



UPDATE #21

'IN-CHURCH' SERVICES

After the re-opening of St Peter's last Sunday, it is our hope that we will continue to be open on Sunday mornings for the foreseeable future. However, there are three factors that the Vicar, the Churchwardens, and the PCC are having to be conscious of:

1. **We are required to observe the government legislation** that places significant restrictions on what happens in and around church buildings. Increasingly, the restrictions (wearing masks, restricting how close people get to one another, patterns of cleaning etc) are legal requirements, and we have little or no room for manoeuvre. We do understand that many people find these restrictions onerous and frustrating, but part of the process of re-opening is a commitment to observing the recent legislation. Please help us by following the instructions of the Churchwardens and stewards!
2. **We want to welcome everyone, but have to be conscious of the maximum numbers** we can admit to any one service. Very simply: at this time, we are unable to let into the building as many people as might want to come. There are plans to start a second service (perhaps a second morning service? or maybe an afternoon one to complement the one in the morning? or an evening one?!) if, as, and when we get to the point that we need it. The rationale behind the booking system is that it allows us to keep within our maximums, but also to have a sense of whether or not one Sunday service is sufficient.
3. **We are having to deal with many last-minute changes** as the diocese and the government respond to the changing picture locally and nationally. As many institutions are finding at the moment, the changes often come through quite late in the day (and are not always immediately clear), so it is difficult to be clear in advance about what will — and what won't — be permitted. Do pray for those who are needing to implement significant changes, often at very short notice.

So please do bear with us! If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Mark (572641) or Bernice (866630), or either of the Churchwardens. But in the meantime, we would be grateful if you could be as understanding and co-operative as possible through this difficult time. And **please remember to book your 'in-church' space!**

NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- As well as 'in-church' and 'on-line' opportunities, we are exploring 'at-home' possibilities. It looks increasingly likely that the restrictions will be with us through the winter, and we are looking to find ways for people to gather — safely and legally! — through the colder months. Watch this space!
- The PCC meeting in September will again be online. If anyone on the PCC, or any member of the Electoral Roll, has any questions about the process or the issues to be considered, please speak to Bernice in the Church Office.
- The ReNew conference this year is online, which means you no longer need to travel to Leeds if you wish to attend! The online sessions on Monday 14th September are free, but you will need to register in advance via the website (<https://www.renewconference.org.uk/annualconference/>). This year's main speakers are Hugh Palmer (who has recently retired as the Rector of All Souls, Langham Place) and Kanishka Raffel (the Dean of St Andrew's, Sydney).
- Practical help is still being co-ordinated by Bernice Watts and Morvern Cox, who can be contacted by email on stpeterspracticalhelp@gmail.com or by telephone on 01206 866630.
- A newsletter have been received recently from the McCann family. If you would like see a copy, please contact Bernice in the Parish Office who will arrange for it to be sent to you.

- Rosemary and Roger Milne have enjoyed seeing church members at their place on Sunday afternoons during the summer. While the weather is still warm to sit in the garden, they will be happy to see anyone who drops in between 2pm and 5pm. Their address is Newbridge Hill, West Bergholt, CO6 3ES. Park on the drive or in the lane opposite. There's a side entrance to the back garden and room to social distance. Bear in mind that the government's restrictions on gatherings has recently been changed, so please follow the latest news.
- Anne and Mick Kavanagh are taking part in a cycling challenge throughout September, covering 300 miles to raise funds for *Cancer Research UK*. They have been motivated by Mick's recent experience of cancer and excellent NHS care, the importance of exercise to recuperation, and the treatment and care being offered to friends. They are keen to point out that all sponsorship money will go to CRUK, but that they do not wish to deviate any potential funds from the *St Peter's Project*. If you would like to know more, follow their progress, and/or make a donation, please visit: <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/team/anne-mick>, or feel free to contact Anne and Mick directly (07544391882; mick.jademaide@gmail.com). Prayers for good weather and a following wind also appreciated!
- Many people at St Peter's have enjoyed staying in contact by phone and/or social media through the lockdown, which has been a real highlight and lifeline for many. Could we, though, gently encourage people to be careful not to pass on other people's contact details without their consent? *If in doubt, please check first!* We want to encourage people to be in contact as much as possible, but also want to respect people's confidentiality. If you have any concerns or reservations, do please get in contact with the Vicar or Churchwardens.

READINGS, A THOUGHT, AND A PRAYER FOR THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Lectionary readings: Genesis 50.15-21; Romans 14.1-12; Matthew 18.21-35

Something to think about: The theme of our readings this week is living as those who have been forgiven by God, and serve him alone. Since all churches are full of sinners (by definition!), we need to work out a way to live together with those who may hurt or offend us. In our Gospel reading from Matthew 18, Jesus shows Peter the extent to which we must be willing to forgive one another, bearing in mind how much we have been forgiven, as the parable then goes on to demonstrate! Joseph, meanwhile, is an example of how to forgive. At the end of the Genesis story, his eyes are not on retribution (which belongs to God alone) but on the guiding hand of divine providence and the needs of his family members. O that we might have a similar attitude to those who cause us grief and pain! Meanwhile, the needs of our sisters and brothers in Christ is also the theme of our Epistle, from Romans 14: we must not pass judgment on someone else's servant, but be willing to live in a way that serves them (even if it makes life more difficult for us). So let us pause and reflect: are we willing to forgive those who have offended us, or caused us great pain? how is that forgiveness seen in our thoughts, and our words, and our deeds? and when we struggle to forgive, what themes and/or passages in the Bible encourage us to be more like our forgiving heavenly Father?

The Collect: Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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 DIARY

Sunday 13th September [the 14th Sunday after Trinity]

- 10:00am — **Church Family Worship Online** (available on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#))
- 10:00am — **Morning Service in Church** (booking essential, see above)

Monday 14th September

- 9:00am — **The ReNew Conference** (registration via www.renewconference.org.uk)

Wednesday 16th September

- 8:00pm — **Church Prayer Meeting** (via the *St Peter's Church* WhatsApp group)

Sunday 20th September [the 15th Sunday after Trinity]

- 10:00am — **Church Family Worship Online** (available on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#))
- 10:00am — **Morning Service in Church** (booking essential, see above)