Palm Sunday & Holy Week eMag(nificat)
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:

- From the Vicar
- Worship this Week
- Children
- Music
- Easter Collection
- Pastoral Care
- Ways to Help
- BCP Collect
- Conflict in Turbulent Times
- A Prayer

The Devil can be in the Digital
a pastoral letter from the Vicar

A major pharmaceutical company is presently using the phrase 'Prescribe Kindness'. That's a good maxim for any time, but now more than ever. The word 'kind', like 'nice', can get a bad press, as a bit weak and wishy-washy. Far from it. St Paul is clear: 'Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you' (Ephesians 4.32).

I am so very aware of the anxiety and vulnerability that is rife in our communities at present - and our church family is no exception. Nor am I. One of my friends is critically ill with the virus.

Isolation makes it much worse, when our window on the world is shrunk by forces beyond our control. We risk losing our sense of perspective, and we suffer, in terms
of our mental health, and our emotional and spiritual well-being. Our heightened self-awareness can begin to blunt our awareness of the sensibilities and needs of others. The shadows overwhelm, and we seek outlets for our fear.

Social media is a lifeline for many at the present time. For others, it is yet another source of angst. I am firmly in this second category. I have never made a secret of my own mental health issues, and have learned over many years that too much exposure to social media is hugely detrimental to my well-being. As I say, some will not understand that at all. But it is true for me. I am relieved, and thankful, to be part of a team who can share in the streaming of worship and other kinds of online support, not least Devin, who is working so hard to support this ministry right now.

I know how grateful so many of you are for all that we are doing. I know that many of you are using online media and devices for the first time, and that it's not always easy to get used to. I know that many feel they want to comment on posts, feeling that this is an essential connection at a time they feel very alone.

A number of clergy in all denominations are being surprised by the tone and language that some are employing: seemingly forgetting that a post on social media is not private, but can be seen by everyone. To some extent Great St Mary's clergy have found that to be the case too. I, and most of my colleagues, have received emails which have been offensive and hurtful; and that is not acceptable.

So, as we enter Passiontide, and seek a closer walk with God, and companionship with his Son, I want to gently invite people to reflect on what I say. Being separated from each other provides time to prayerfully consider our common humanity and our shared frailty. It is also a time for seeking to build one another up, with generosity of spirit, and in the love of Christ.

Adrian

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**Worship in Holy Week**

Holy Week begins this Sunday. There are number of special services for this week of prayer, repentance and hope — including Midday Prayer at noon Monday through Thursday, and special services for Maundy Thursday (7pm) and Good Friday (10am childrens, reflection at Noon, and 2.30pm).

- **Palm Sunday** will be a livestream service of Morning Prayer on Facebook with Revd Devin, followed by a pre-recorded reading of the Passion, which will be up on the parish website, YouTube, and Facebook pages.
- **Holy Monday – Spy Wednesday:** Morning Prayer 9am, Midday Prayer at noon, Compline at 9p, on Facebook
- **Maundy Thursday:**
  - Morning Prayer 9am on Facebook
  - Midday Prayer at noon on Facebook
  - Holy Eucharist at 7pm with Revd Andrew Day on Facebook

- **Good Friday:**
  - Morning Prayer 9am on Facebook
  - Children’s Service at 10am (on the Children’s Church Facebook Group)
  - 12pm Reflections on the Cross (pre-recorded and posted Friday morning to YouTube, Facebook, and parish webpage)
  - 2.30pm Good Friday livestream service with Revd Shirley on Facebook.

- **Easter Sunday:** Holy Eucharist from the Vicarage with Canon Adrian, on Facebook, followed by a (probably quite noisy) Zoom coffee hour at https://zoom.us/j/813503785 You'll need a password to join the Zoom coffee hour; the password is 1205

Remember, you can find service books and more at our website, www.gsm.cam.ac.uk/church/online-services/

Watch and listen online as a Great St Mary's ministers lead services via our Facebook Livestream. You do not need a Facebook account to take part: just open up your web browser to facebook.com/greatstmarys/live and ignore the prompt from Facebook to sign up for an account. 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**

Our interim Children's Minister, Rebekah Perez, is posting video stories about the Passion & Easter. You can find them on our YouTube page and parish website, as well as the Children's Church Facebook Group.
Music
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
Have a listen!

Pastoral Care

The clergy are making contact (usually by telephone) with every household on our congregational lists this week and in the coming week or two. It's great to speak, and be in touch.

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

Rev Shirley is organizing a buddying programme for our church. If you're isolated, or know of someone in the congregation who is on their own, please send Shirley an email at ssh49@cam.ac.uk

Easter Collection for Christian Blind Mission

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.”

All donations before 12 May will be doubled by the Government, so please donate early! Of course this year we won’t be passing the plate on Easter Sunday. Instead, we're collecting donations via JustGiving, at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/greatstmarys

Donating through JustGiving is simple, fast and totally secure, and you can still use GiftAid as part of your donation. Your details are safe with JustGiving - they’ll never sell them on or send unwanted emails. Once you donate, they'll send your money directly to Christian Blind Mission. So it's the most efficient way to donate - saving time and cutting costs for the charity.

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**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 in the coming weeks. Can you check in on a friend or neighbour by phone as well?
- **Join a virtual home group.** A number of our Lent home groups have been meeting via Skype. If you're not in a group, and want to be connected by Skype or Zoom, [send us an email](mailto:).  
- **Turn down the news** Most of us 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.churchofengland.org.uk/faith-and-belief/mental-health) and [physical health](https://www.churchofengland.org.uk/faith-and-belief/physical-health)
- **Share a Prayer** at our virtual share a prayer [website](https://www.churchofengland.org.uk/faith-and-belief/prayer/paths-to-prayer/sharing-prayer)
- **Keep praying**, at 9am and 9pm especially! The Church of England has some prayer resources about [CORVID-19 here](https://www.churchofengland.org.uk/faith-and-belief/prayer/paths-to-prayer/coronavirus-prayer-resources).
Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for the Sunday Next before Easter

Collects from the Book of Common Prayer

At the beginning of Holy Week, this collect takes us to a vantage-point from which we can see the whole redemptive process of God: Christ’s birth and human life, his death and resurrection. Our response, in this redemptive landscape, is to pray both to follow Christ in his passion and to have a part in his resurrection, and our prayer is to a God who is almighty, everlasting and merciful, who loves us and all mankind with a love that is ‘tender’ (Cranmer’s affecting addition to the Latin original). From our panoramic vantage-point we shall immediately be plunged into a close-up of Christ’s passion in Jerusalem, into the midst of the crowd that cheers at first, then calls for Christ’s death. No social distancing on the way to the cross! The noise, the confusion and the fear press upon us, but this collect keeps the whole picture of redemption in our minds.

The Rev’d Margaret Widdess

Dealing with Conflict in Turbulent Times

Adrian was really struck by this list of 6 tips from the Rose Castle Foundation which he has found helpful in understanding how people respond to things at the present time, as well as how he responds himself. Do take a look - there is real food for
Six Top Tips for Dealing with Conflict in Turbulent Times

In times of uncertainty we carry added stress within ourselves, and into the relationships we hold with those around us.

Here at the Rose Castle Foundation we’ve been getting ready for remote working and self-isolation. As we gear up for the weeks ahead, our team shares some tips that we’ll be using to look after ourselves and others while the world changes around us.

1. When you are frustrated with others, try to understand how you’re feeling before you try to change their behaviour. It’s much easier to change yourself than others.

2. You always have a choice. When the doors of life are closing in, creatively play with the new boundaries. Sport is only fun because of boundaries – they give us the space to play in.

3. When you don’t talk, you make assumptions about others. Talk to people; ask them so that you understand.

4. Take time to reflect by going outside. Change your environment for a bit, then come back to the problem with fresh eyes. Being out in nature reminds us we are not the only thing in this world.

5. Distract yourself. Allow a small chunk of time each day to catch up on world affairs, then get stuck into something else. Ban coronavirus conversation at mealtimes.

6. Properly finish your cup of tea (or whatever you habitually drink). Use the time to reflect, be at peace with yourself and consider how to help the other.
A Prayer

When all we are and everything we do are called into question, grant us dignity and direction, grant us patience; Jesus, be there then.

[Collect for Tuesday in Holy Week, A New Zealand Prayer Book.]