



OLD HILLS MALVERN HEADLINES

Keeping You in touch with Your Churches during the Coronavirus

Hello Having spent a good while contemplating the Government and Church regulations that were issued on the 12th and 29th June, I have decided not to reopen the churches for worship until the 6th September. See my response to the PCC's later in this bulletin. This *Headlines* is larger than normal as I am included within it the Beyond Covid questionnaire I mentioned the other week. As we contemplate reopening, we mustn't forget that our churches have engaged with different ways of worshipping, communicating with one another and hopefully learnt a bit more about our faith and prayer. How can we, or should we, continue? With the potential for a Diocese Review of Ministry likely, after the Open Conversations at the end of last year, perhaps its timely to look at what we are doing and take the time to reflect upon it. Somethings were of the moment, others might continue. I would appreciate your thoughts on these. There is no pressure to respond, or respond quickly, but your thoughts and views would be useful to read and reflect upon. Give yourself to the August Bank Holiday to do just that. Take Care Rev Gary

Edition 15

5th July 2020

CHURCH STATUS All Churches **CLOSED** for all Public Worship except Graveside funerals
WORSHIP Zoom Service - see email from me (not Zoom) for links and passwords for ALL Zoom based worship in the coming week:

Sunday Worship - Sunday 5th July 2020

Morning Prayer

by ZOOM at 10.30am

Common Worship Lectionary Readings -

Genesis 24.34-38,42-49,58-end Zechariah 9.9-12 Romans 7.15-25 and Matthew 11.16-19,25-end
(If any one wants to read at this service, the **red** readings will be used and will be shown on screen - just let me know if you want to read a lesson)

A Service of **Spiritual Communion is available on line** if you cannot access the Zoom Service. Intercessions for the week, based on the Lectionary readings for Sunday are on line via the parishes' website and printed in this *Headlines* edition.

THURSDAY NIGHT PRAYER VIA ZOOM – 8.30pm-9.00pm - Contact Rev Gary for Zoom access link/codes (normally on the weekly covering email for the *Headlines* circulation)

Our Prayers this week should remember: We pray for the communities in which we live and serve – all that are unwell in body mind and spirit. For those that are shielding or remaining in self isolation because of anxiety or COVID symptoms. We pray for those that are dear to us but cannot see at the moment. For those venturing out after time being shielded from the virus. Pray for your churches as they plan for reopening.

We pray for the families of Mary Andrews (Powick) , Phyllis Bladder (Guarlford) and Esme Moore (Newland) (please use the above prayer and Community Location Prayers with the Intercessions)

Praying through our Communities

Powick - The Orchard, Parklands, Upton Road, Bramley Close, Essex Close, Montgomerie Close

Callow End - Wheatfields, Alton Park, Nixon Court and The Maize Maze

Madresfield - Rectory Lane and the MEYC

Guarlford - Penny Close and The Nursery **Newland** - The Beauchamp Community

The Public Houses, Social Clubs , Guest Houses and Stanbrook Abbey that are contemplating their reopening this coming weekend



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Church reopening - a statement to the PCCs and congregations from Rev Gary

Having considered the advice coming out of the Church, including comprehensive advice published by the government on the 12th and 29th June for faith organisations, and reflecting upon it from my own ministerial perspective and through the lens of our four churches, I have decided that no church will open for worship until September. This is so counterintuitive to what we should be doing in times of great need I appreciate. However, we are dealing with a situation that cannot be predicted or controlled at this time adequately on a number of levels.

There has been good progress towards getting us open - cleaning equipment and sanitiser gel has been ordered in sufficient quantities to be issued to churches. I know that those that clean will get the churches ready for the first possible open service. Signage is underway and we can attend to the social distancing requirements well. That said, the sense of viral anxiety is still a concern to so many of our congregations and church volunteers - many of whom are in the at-risk categories of age and underlying health issues.

That said, we must be like Aeneas and get off the mat at some point (Acts 9.32-33) . Therefore, I urge you all to make that final push in confidence and in action to prepare our churches for a reopening from September. I am looking forward already to my first services in our church(es) on Sunday 6th September. A brief rota will be produced for our magazines, *Headlines* and online media.

Until September, worship services on Zoom will continue twice a week (Sundays 10.30am and Thursday evenings at 8.30pm). Due to the kind donation from a parish benefactor, we have accessed a better version of Zoom that will permit the showing of video (as we did on Sunday), music and have a little more time and unlimited use and access. So, even though we can't sing in church, we can still sing at home. The overall success of Zoom means that it will remain a feature of our service rota from September - to provide choice and worship for those of you that decide to continue to stay at home. Even the virtual coffee morning idea is proving popular and will be used for PCC meetings soon, too.

The summer months (July/August and September) tend to be quiet in our churches. As I ventured last time, services will potentially return in a phased way with not all churches open at once and maybe at different times to start with. Likewise, until the position regarding Holy Communion is sorted, the services on offer in the churches will be Services of the Word with an open opportunity to remain for private prayer afterwards- online Zoom services will be services of Spiritual Communion. For the weeks that I am off ministry this summer, I am delighted to advise that the *Lord's Alive* team will be producing videos that can be accessed online via Facebook (you will not need an account to access these). Additionally, *Churches Together in Malvern* will hopefully be producing a signpost to where worship is happening, should you wish to travel outside your bubble to worship.

With respect to opening for private prayer, I would like to open St James' Callow End on a Wednesday afternoon at some point in July and onwards . This is subject to the completion of the risk assessment process, the availability of volunteers to staff and sanitise and publicity. I will promote the start date for this private prayer session, for the benefit of all across both parishes, in a future edition of *Headlines*.



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Flash Foodbank Collection

Flash/pop up foodbank collections are continuing and by the time you read this we will be collecting at the Phone box in Guarlford and outside the church at Callow End. I hope to get a report in how our collections are being put to use from Pete Buchanan, Chair of the trustees. Watch this space.

News from Severn Heights

I spoke with Sue Jones, the Registered Manager at Severn Heights Care Home on the Old Hills in Callow End earlier this week. To date, they have not had any case of COVID19 amongst the residents nor staff. She puts that success down to an effective lockdown, great hygiene standards, uniform washing and social distancing. It has been very hard on the residents but contact is maintained with relatives via FaceTime and phone calls - and speaking through the windows. The recent good weather gave the opportunity for socially distanced visits in the gardens. A significant number of residents need to be shielded so access to relatives is regrettably restricted. Likewise, Barbara Hill and I cannot visit at the moment for a church service but it is hope we can revisit again soon.

Wot No Scones

Something a bit different - a virtual coffee morning just to chat. There is a theme - hoe can we fundraise for our churches in a Beyond Covid world but you have to get through the Vicar's 10 second Quiz first. Join me on **Saturday morning, 4th July at 10.30am for 30 mins of banter and chat across the parishes**. This is a virtual coffee morning, so don't turn up at a church or The Vicarage. It's on Zoom so bring your own coffee, tea, and scones..... check for the Zoom Link on the covering email for this edition of Headlines.

Caption Competition



Last September, I was the guest of some lovely people who gave me a behind the scenes tour of the Army Air Corps HQ and museum at Middle Wallop in Hampshire. I am a bit of an aviation geek so it was a real thrill to go behind the scenes to see how a frontline army base operates. Here I am with one of the Army's Apache Helicopters. Do you have a caption for this photo.....here are a couple of suggestions to get you thinking....

*Vicar sets his sights on the Diocesan Ministry Review.....
What do you mean - my Zoom sermon is too long?*

*"Answers on a post card please" - no prize – other than the thrill of making others smile or laugh out loud (perhaps).
The two Majors who showed me around are keen to see your captions so I will be sending them along!*



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Old Hills Malvern's Churches

Intercessions for Fourth Sunday after Trinity Year A – July 5th 2020

(please use with the Community prayers on front of this week's Headlines, as appropriate)

Holy God, and Lord of the Dance, we raise our prayers to you in the power of the Spirit which unites us with Christ Jesus trusting that you will hear our prayers and use them to accomplish your will for the world and for the church. *(Short Silence)* **Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer**

Faithful God, we pray for all people who seek to follow your way in their lives. Let your church speak your word of truth with confidence and in unity so that those who are searching and listening will be able to see and hear clearly your message of love and peace. **Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer**

Creator God, we pray for people and nations whose troubles, brought about by the global pandemic, drown out your music of harmony and where the violent heat of anger seeks to destroy your word of peace. **Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer**

Father God, we pray for the people around us in our streets and villages. Give us sensitivity and insight into their needs and vulnerabilities so that we may learn truly to love our neighbours as ourselves. Help us to be responsible and sensible in all our interaction with those around us so that we do not increase the chance of infecting, or being infected by, those we meet. **Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer**

Gracious God, we pray for people we know who are ill, anxious or bereaved, and for those that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens. We pray that you will lead them, and us, in peace towards healing and wholeness of mind and spirit. **Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer**

Merciful God, many people die by violence, war, and famine each day. Show your mercy to those who suffer so unjustly for these sins against your love, and gather them to the eternal kingdom of peace. **Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer**

Loving God, we offer ourselves to you in faith and confidence. Show us as we go out into the world how we can best prepare ourselves to be part of your response to our prayers. Fill us with the Spirit of life which was in Christ Jesus, your Son and our Saviour.

Merciful Father: Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Theology of Lockdown - A thought for the week - Have we been paralysed too long in lockdown?

Acts 9:32-43 (NIV)

³² As Peter travelled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda. ³³ There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. ³⁴ "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. ³⁵ All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.



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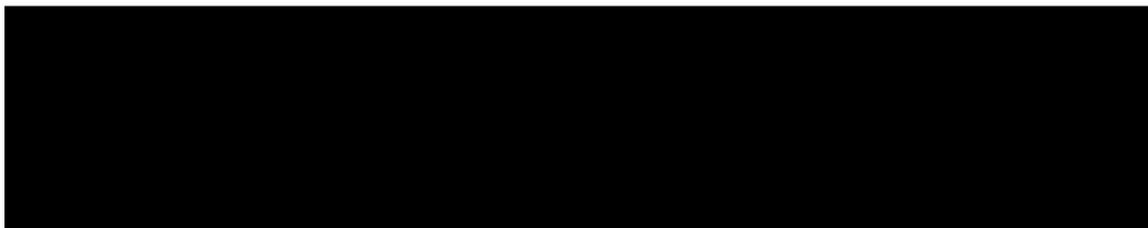
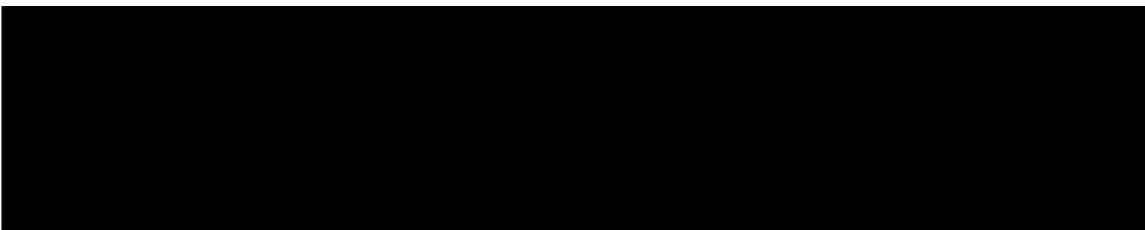
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Not the End Times

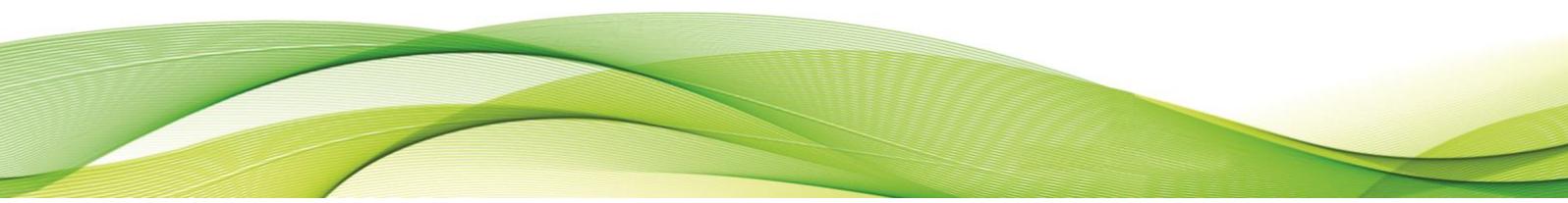
Last week's Quiz Answers on St Peter

1. Fisherman
2. Probably married (*see reference to Jesus healing Peter's mother in law at Matt8:14, Mark1:24-31 & John 4:38*)
3. Andrew
4. Crucifixion - upside down
5. The Transfiguration
6. Bethsaida (*on the sea of Galilee*)
7. Paralysis
8. John (bonus mark for the Gate - Gold, Silver and Bronze)
9. The clock face at St Peter's is made up of two pieces of slate

As we contemplate how Christmas could be this year.....



(courtesy of the Vicar Covid support group - original cartoon source unknown)





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CHURCH LIFE BEYOND COVID-19

An invitation to reflect and respond

Name (optional):
Usual service attended and where:

A message from Rev Gary

COVID-19 has changed our experience of church life significantly. As we move slowly towards the possibility of returning to church and greater social interaction, I thought it would be useful to reflect on what we *have gained and lost* during these weeks since we left our physical churches in March.

Do we want church life just to return to what it was like before, or are there things that have started during the pandemic that we wish to continue, or are there things that we haven't really missed?

Your answers to these questions will help us discern how to move forwards into the future. This survey is divided into two sections.

The first section asks very open questions about our *Church Life and Community Witness*. What have we lost and gained? Also, I have to raise the issue of church finances.

The second section is very specific about what you have valued that is new about *our worship and communications* with one another.

Please complete as much of the form as you wish and return it me, preferably by email or by post to the Vicarage by the August Bank Holiday. Every Blessing and thanks for contributing to the debate about reopening and the new normal for our four churches.

Rev Gary Crellin

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Section 1: Church Life and Community Witness

1. What have we lost in the past four months as a church that must **remain lost**?
2. What has been lost that we must **regain** in the weeks and months ahead?
3. What has been **gained** in the past three months that must be **retained or developed**?
4. What was gained that was **“ok” for a season** but can **now be lost**?
5. Our Churches' finances could be severely tested over the next few years. All weddings have been postponed or changed, there are no baptisms planned and funeral ministry continues to change, with many in our communities not choosing to involve their church even though they could. Our Virtual Zoom church worship on a Sunday does not take a collection!

Regular Giving is going to be so important and I am so grateful that so many of you continue to maintain your giving to your church. Would you be willing to increase your Giving and where appropriate Gift Aid it and give via Ebanking etc rather than via a cash plate collection or envelope scheme, where appropriate?
(for further info on how to do this, please contact me or your parish treasurer in confidence)

YES

NO



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Section 2: Worship and Communications

Below is a list of activities in church life that have started or developed during COVID-19. Some were operated across both parishes, some not. Some are quite established, some not. Please mark the column with a tick if you wish the activity to continue or cease but please give a reason either way. Leave blank if you don't Have a strong opinion. Add activities that I've overlooked on a separate piece of paper:

Worship

Activity	Keep going	Cease	Why?
Zoom services (as an addition to worship in church)			
New service sheets as used with Zoom			
Different congregations and churches worshipping together			
Online Worship Resources tab on the Parishes' Website			
The introduction of Virtual Night Prayer (Compline) on Thursday nights at 8.30pm			
Greater flexibility in our adherence to the liturgical calendar			
Use of images, video and internet resources during worship			
Praying Through the Parish - defined prayers for our communities			
New worship opportunities – such as Iona Morning Prayer, Malvern Noon Prayer and Spiritual Communion			
Funeral support liturgy leaflet			





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Accessing the Diocesan monthly Prayer Diary on line			
Video Prayer Series – Thy Kingdom Come Video			

Supplementary Questions

Zoom has been used for worship since Easter Sunday. Typically, each Sunday worship reaches out to 32 people. Night prayer has been introduced on a Thursday night and musters c10 people. The Church is heavily suggesting continuation of a local on-line presence to reach out to those that remain shielded or anxious about gathering, however hard we strive to make our churches as Covid19 safe as we can. IF a Zoom Service was to continue:

Would you still access it? **YES** **NO**

What time of day would you prefer a Sunday online worship?
AM (10.30am) **PM(3.00pm)** **EVENING (5pm)**
 Or Suggest a time.....

If you haven't accessed the Zoom Worship, please can you explain why.....

If you have watched/participated in another church's online services (YouTube/Facebook/Zoom/Website), please compare them to what we have been doing.....





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Communications & Activities (including prayer development & Bible Study)

Activity	Keep going	Cease	Why?
Old Hills Malvern Headlines Newsletter – by email			
Old Hills Malvern Headlines Newsletters – by post			
Vicar’s Pastoral letters on line			
Vicar’s Pastoral letters in the Parish magazines			
Telephone Buddy Contacts/pastoral calling			
Zoom meetings of the PCC			
Continued expansion of our Social Media presence via Facebook and Twitter			Any other platforms to be used?
Continued expansion of the web site, including repurposed Home Page and dedicated On Line Worship resources			
Maintaining effective contact with schools and Severn Heights Nursing Home			
Flash/Pop Up Collections for Malvern Hills Food Bank			
Links with Upton Baptist Church for Food Pack distribution (Guarlford only)			



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Video Messages on social media and in support of <i>Lord's Alive</i> Family Service on line			
Bell Tolling for the NHS (Powick only)			
Promoting Community engagement - VE DAY with Parish Councils etc			
Supporting Volunteering opportunities e.g. Cllr Tom Wells COVID Volunteers and community action in Madresfield			
Promoting the existence and relevance of local "Alms" Charities across the parishes and lobbying trustees to change the terms of reference and increase publicity to promote take up			
"Wot No Scones" - a Virtual Coffee Morning on line			
Deepening our Faith series - The Examen, Home Worship, The Beatitudes and a Journey with Paul "correspondence course"			





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A Space for your reflections, prayers and comments: You don't have to use it! Any comments made will not be attributed in any summary but all will be read and prayed through.

Thank you for contributing to the review. Please scan/send/post or deliver your response to The Vicar