



From Rev Tim Ward, Vicar of Walberton and Rector of Binsted

Dear Friends and Neighbours

Church is Changing Month 7

In response to this time of difficulty we at St Mary's are taking the following measures in line with our vision, Loving God - Loving Community:

~Services in Church

Since 12 July we have been worshipping in church each Sunday as well as online. Up to 40 people have gathered on a Sunday morning. We have been blessed with extraordinary weather allowing us to worship outdoors as well as indoors using a relay. The capacity of Walberton's building is limited by social distancing. In August we managed to accommodate 30 people for a wedding by using the chancel. The number who can be allowed in on Sundays is not fixed but depends on how many households and singles attend. Thirty is a reasonable likely maximum. Church funerals and baptisms are also now allowed with a legal maximum of thirty people.

We have also been broadcasting a simple service from St Mary's Vicarage each Sunday morning at 9am. We use YouTube. The details of how to access this will be posted on our website home page. Or try searching 'St Mary's Walberton' in YouTube. Service sheets on the website will not have the modern songs' words for copyright reasons. The full words will be available via the weekly ChurchSuite email. If you are not on ChurchSuite, please email vicar@stmaryswalberton.org.uk and ask for your email address to be put on the ChurchSuite data base. If you are worshipping at home do look for the sheet on making a spiritual communion without the sacrament.

~ Prayer

If you would like immediate prayer support please contact our Churchwarden Jean Strickland on 01243 552825. You can also leave requests in the box in the church porch.

House of Prayer. We are grateful that Covid-19 deaths have fallen by 98% since the peak and we see this as an answer to prayer. But, as winter approaches, we need to keep praying. Our weekly Parish Prayers continues via Zoom. If you want to take part, please email houseofprayer@stmaryswalberton.org.uk and ask to be added to the ChurchSuite email list. You will then receive a link via email enabling you to join the prayer meeting on Tuesday mornings at 8.30am. on the website or even add your own.

Building our House of Prayer: Do also look at the prayers in the House of Prayer on the website. If you have a prayer of your own that you are finding helpful during these challenging times, then please do share it and support us, as we reach out to the community. email houseofprayer@stmaryswalberton.org.uk

~ Financial Help

For those facing financial hardship we are using The Walberton, Binsted and West Barnham Sick Poor Fund (Reg Charity 243280). The Sick Poor Fund is the parish charity run by the vicar, churchwardens and up to three trustees. It has an income of about £8,000 per year. We currently have about £9,000 in reserve. We can make emergency grants of up to £200 as well as other more regular grants. We usually do so through food vouchers or paying heating bills. A few years ago we changed the qualification for help from being 'sick and poor' to 'sick or poor'. The area of benefit is Walberton, Binsted and West Barnham (up to the railway bridge). People need to live, work or attend primary educational establishments or community organisations or churches in the area of benefit. If you know of anyone who is financially struggling - especially anyone who is under the Statutory Sick Pay threshold for earnings of £118 per week - and has lost their income, then, please, do let me know by phone or letter, preferably asking them first (01243 551488). For this and other local resources Email: help@stmaryswalberton.org.uk

~ Volunteering and Practical help

We have a list of church members willing to assist the housebound. We would encourage you to help your immediate neighbours without referring to the church. But if there is no one to help you then please contact help@stmaryswalberton.org.uk

This service is open to all villagers as recipients. Volunteers should expect to fill out a simple self-declaration form and be registered by the Parochial Church Council. Volunteers should expect to buy goods out of their own pockets and then be reimbursed on delivery of the goods with a receipt. A log of all contacts must be kept. Entering houses will not be part of this role as that would require a DBS check.

~ Church Office

The Church Office at Unit G, William Booker Yard, The Street is closed to the public. Carole Edwards is presently on furlough and Jill Whitelock is working from home where possible but is usually in the office on Thursday mornings. Please knock and wait at the door. The phone is now redirected to the vicarage.

I hope all that makes sense. Do contact me at my email or phone below. May God bless you and your families at this difficult time. May we discover resources within our community that we didn't realise we had and be a blessing to each other.

Yours in Christ

Tim Ward

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