The Great St Mary's eMag

It's your weekly eMag(nificat) from Great St Mary's, the University Church. The building may be closed, but the church is still going strong. Read on to find out about what's going on:

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From Rev Devin

We've been busy on social media. In the last 28 days we've reached 22,376 people on Facebook, including 15,733 people who have viewed our online worship services. We regularly bring between 200 to 700 people to our online services. And that's not counting our 1,078 Twitter follower and the 24,500 people we reached on Twitter this month.

Our online presence is a tool of mission, but it is not a marker of holiness — and not just because Facebook counts everyone that watches for 3 seconds as a 'viewer'. I don't think God will ask us if we worshiped in a pretty church building, or whether we liked a popular Facebook page. We'll be asked whether we loved our neighbour as ourselves, whether we loved God with all our heart,
soul, mind, and strength; whether we fed the hungry and sheltered the homeless poor; whether we prayed without ceasing.

Now that's a big ask. And in a time where we are being asked to stay home to save lives, many of us are struggling to learn to be still rather than to keep busy. Praying at home challenges us to be still and seek God without some tools from our familiar spiritual tool kit: choral music, architecture and the physical presence of others at prayer. Without those tools at our disposal we can worry: *Am I doing this right?* Don't worry; you're probably not! But then again, we probably weren't perfect when we were in pews, either — we can rest in the confidence that we aren't perfect Christians. There's no such thing. As Christians we are, in the words of Bp. Simon Barrington-Ward, always "failing towards love."

So make use of the tools we have at our disposal — join in prayer at 9am & 9pm; share our emails, posts, online services with friends; phone a neighbour; contribute to CBM or your local foodbank; and that most versatile tool, the one some of us had forgotten has been in the tool kit this whole time: being still and knowing that God is God. Some days we'll feel that Easter joy, some days we'll feel we've come up empty. The journey of faith, as Bishop Simon wrote, is "a shared movement of continuing failing and finding again, correction and re-direction." Enjoy the journey, knowing the Risen Christ is walking with you every step of the way!

*Devin*

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**Worship**

This Sunday, Revd Andrew leads our service of **Holy Communion** at **9.30am** live-streamed on our Facebook page, [facebook.com/greatstmarys/live](http://facebook.com/greatstmarys/live).

You'll find the service book at [www.gsm.cam.ac.uk/church/online-services/](http://www.gsm.cam.ac.uk/church/online-services/). Sunday services are posted to our website and YouTube channel by the same afternoon.

After the morning service, join us at **10.15am** for Zoom coffee at [https://zoom.us/j/91808611088](https://zoom.us/j/91808611088) (Meeting ID: 918 0861 1088) The password is 1205, and this link will now be the same every Sunday for coffee hour.

There will be a **service for children and families** live-streamed on the Facebook page at **11am** each Sunday.
During the time that our church building is closed we will alternate on Sundays at 9.30 between Holy Eucharist and Mattins, as well as continue with our 9am and 9pm weekday services of Morning Prayer and Compline.

Remember, you can find service books and more at our website, [www.gsm.cam.ac.uk/church/online-services](http://www.gsm.cam.ac.uk/church/online-services/). And you can join us in prayer on your own without a device, of course! Although we cannot gather in the same place to worship together, we can gather in the same time.

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**Children and Families**

Join other Great St Mary's parents for a virtual coffee time to connect and encourage one another, next Tuesday, April 28th, at 4pm. Details are posted on our [Children's Church Facebook group](http) — or email our interim Children's Minister, Rebekah Pérez at rebekahperez21@gmail.com for zoom details.

The Ark is meeting online; details are on the [Ark Facebook group](http). Both the Ark and Children's Church are 'closed' Facebook groups, for Safeguarding reasons, but becoming members of the group is a quick process.

Sunday's Children's Church lesson can be found on our [YouTube page](http) and parish [website](http), as well as on [Facebook](http).

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**Music**

Sam Hayes, our Director of Music, has shared recordings he's made of the choirs of Great St Mary's over the years, now posted on our [YouTube channel](http). Benedict Todd, our organist and Ass't Music Director, has been sharing some beautiful organ music for us at [http://www.benedicttodd.co.uk/gsm_corona.html](http://www.benedicttodd.co.uk/gsm_corona.html) Have a listen!
Keep an eye out for reflections from our Ministry Experience Scheme, Toni Papenfuhs, on our YouTube page as well as on Facebook.

**Spiritual Communion**
Revd Shirley shares a very helpful video reflection on spiritual communion, from St Matthew's church in Norfolk: https://youtu.be/UGaKox9ywzo

**Pastoral Care & Updates**

In case of a pastoral emergency when you need to reach a clergyperson right away, the pastoral emergency phone number is 01223 747277

Because we are broadcasting our services on the internet, we do not name individuals aloud during our online worship. However, a team of us at Great St Mary's, clergy and laity, are praying for all those in need. If you have a prayer request, please contact Revd Shirley at ssh49@cam.ac.uk

**In memoriam**

Dido Whitehead passed away this past Friday, and we remember Dido's life with thanksgiving and hold her husband Stan and their children and grandchild in our prayers. Rev'd Shirley will be taking Dido's funeral in a private crematorium service on 1 May. There is a lovely and brief service for those who cannot attend the funeral of a friend during the lockdown, which you can read online at this link here.

Bishop Simon Barrington-Ward, father of our ass't priest Revd Helen Orr, died on Holy Saturday. There's a lovely remembrance of him on the Church Mission Society website, as well as his obituary in the Times, and we give thanks for his life and remember in our prayers his wife Jean, their daughters and grandchildren.

Derek, brother of Helen Long who works at the Great St Mary's Shop, passed away during Holy Week; his funeral will be this Thursday afternoon.

Peter, brother of Robert Hilsdon, departed this life on Wednesday; we give thanks for Peter's life and hold in our prayers his wife Rose, their family, and all who mourn.
The Church of England offers a way to light a virtual candle in memory of those who have died, which you can find at http://churchofengland.org/funeral-candle.

In these difficult times I am sure we are all aware of friends in our Church family, who are living alone, are isolated by age, have underlying medical conditions, or who are finding themselves very stressed and fearful. The new Phone Buddies scheme is working well, but is probably limited by my not being aware of all who would like phone support.

In order that I do not miss anyone, may I ask you to send me an email if there is someone you know who would appreciate being on my list?

Many thanks,
Shirley
ssh49@cam.ac.uk

Almighty God,
who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin,
and also an ensample of godly life:
Give us grace
that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit,
and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Collect for the Second Sunday after Easter*
Collects from the Book of Common Prayer

When I was at theological college I had to write an essay on ‘models of the atonement.’ I came to the conclusion that they all say something true and contribute to an overall picture. Today’s collect, first composed by Cranmer for the 1549 Prayer Book, gives us two of them: Jesus’ sacrifice for sin and his ensample (= example) of godly life. These are sometimes distinguished as objective and subjective models of the atonement. The first tells us that Jesus’ death on the cross was not just one more brutal execution carried out by the Roman authorities in Judaea. No, at a much deeper level it was God offering his Son as ‘a sacrifice for sin’. It is the objective means whereby we are forgiven.

The second model tells us that Jesus provides an ‘ensample’ (= example) of godly life, that is, he shows us how we are to live by modelling our lives on his life. We must realize, however, that in reality Jesus’ godly life is an inspiration in an objective way too, different from the way in which other remarkable people are inspirations. This is because, not only are we inspired to follow his ‘blessed steps,’ but we are enabled to do so by his grace, which flows freely from his sacrificial death and mighty resurrection. So the second model is dependent for its efficacy on the first. Practically, we need to pray, as in the collect, for this overflowing grace and power of the Holy Spirit as we seek to love others as we have been loved by Christ.

The Revd Dr Rodney Holder

*The Prayer Book counts Sundays after Easter, whilst our contemporary liturgical calendar calculates Sundays of (the Great 50 Days of) Easter.

Eco Tip

For those of you with gardens, you are probably spending more time there. Have you considered how you can help God’s creatures? Here are some ideas to make your garden more wildlife friendly: https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/gardening-for-wildlife/
Collection for Christian Blind Mission

New Target: £1,500

Tremendous appreciation to all who have contributed; we're delighted to have been able to raise £925 to date! We have increased the target to £1,500 in view of the even greater challenges now faced by so many countries in which CBM work, where there are very limited medical facilities to cope with the global pandemic.

Our parish Wider Concerns Easter ‘Envelope’ Collection is for Christian Blind Mission Many of you will have already heard about Christian Blind Mission, in Revd Shirley Holder’s sermon at Parish Communion in February.

Click here to donate, or read on and learn more:

Christian Blind Mission (UK) are based in Cambridge doing remarkable and inspirational work “transforming the lives of people with disability, their families and communities in the poorest places of the world. Driven by Christian values, they tackle poverty, prevent blindness, improve health and change the lives of disabled people through restored sight or mobility, dignity and hope.”

This year we are collecting donations via JustGiving, at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/greatstmarys

Your donations will be doubled by the Government, so please donate early!
Happy Easter from Christian Blind Mission | Malekano singing

Ways to Help
There are lots of good ways to help

- **Help people connect.** Great St Mary’s clergy are telephoning everyone on our electoral roll. Can you check in on a friend or neighbour by phone as well?

- **Join a virtual home group.** A number of our home groups have been meeting via Skype or Zoom. If you’re not in a group, and want to be connected, send us an email.

- **Volunteer.** You can find your local Cambridge community volunteer team for helping people who are self-isolating at [https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-community-group-contact-details](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-community-group-contact-details). There is also a national website showing local volunteer groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, at [covidmutualaid.org/](https://covidmutualaid.org/)

- **Turn down the news** We don't need 24/7 news updates; take a break from the constant newsfeed. Many of us are keeping Saturday as a sabbath from screentime and devices.

- **Take care of yourself** — including your [mental health](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-community-group-contact-details) and [physical health](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-community-group-contact-details).

- **Share a Prayer** at our virtual share a prayer [website](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-community-group-contact-details)

- **Keep praying**, at 9am and 9pm especially! The Church of England has some prayer resources about COVID-19 [here](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-community-group-contact-details).
A Prayer

This is another day, O Lord.
I know not what it will bring forth,
but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be.
If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.
And if I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly.
Make these words more than words,
and give me the Spirit of Jesus. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer (Episcopal Church)