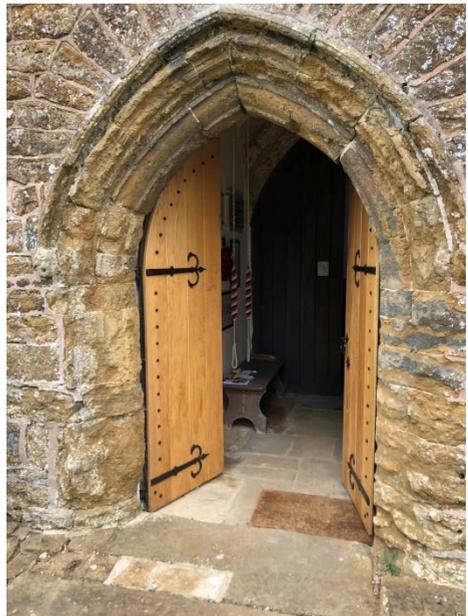


Wykeham Benefice News

July 2020

The major change for churches since last month is that the Government has permitted church buildings to open for individual private prayer, subject to significant safety restrictions and cleaning obligations. At the date of writing, some PCC's in the benefice will be opening their churches; others have decided to remain closed for the time being. *You can find the opening times highlighted on the back of this newsletter.*

These were difficult decisions for PCCs: in Swalcliffe's case there has always been a bias towards 24-hour opening after a nearby helicopter crash in the 1980s, when Swalcliffe was the only church that was open for rescuers, bystanders and relatives of the victims to pray. They were effusive in their thanks to us. Please feel free to use any of those churches which are open if you want to pray in a church. It is clear, however, that the process of opening up churches in the recovery period from Covid-19 will be much slower than the journey into lock down. A list of readings for July is included in this edition but not yet a list of services.



We are all challenged as to how we should respond to the Covid-19 virus. We see how very uneven the impact on different sectors of the population has been, both in physical and economic terms. I have recently read a short book by Professor Tom Wright, former Bishop of Durham – *God and the Pandemic* – which challenges us as to what the Christian response should be. The message of the book seems to me to be summed up in a quotation that he gives from a German pastor writing about 1930s Nazi Germany:

*First, they came for the Jews, but I did nothing because I am not a Jew.
Then they came for the socialists, but I did nothing because I am not a socialist.
Then they came for the Catholics, but I did nothing because I am not a Catholic.
Finally, they came for me, but by then there was no-one left to help me.*

Tom Wright argues that we should not ponder on why the pandemic has come: we should ponder on how we and the Church more generally should respond, on how we should learn from Jesus Christ in our responses. There is no doubt that the Church will need to change and so will we, perhaps both in our worship and our support for those who are suffering more than we have.

Our Zoom services at 10.00am each Sunday morning have brought back several members who have not managed to get to church recently but who are prepared to risk using Zoom on their computers, iPads, tablets or smart phones to join in. We can worship God from our homes as well as from our wonderful medieval buildings. If you have not tried the Zoom services, please give them a go. Across our Diocese, some 90% of benefices are offering some sort of worship on-line, and many are attracting worshippers who were not attending church buildings. We as a benefice may need to consider what we offer on-line once worship in our buildings is permitted again, particularly if some sections of the community continue to 'shelter'. Perhaps something on-line would help us to reach out to the children and young people of the benefice too, particularly those who have lost out on a term of schooling.

Progress has been made towards the recruitment of a new Rector. Representatives of each parish and our Joint Patrons (Lord Saye & Sele, New College Oxford and Worcester College Oxford) met on 9 June with the Archdeacon of Dorchester and our Area Dean to agree the Benefice Profile and the drafting of an advertisement to go in the Church Times as well as on the Church of England jobs website. Both have now been completed. If the advertisement goes out in July, we may be able to interview and appoint in September. Please pray that plenty of candidates will be inspired to apply.

I look forward to seeing as many as possible of you on Sundays and in the meantime, please keep safe.

John Tattersall June 2020

News from the Benefice Villages

Broughton – St. Mary's Church



Shutford

St Martin's Church is to remain closed but the churchyard is open for private prayer and solace. All lives matter so it is important to continue to be alert and care for our neighbours wherever they may be.

*I said a prayer for you today and know God must have heard,
I felt the answer in my heart although He spoke no word.
I didn't ask for wealth or fame I knew you wouldn't mind,
I asked Him to send treasures of a far more lasting kind.
I asked that He'd be near you at the start of each new day,
To grant you health and blessings and friends along the way.
I asked for happiness for you in all things great and small
But it was His loving care I prayed for most of all.*

Tadmarton

Taddy congregation continue to join with other Benefice members in the services with our Rev. John Tattersall. They enjoy the service, to share with members of the Benefice and friends.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL elected not to open the church just yet. We are unable to guarantee that we can conform to the requirements of the Anglican edicts, at this time. However we hope that we shall be able change this soon.

I hope some of the following may bring reflection and comfort in these difficult times. Please stay safe. J.H.W. Hon Sec.

“Desiderata”

“Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself to others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly to the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here and whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be, and whatever your labours and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams; it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

Epwell - ST ANNE'S CHURCH, EPWELL WILL BE OPEN ON MONDAYS,

9 - 10.30 A.M. & THURSDAYS, 4 – 6 P.M. We are trialling the opening of the church with safety requirements in place. We would like to thank all those who have volunteered to assist with the church during these times and to all those

who work hard to keep the churchyard in its beautiful state at this time of year. Any further requests can be received by our Church Wardens:
Alasdair Lowe – 01295 788866, Dawn Castle – 01295 788473

EPWELL FACE MASK TREE - The Government and WHO now advise use of face masks in crowded places and in order to ensure that every community has access to face masks, the Big Community sew has been launched. The idea is that villages, towns etc. host 'Community Face Covering Trees', with volunteers sewing face masks. Epwell's Tree is being co-ordinated by Lin Iddons and she would welcome any offers of help with sewing, especially as she is also supporting Sibford and Shutford. Please contact Lin on 730369.

EVA, EPWELL VIRUS ASSISTANCE – This still operates in Epwell as an additional safety net for villagers needs during COVID–19. If you need help, please call: Nicola Rudge 01295 780508, nicola.rudge@icloud.com or Chris Hurst 01295 780118 chrishurst62@gmail.com or to volunteer call Gavin Lloyd Thomas 01295 788771, gavinlthomas@aol.com

POLLY'S WORK FOR THE HOMELESS – Thank you to all who have given so generously so far. The box for food and clothing will remain in the Village Hall. See how to contribute clothes or a financially on page 7.

ANAGRAMS OF OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

See if you can unravel these 15 anagrams to reveal books of the Old Testament.

Burns me.	Chair haze.	Eds jug.	Evil is cut.
Hail Mac.	Hurt.	I jam here.	Rich clones.
On gloom of sons.	Our needy Tom.	Tom anneals it.	
See sign.	Select as ices .	Threes.	Used Ox.

Sent in by Julie Brugenwirth

Swalcliffe - These are strange times but if nothing else we have time for preparation and contemplation. Preparing to open our churches again even for the very limited access of private prayer. Unlike the rest of the country our churchyard has had a 'trim'! A kind young volunteer worked hard to remove all the ivy and wild clematis choking the shrubs in the Betty Pank's Garden. Today it looks tidy and welcoming!

I was impressed today when I heard Maro Itoje (England rugby player) being interviewed on Radio 4. Some think of him as a future captain of England. He wrote this poem as a 21yr old, although, no doubt, from the perception of his future in rugby. I thought it very appropriate for today and to share it with you.

There Comes A Time - By Maro Itoje

*There comes a time
When a boy must become a man
When fear must turn to bravery
When thoughts must turn to belief
When this belief must turn to action
When one must love and one must hope'
When preparation turns to performance
When strangers turn to friends
When friends turn to foes
When joy fulfils your mind
When anger fills your heart
When one must stand up and lead
When one must sit back and listen
There comes a time, when the time must be taken*



Sibford

More changes at Sibford, our Treasurer for the past seven years, David Watson, has announced he wishes stand down from this role at the end of this Financial Year, 31st December 2020. We thank David very sincerely for all the work and support he has given to Sibford church. The encouraging news is that David Gill has put his name forward to take over from David Watson and we are delighted to put forward this offer at the next possible ACPM.

CHRISTIAN AID 2020 - Collection to date £335, awaiting the final total. The usual expected House to House collection would be in the region of £1000, so this is a good response. Thank you to the Sibfords for your continuing support.

CHURCH OPENING FOR PRIVATE PRAYER - Sibford Church opens. A great deal of ‘behind the scenes’ planning has taken place to enable us to open our doors on a trial period of three days a week for two weeks, when the situation will be reviewed. We have complied with the Risk Assessment as instructed by the Diocese; safe distancing and hygiene measures are in place. For an update at the end of June please, check with the Wykeham News and Sibfords Website.

POLLY - There has been an encouraging response to the plea for help for Polly and her work. There is a container in Sibford Church porch, collecting tinned, dried food and clothing. Please keep donations coming. See details on page 7.

SIBFORD SUPPORT GROUP - This was set up in April and has over 70 volunteers, befriending, helping with shopping, prescriptions, etc. during the Lockdown period and this continues. A BIG THANK YOU to David Allen and the Sibford Support Group for organising this successful venture. REMEMBER! BE ALERT, OUR COUNTRY NEEDS LERTS

“Prayer is first and foremost thinking: only it isn’t ordinary thinking. Prayer is thinking with God” **George Snow**

Please Pray ...

- With Gratitude that we are not without God and therefore ‘not’ alone.
- Thankfully for our Heavenly Father’s compassion that shows His care in all our needs, lows and joys, and His desire to share them all with us.
- With gratitude that some medical progress has been made to help the most severely affected Coronavirus sufferers. May God give them the courage to fight on and may their loved ones be comforted.
- For those who are ill from any other serious disease. Please pray that their requirements will be fulfilled and necessary support be there for them.
- For all those who grieve, for courage and comfort to surround them.
- For unity to rid each nation of racial violence and discrimination throughout the world and for initiatives to demonstrate peacefully and thoughtfully, considering for the importance of social distancing.
- That plenty of good candidates apply to our advertisement for a new Rector.
- ...and ask God to help us be compassionate and courageous Christians for His love to penetrate all we encounter.

Polly and her work for the Homeless and Dispossessed in Banbury. Thank you to all of you who have already contributed so much to Polly’s work from the Benefice. This cause continues to need your support. If you would like to donate to this most worthy cause, please contact Allison Pollard who is liaising with Polly on our behalf. Allison lives in Epwell. Please call her on 01295 788529



Churches Open for Private Prayer

Swalcliffe – St. Peter and St. Pauls Church: will remain open at all times

Sibford Church – Holy Trinity Church: Mondays, Wednesdays and Friday.
Friday 9.30 – 10.30a.m. & 3.30 – 4.30p.m.

Epwell - St. Anne's Church: Monday 9–10.30a.m. & Thursday 4–6p.m.

Broughton, Shutford and Tadmarton churches will remain **closed**.

In all cases rules for hand sanitising and social distancing are spelt out at the entrances.

Readings

for July

		Old Testament	New Testament	The Gospel
Trinity 4	Sunday 5th July	Zechariah 9: 9 - 12	Romans 7: 15 - 25	Matthew 11: 16 – 19 & 18 - 30
Trinity 5	Sunday 12th July	Isaiah 55: 10 – 13	Romans 8: 1 - 11	Matthew 13: 1 – 9 & 18 - 23
Trinity 6	Sunday 19th July	Wisdom of Solomon 12: 13 & 16 - 19	Romans 8: 12 - 25	Matthew 13: 24 – 30 & 36 - 43
Trinity 7	Sunday 26th July	1 Kings 3: 5 - 12	Romans 8: 26 - 39	Matthew 13: 31 - 33 & 44 - 52

**Final submission of your copy for the
August and September edition of the newsletter is
Friday, 10th July 2020**