

Vol.60 No 8 August 2020

Online Edition

# **ST PETER'S CHURCH BRACKLEY**

***“Loving God, loving each other, loving Brackley”***



Notice:

Dial-A-Sermon

You can now call 01280 73 43 73 and listen to the latest St Peter's sermon night or day. It will cost no more than any other local landline call. We hope this will be particularly helpful for those isolating without the internet.

### ***The Vicar writes....***



Since reopening for Sunday worship at the beginning of July, it has been a real joy to have 30-35 people at our services each week, with representatives from all three of our congregations (8, 9:30 and 11am), as well as from Halse.

For those of you who cannot attend for safety's sake, I'm conscious the reopening might bring added sadness knowing that others are now able to meet while you are not. I hope that having these magazines printed again will help to foster an ongoing sense of connection with St Peter's – thanks so much to those who have compiled, printed and distributed them.

For those of you who are isolating without internet, and therefore unable to access the online services or weekly email, you might like to try our new 'Dial-a-Sermon' service. Simply call 01280 73 43 73 at any time to listen to the latest St Peter's sermon. It will cost you no more than calling any other local landline number.

For those of you who haven't attended on Sundays but are considering it, perhaps it would help to know what to expect. Of course, in various ways, things feel different. Pews are marked to ensure social-distancing, hand sanitisers are dotted around the building and neither books nor service sheets can be handed out, so we ask people to bring their own bible and print their own liturgy (or use their smartphone). Although we largely follow the same simple order as the online services, singing is not allowed so we just listen to one hymn as a chance for reflection. Children, as always, are very welcome at our services, but current guidance sadly means that neither Junior Church nor the Children's Corner are available, making attendance for young families difficult. Serving refreshments after the service is also a no-no for the time being.

Despite all of this however, I have been pleasantly surprised at how 'normal' the services feel. Sitting under God's Word together, praying together, receiving Communion together (even if only in one kind), and chatting together before and after the service, are such familiar corporate activities that I have previously taken for granted but now savour with renewed appreciation. I have loved the fresh enthusiasm with which liturgy is said, hymns are hummed and conversations are continued long after the service has ended. Christianity was never supposed to be a solo sport and COVID-19 has certainly brought that home to those of us who were not previously housebound.

Of course, there have been many negative impacts on church life during the period of enforced separation and who knows whether a second wave of infections will trigger another closure? Nevertheless, there is blessing amid the trial: lockdowns do have upsides. The things I've noticed include greater cohesion as people look out for the needs of others, greater honesty as the pandemic somehow makes vocalising struggle more acceptable, greater reach as the internet makes church services accessible to new audiences, and greater appreciation for the things that matter most. At a time when church buildings were about the only place Christians *couldn't* worship God, many of us have gained a greater awareness of the glory of God in creation. The list could go on and on.

We must not trivialise the hardship that many are suffering. Yet God's *modus operandi* is always to work good through evil, as epitomised by the death of Christ on the cross, as the very worst of scenarios was used to bring about the very best of outcomes (Acts 2:23, 4:28). Therefore, in distressing times, let's aim to cling to the promise that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Rom. 8:28) and resolve to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thess. 5:18).

Love in Christ, Rev. Rich Duncan

# AUGUST



<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sun</b>	<b>Trinity 8</b> – first Sunday of the month 9.30am	Holy Communion
5 <sup>th</sup> Weds	10am – 12noon	Private Prayer
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>	<b>Trinity 9</b> -second Sunday of the month 9.30am	Holy Communion
12 <sup>th</sup> Weds	10am – 12noon	Private Prayer
13 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	7.45pm	Church Prayer meeting via Zoom
<b>16<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>	<b>Trinity 10</b> – third Sunday of the month 9.30am	Holy Communion
19 <sup>th</sup> Weds	10am – 12noon	Private Prayer
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Sun</b>	<b>Trinity 11</b> -fourth Sunday of the month 9.30am	Holy Communion
25 <sup>th</sup> Tues	2pm	Magazines will be delivered to distributors
26 <sup>th</sup> Weds	10am – 12noon	Private Prayer
<b>30<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>	<b>Trinity 12</b> – fifth Sunday of the month 9.30am	Holy Communion



## READINGS

2nd - Psalm 17:1-7, Matthew 14:13-21

9th - Psalm 119:1-16 The Authority of God's Word

16th - Psalm 119:89-96 The Necessity of God's Word

23rd - Psalm 119:97-112 The Sufficiency of God's Word

30th - Psalm 119:129-136 The Clarity of God's Word

## New beginnings



Is it possible to write in the present day without mentioning the c\*\*\*\*virus or C\*\*\*\*-19?

Possibly (by cheating, as I did above), but it is not possible to claim that the world – our world, God’s world – isn’t already a very different place.

I am writing at the start of July. Most readers will see this in August. Things have been moving incredibly quickly since March, when the world we knew changed beyond our imagining. As I write, we are preparing to reopen some churches for public worship, but many clergy, and many more lay people, are wary or reluctant about taking that step. Who could have guessed that?

From the beginning of August, ‘shielding’ will be no more, but it seems that most of those who had to be shielded are in no hurry to rush out to work, or to shop, or to go to church. Who could imagine that people would be reluctant to leave their homes after over four months of virtual house arrest?

And who would have thought that we would be encouraged off public transport and back into our cars? Or that the government would still be paying people not to go to work?

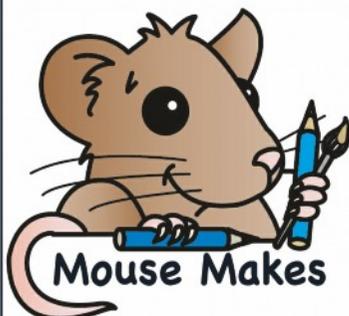
This time of late summer and early autumn is when we have to press the reset button and start life all over again. In fact, of course, some wonderful things have gone on, and there has been some very beautiful living during the crisis – as well as some tragic dying – and we mustn’t lose the lessons we have learnt. But now, we have to look hard at how best to get back to a sustainable future: going to work, opening our churches, learning to socialise again. All those things are likely to look different, but we need to do them.

God is the expert at fresh starts. We need to take this to him, and seek his wisdom. Let’s ask him to give us his new birth – as individuals, as churches, as a society.

With best wishes

+Donald

Bishop of Peterborough



The **PSALMS** are hymns of **PRAYER** and **PRAISE** to God.

*"I will proclaim your greatness, my God and king; I will thank you: I will praise you for ever and ever."*

*Psalm 145:1-2*

### Glory to God



*"How clearly the sky reveals God's glory! How plainly it shows what He has done."*

*Psalm 19:1*

Cut out and colour these cards to help you to **thank** and **praise** God.



*"Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path."* *Psalm 119:105*

### God's World

*"The world and all that is in it belong to the Lord: the earth and all who live on it are His."*

*Psalm 24:1*



### Praise the Lord!

*"Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord."*

*Psalm 150:6*



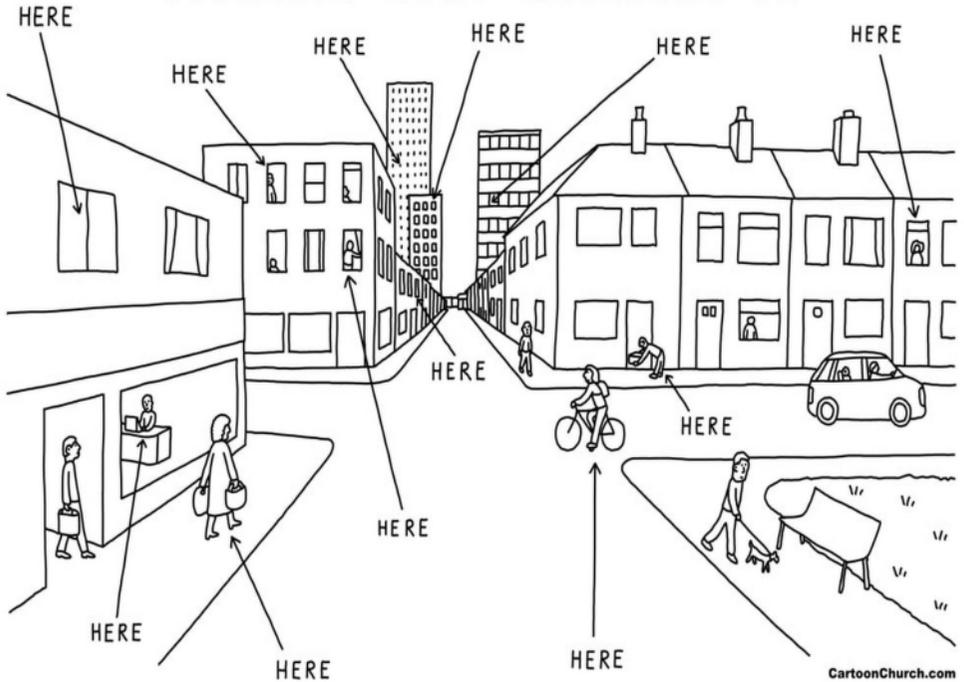
### Give thanks!

*"Your constant love is better than life itself, and so I will praise you. I will give You thanks as long as I live; I will raise my hands to you in prayer."*

*Psalm 63:3-4*



# WHERE THE CHURCH IS



If you have enjoyed this short online edition of the current magazine, you can purchase the full 20 page printed edition for the modest sum of 40p.

The magazine is available at Jems on the Market Place or you can have delivered to your door at no extra charge monthly.

If you would like to take out an annual subscription for home delivery please email Marilyn Israel at

[marilynisrael2017@gmail.com](mailto:marilynisrael2017@gmail.com)