08/palmbcross_ks2.pdf

'Give thanks in all circumstances': The Saturday Thought For The Day will focus upon simple ways to live out our faith during lock-down and self-isolation. Please send a picture or a few words to me about things that have brought you joy or for which you are thankful so that I can build a 'community of thankfulness' to use as part of my ongoing Saturday Thought For the Day - drop me a line to evelyn@bathabbey.org or send a picture to 07920 847322. I look forward to hearing from you. *Evelyn*

Praying for Zambia: At midday on 1st April, Zambia had only 36 confirmed cases of Covid-19 and no-one had died of the virus. Give thanks that a country whose health resources, though highly competent, are spread so thinly, has been given time to prepare its people to take the social-distancing and self-isolation measures that will become necessary. Please pray for those who are vulnerable, those who are fearful, that they may know the peace of Christ in their hearts.

Praying for Reaching the Unreached – RTU – Tamil Nadu, India: This week, we have been in touch with Fr Antony, Director of RTU. As we have seen in the news, India has been in lock-down for a week. There have been chaotic scenes as thousands try to return to their homes. At RTU, the schools are closed. The emphasis will now be to support people in their houses since that is where they are confined. With a population of more than 1.3 billion people and the prevalence of coronavirus likely to be much higher than we know, the situation is only going to get much worse.

Here in the UK the trustees met to consider our prospects and to agree Fr Antony's budget. As the shadows grow longer we, all of us, share the same feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. It is difficult to make decisions. He faces the hard reality of this situation in a poor, rural community, already deprived of so much. Fr Antony wishes us well and prays for us as we must pray for him.

James Playfair