

ST PANCRAS EASTER NEWSLETTER – 8 APRIL 2020

Dear friends, brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

Warm greetings for Easter 2020. At this time, the church remembers the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. As we go through a major upheaval in the lives of our families, community and nation, it is worth reminding ourselves that Christian confidence is grounded in the love and power that God showed in raising Jesus from the dead. No other event in history is comparable. Death has been conquered. God's love is victorious.

Even so, these days will be a struggle for us. Our Easter celebrations will not be the same. Many of you, like me, will be finding the increased isolation a real burden. As you read through the rest of this newsletter, you'll see that some of us have had the wonderful news of the safe arrival of grandchildren but are not able to visit them. Others of us have faced real tragedy through the deaths of family and loved ones. Jesus' death and resurrection do not make the sorrows and partings of these days any less deep. Separation still hurts. Death's shadow still clings to us. The apostle Paul wrote to friends, "As for us, brothers and sisters, when, for a short time, we were made orphans by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face" (1 Thessalonians 2:17, NRSV). What a powerful expression of the grief of enforced separation! It is right to long and pray for these days to end, for God's kingdom to come.

'We longed with great eagerness to see your face ...' (1 Thess. 2.17)

The theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote about the pain of disconnection after he was imprisoned by the Nazis. He wrote, 'There is nothing that can replace the absence of someone dear to us, and one should not even attempt to do so; we must simply persevere ...' Faith means we are called to endure these days with hope. I pray that as we look back at the events of that first Easter so we will be enabled to look forward with hope. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. He is risen. He is alive. He has given us His Spirit.

Every blessing in Jesus Christ,

Lawrence

EASTER SERVICES (VIA ZOOM)

Maundy Thursday (9th April) – PRAYER EVENING – 7.30pm

Good Friday (10th April) – WORDS FROM THE CROSS – 2pm

Easter Sunday (12th April) – MORNING PRAYER – 9.00am

ALL AGE CELEBRATION – 10.30am

If you would like to join any of our Zoom services please contact
lawrence.braschi@stps.org.uk



NOTICES

We were saddened this week to learn of the **death of June Farley's son Steven** of COVID-19 on 5th April. Steven's twin brother Alan remains in critical condition at Derriford. The family have been thankful for how well Alan and Steven have been looked after by the staff at Derriford. June has been grateful for support and prayers, and asks that we can continue to pray for Alan's recovery.

Sadly, Stuart and Liz Barnes have also let us know of the **death of Stuart's mum, Brenda**. Both Brenda and her husband Peter have been frequent visitors to St Pancras over the years. Thankful for the many years of family life, please do remember the Barnes family in your prayers.

Congratulations to Faye (née Steer) and Rowan on the **birth of Lorcan** on 28th February. Lorcan, (Irish for Little Fierce Warrior) weighed in at 7lbs 2oz. As Faye and her husband, Rowan, live in a cottage called, "The Yews",

Lorcan bears the second name Ewan, meaning, "from the yews".

Congratulations also to Jess (née Wass) and Will on the **arrival of the third Harvey baby, Esther Rose**, who came into the world weighing 7lbs 14ozs on Sunday 29th March.

We are delighted for grandparents, Vanessa and Colin Steer and Tricia Wass and hope that they will soon be able to see the new additions to their families.

We also send **congratulations to Lizzie Clarke** (daughter of Jane) who has recently been promoted to Director of Conservation for the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) in Singapore.

WELCOME TO REV SARAH SHARLAND

Hi, everybody! I am delighted to be joining you at St. Pancras. Lawrence has kindly invited me to introduce myself and I am looking forward to meeting all of you over the coming months. I have been in Plymouth for 20 or so months, having moved from Hampshire which had been my home for the majority of the time that I was serving as a Royal Navy officer. After leaving the RN I had a spell at home and then went to study at Trinity Theology College in Bristol. I have two grown-up daughters: one is living and working in London, and the other is currently on a gap year travelling around SE Asia (although that plan has been somewhat scuppered recently and she is spending more time than planned in Thailand).



Having spent most of my life as an atheist, I found faith 12 years ago through doing an Alpha course which I didn't know I was going on! (God is good like that – he knew I wouldn't have gone if I had.) I went from arrogantly thinking that God was a figment of other people's imagination to realising that he is real and the creator of everything including me and all I see around me. After that huge revelation happened to me, I had to change my whole paradigm of life – I had a lot of rethinking to do – and have been learning ever since, in deeper and deeper ways, just how awesome is our God whom we serve and how much he loves us all. I look forward to hearing from you about your stories of God's faithfulness in your lives.

I am looking forward to being part of the lovely St. Pancras church family, getting to know you better and hearing your stories. I so enjoyed sharing worship with some of you at the (Zoom) Palm Sunday service and I look forward to spreading with you the Good News of the Kingdom of God coming nearer to all those who don't yet know it. May God bless you all richly in this time and always.

Sarah

[We're really glad to be welcoming Sarah on placement with us as part of her curacy. Sarah has been serving as curate at St Mary's Plympton for the last eighteen months and began her placement with us on Sunday. Please do pray for her as she settles into a new church family during a challenging time.]

TROUBLE WITH THE COMPUTER?



Derek Gribble writes: Hi Everyone

Part of my role at the Plymouth Foodbank is to help folk build their confidence in using a tablet, laptop or a desktop computer. This is done through an online course called Learn My Way. It is a course where you learn at your own rate and no one puts you under any pressure to complete the course. You can take as long as you like and it is completely free.

So during this time of isolation you may want to consider joining the course and gain confidence in using a computer. The course starts at a very basic level and assumes you know very little about how to use the computer, but I can also guarantee regular users of a computer will learn something to aid their use.

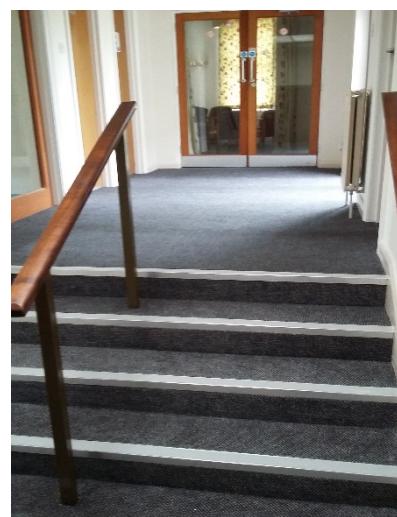
I will be available by email should you have any queries or need any assistance.

If anyone is interested then I will need to register you through the Foodbank setup and once that is complete you can get started. Remember it is fun and it is there to help you get the best out of using a computer for your benefit. There isn't space to put here all of the titles you can look at, but just to give you a taster. You can look at emails, online banking, Facebook etc, just to mention a few.

If you are interested you can let me know by sending me an email, my Foodbank email is
derek@oasisproject.co.uk

LOUNGE UPDATE

Thank-you to Colin McGowan and Peter Dyson for successfully applying to our insurers for the cost of repairing damage to the lounge floor caused recently by a water leak. Repairs have been undertaken by Complete Works and the lounge and area leading into the church have been recarpeted – something to look forward to seeing when we return to church. Whilst Complete Works were on the church site they have repainted the front of the church hall and done some repairs to cracking plaster in the church itself, so we are very grateful to them for their work.

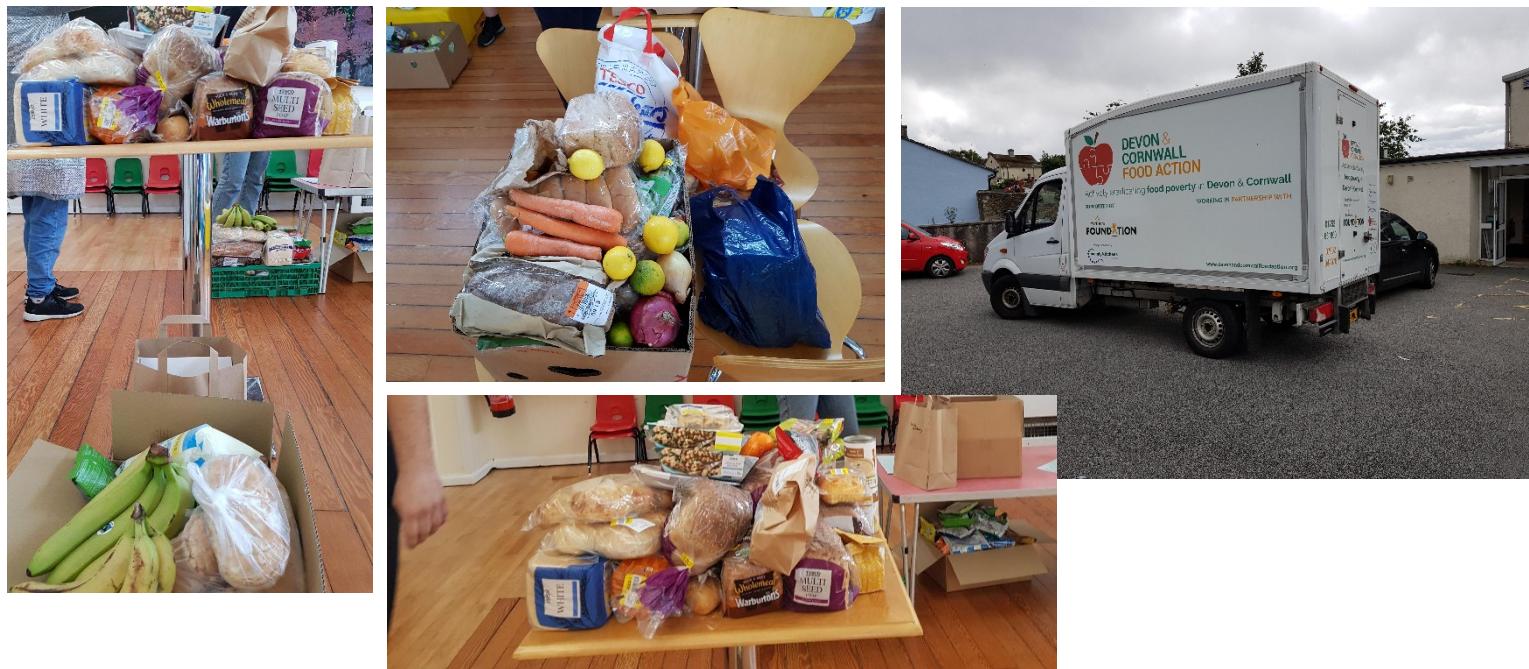


GIVING UPDATE

Although the church building is closed, our outreach continues and bills still need to be paid. Thank you to all who give by bank standing order or put money aside to put in the plate when we get together again. Of course, we understand if you find your finances becoming tight and you are not able currently to give as you have previously. However if you normally give by cash or cheques and are able to bank online, then perhaps you can consider giving directly through the banking system, either making one-off payments or setting up a regular standing order. Also, if you are a taxpayer and are able to Gift Aid your donation, that would bring in an extra 25% from the government. Please contact Peter (mp.dyson@btinternet.com) for the church's bank details and, if needed, a gift aid declaration form.

PENNYCROSS EMERGENCY FOOD HAMPERS

As the lockdown continues, many vulnerable families in our community are faced with even more difficult situations. Mariska has been working with the family support workers at our local schools to coordinate food hampers for more than 20 families who are in most urgent need. The food comes through Devon and Cornwall Food Action (DCFA) and Fare Share, both of which receive excess food from supermarkets and local suppliers. DCFA are currently struggling for funding at a time when the need is most urgent. If you are able to **help subsidise a hamper for a struggling family** at this time (£5 per week) please do speak to Mariska or the vicar. With a big thanks to all those who have helped in many ways to enable this help to continue.



VOLUNTEERS

If you are able to help support others in the community at this time, for example by picking up prescriptions or helping to collect essential food, could you let the vicar or churchwardens know.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

If you would like to include anything in the next newsletter do write or phone Lawrence Braschi (lawrence.braschi@stps.org.uk)