



CHURCH NOTICES

Sunday 19th April
2nd Sunday of Easter

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

A very happy Easter to all those who read our notices.

STAYING IN TOUCH

It is very sad that at such a difficult time we cannot meet together in church for fellowship and worship. **Both our churches are now closed for any visitors and for private prayer.** In every other crisis the church has been there and open for people to come to and be supported by others. We do not know how long this state of affairs will last and we need to make sure that we care for each other and our neighbours as much as we possibly can.

There is a real danger of loneliness and isolation. To help with this we are going to do a number of things including regular mailings and additions to the church website

<https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/>

If you have taken any photos of yourself or others at home – especially any that show what you have been doing – please send them in to Angie or me so that we can post them on the website so we can “see” each other.

The office Phone is not currently being regularly monitored. The ministry team and others are continuing a ministry by telephone to keep in touch.

Rector, Simon Baker (☎ 01543 253010)

BIBLE STUDY

We will be holding a virtual Bible Study during the Easter season, **every Wednesday at 10.30 for 30 minutes, starting next Wednesday April 22nd.**

The theme will be ***Living our Easter Faith***, and the first study will look at part of 1 Corinthians 15.

We will be using “Zoom”. This is quite simple to use, and doesn’t require you to download any software. All you need is a laptop or other device that has a camera.

If you would like to take part please e mail Chris Baker on c.j.baker@bham.ac.uk and he will send you a web link to join the study and some simple instructions. He will also send you a link to a practice session that you can join if you wish him to help you sort out the technical issues. This will be at 10.30am on Tuesday 21st April.

There will be a direct link to the Bible text and a few questions on the weekly email and it is also here.

GIVING AND CHARITIES

LICHFIELD FOODBANK is continuing to function and is dealing with increased numbers of clients. Donations of items can still be made at the collection boxes in our local Co-op, Tesco and Waitrose supermarkets. The particular items needed are – long-life milk, long-life fruit juice, tinned fruit, tinned fish, rice pudding, teas, coffee, jars of pasta sauce, tins of tomatoes. If you can, please do support this appeal. Many thanks. *Trevor*

You can access more information about the Foodbank on our website <https://lichfield.foodbank.org.uk/>. There is information for those who would like to make a financial donation and a gift aid form.

Lichfield Foodbank Coronavirus Update

We are now well into the second week of 'lockdown'. The new operating system at the distribution centres has settled down and is working well - thank you to all of you on the 'front line' of our support for those in Lichfield who cannot afford food. The warehouse has got into a new routine of pre-packing food bags - thank you to those who have stepped up their support and are covering Thursdays and Saturdays which haven't previously been necessary. Our drivers, ably supported by a host of new volunteers, are keeping the food moving from the supermarkets to the warehouse and out to the distribution centres - thank you. Thank you too to all of you who are working behind the scenes to make all of this happen. We have now set up all of our referral agencies so that they can send an electronic voucher to a client's phone, saving our volunteers having to handle a physical voucher.

We have been busy this last week, providing food for 125, and 144 in the week before. This compares with an average of 63 per week in February.

Thank you to the people of Lichfield and the surrounding areas who have responded magnificently to the appeal we put out for extra food. We are still short of some items but we have been able to keep the supply of food bags going thanks to that support. Many individuals have come to the warehouse this week with personal donations and street collections - we are very grateful for all these acts of kindness towards their fellow citizens.

Our four major supermarkets - Tesco, Morrisons, Waitrose and the Co-op - have all supported us, whether that be by donating food, organising extra collections or allowing us to buy food in volume. We also need to remember Riley's Greengrocers and thank them for continuing to be willing to take our £5 vouchers.

Finally, there is the army of older and vulnerable volunteers who would be helping us if they could. Thank you too for your supportive good wishes and prayers.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT. Support Staffordshire are looking for volunteers to provide help during the Coronavirus epidemic. If you would like to volunteer please go to <https://www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk/covid-19-support/coronavirus-community-support-effort>

GIVING TO CHARITIES

It is becoming clear that many charities will suffer a significant loss of income due to the changes in our way of life at the moment. For many of them the demands on them will also increase. Please consider making a donation to a charity while you are confined to home so that others can benefit and our charities continue with their work.

GIVING TO ST MICHAEL'S

We are grateful to everyone who gives to St Michael's church and helps us cover our costs. At the moment, we cannot supplement our donations by standing order with collections made in church. If you give through the envelope scheme please consider changing to a bank order, hold on to your envelopes or write out a cheque and put it in the church mailbox. In order to make one off or regular donations easier we now have a **JUST GIVING** page for St Michael's. please visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stmichaellichfield>

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR STAFFORDSHIRE

In response to the outbreak of Covid-19 in the United Kingdom, the Community Foundation for Staffordshire has launched an appeal via JustGiving to raise funds that will enable us to support communities that have been severely affected by the pandemic.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

In an unprecedented move, the 22 most senior **Church Leaders** in Britain and Ireland met in video conference on Wednesday, 1 April. Following the meeting, they issued a **Joint Statement** concerning the current national and international COVID-19 crisis. Read the statement [HERE](#).

<https://www.cte.org.uk/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=572255>

THE PARISH MAGAZINE

During this time of lockdown it is not going to be possible to produce and distribute the Parish Magazine for May and probably not for June either.

In order to keep people informed, we would like to send out articles that would otherwise have been in the magazine as part of our weekly notices. If you have an article to contribute please send it to Angie at stmichaellichfield@gmail.com

ITEMS FROM OUR "MAGAZINE"

History

Chris Baker has posted at <https://profchrisbaker.com/historical-studies/> an article and a couple of blog posts on aspects of his historical research relating to St Michael's church and the Lichfield area in general. It might be of interest, particularly to Tuesday club attendees – at least it will be something to do in lockdown! He expects disagreement and discussion!"

Journeys

I usually write '**Ramblings**' for the Parish magazine: this enables me to 'ramble' on about some topic which has caught my attention. This month the topic of 'Journeys' has come to mind and won't go away.... At the beginning of the year many of us were planning journeys: journeys to exotic places, journeys to visit family, journeys to Conferences...all sorts and varieties of journeys. Yet now we seem to be on a different sort of journey – one which we had not anticipated. Instead of travelling, we are staying at home. Instead of a family gathering, many of us are home alone. Within a few short days and weeks our lives have been turned upside down. We don't know what will happen in the future, we don't know what lies ahead for us and those whom we love. We may be scared and frightened about what may happen and how we shall cope. We are on a new and totally unexpected journey and we do not know what the outcome will be.

I have been walking in the local park for my daily exercise. I have been walking there for the last 15 years, with or without my much loved dog. And yet, in these last days I have discovered new paths, I have found a carpet of wild violets under the trees and rejoiced in the first of the cowslips flowering in the field. I have heard the song of the birds and even the baaing of lambs instead of the constant noise of the traffic.

This new journey which we are travelling is not easy. We can no longer meet together in church to worship together and yet God is still with us on our journey. We can enjoy new opportunities which time at home can give us, time to read books we have been meaning to read for years, time together with our children. We don't know where the unexpected paths may take us but we do

know that in our joys and in our sorrows, God is with us and He loves us through it all. I do not apologise for going back once again to the poem with which I started the year....

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

As we move forward into the unknown, let us put our hand into the hand of God and put our trust in Him.

Christine Higgs