

Dear Friend

A personal message from Revd. Andrew

At the beginning of this week our Churchwardens attended a virtual 'Visitation' meeting with our Archdeacon and Bishops. Traditionally this has been an annual meeting after APCM's when Churchwardens are 'admitted' to their roles for the next year. It is also an opportunity for them to be thanked for the excellent (and time consuming) work that they do. This year the meeting was held by Zoom and 94 attended from across the Archdeaconry. I would like to add my sincere thanks to Beth, Douglas and Tony who have guided the Benefice through the Vacancy. I am very fortunate to have three excellent Churchwardens. They are finding that there is still plenty of work requiring their attention. For an example, please see the information later in the Newsletter under 'Opening our Churches for Private Prayer'. This could not have been achieved without a great deal of their time and expertise.

At the end of the meeting, the Churchwardens were sent on their way with a lovely prayer from Bishops Peter and Ruth that we share with you now:

*We have been through strange times that we could not have anticipated.  
We have lived with fear and uncertainty, isolation and silence.  
We have closed the doors of our churches.  
We have heard of the suffering, death and grief of so many.*

YET;

*We have discovered new ways of worshipping  
We have been heartened by many acts of kindness  
We have seen selfless compassion and courage in our hospitals.  
We have experienced loving care in our communities.*

AND NOW;

*We are opening the doors of our churches.  
We are exploring new ways of being church and serving our parishes.  
We are strengthening bonds of fellowship which have been growing among us  
We are waiting to see what God has yet to show us.*

**Amen**

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In your continuing prayers, let us join as a church community in bringing before God;

- Those dear to us, who are struggling in body or mind at the moment especially: John, Nicola, Geoff, Henry, Joan, Ronnie, John, Ken, Vera, Chris, Karen, Celia, Peter, Pauline K, Clive, Peter, Dylan and those known only to ourselves and to God; and for all the people who love them.
- For Andrew and his family Corinna, Owyn and Carys
- The Ministry Team: Hilary, Shaun, Ann, Sarah and Jan. The Churchwardens: Beth, Douglas and Tony. The PCC and David our Administrator
- All the dedicated volunteers who carry out such valuable work in the life of our churches.
- Everyone infected or affected by COVID-19, for healing and wholeness, health and strength, and a renewed thankfulness for life itself.
- For all our NHS and medical staff, remembering especially at this time all the staff at Weston General Hospital, that they may be able to bear the tremendous pressure they are under and that they can continue providing care and treatment for their patients. Including in our prayers Angela Morris's daughter Rachel, an A&E doctor at Weston General and son-in-law Jonathan, a surgeon at BRI, Sam a cardio doctor working at Southmead Hospital and the grandson of George Berry, and Tammy nursing Covid patients in North Wales.
- For Care Home staff and carers looking after the vulnerable in our community
- For Mums and Dads with new babies - very challenging for them.
- For our Government and Civil Servants, that they may receive wisdom and sound scientific advice, and not be discouraged from doing their utmost to serve our country at this time of need.
- For each other, that we may all support one another and our community in every (safe) way we can.

**Sunday 21st June - 2nd Sunday after Trinity**

Every Sunday, you can find the link to the Service podcast from our website: <https://winsandchurches.org.uk/podcasts/>

(You can also find it at: <https://anchor.fm/andrew6704>)

The Bible reading he will be using is: Genesis 21:8-21

A copy of the sermon can be downloaded on Sunday from our website.

### **Opening our Churches for Private Prayer**

In our last Newsletter, we told you that we are welcoming back people into our Churches for private prayer **on Sunday mornings starting on 21st June under supervision:**

- **St James's Church, Winscombe will be open from 09.00am - 10.30am**
- **All Saints Church, Sandford will be open from 11.00am - 12.00am.**

N.B. Access into the Churches outside these times is not permitted except by members of the PCC Standing Committee making the arrangements for these 'open for prayer' sessions.

There is some specific guidance which we ask you to follow if you visit one of our churches during these times:

- Respect the 2 metre Social Distancing advice with anyone else in the Church or Churchyard.
- Follow the guidance within the Church with regard to COVID-19 hygiene and where you can go to pray. Places for single people, couples and family groups will be identified.
- There will be no prayer books or bibles available in the Church for you to use. You may therefore wish to bring your own.
- The toilets will not be open.
- Use the sanitisers when you enter and when you leave, and on your return home, remember to wash your hands.
- This is a trial for the next 4 Sundays and the PCC Standing Committee will keep it under review.

For our part, we will ensure that it is as safe as possible for you to visit the Churches by carrying out a thorough Risk Assessment and implementing the necessary control measures. During the time that the Churches are open someone will be present to supervise those attending for Private Prayer. Those parts that visitors touch (e.g. door handles,

pews, chairs etc.) will be properly cleaned on a regular basis and at the end of the session.

May we respectfully request that you do not enter the churches if you have:

- Coronavirus symptoms, however mild, or you have received a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) test result within the last 14 days and have not completed your self-isolation
- Been contacted through the NHS test and trace scheme, and told that you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive
- Others in your household with coronavirus symptoms

### **Link to C.V. Gowers Website**

Just a reminder that the website for Gowers Funeral Directors has Funeral announcements: <https://cvgower.co.uk/funeral-announcements/>

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### **Bishop Peter begins a Prayer Pilgrimage around the Diocese**

As lockdown begins to ease and some churches are able to open, Bishop Peter is beginning a prayer pilgrimage around the Diocese, praying for the communities he passes through. You can find out more information at: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/2020/06/bishop-peters-coronavirus-prayer-pilgrimage/>

### **Staff in Care Homes**

Meanwhile, Bishop Ruth has been drawing our attention to those unsung heroes who work in our Care Homes. You can find out more about her initiative at: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/2020/06/bishop-ruth-to-bless-care-home-and-staff-to-draw-attention-to-those-working-in-social-care-sector/>

With several Care Homes within our Benefice and the surrounding area, this is a lovely and most timely gesture by Bishop Ruth which we support.

### **Wells Cathedral**

The Cathedral is now open for private prayer every day of the week. You can find more information at: <https://www.wellscathedral.org.uk/your-cathedral/wells-cathedral-re-opens/>

### **30 Days of Prayer**

A reminder about the 30 Days of prayer. Please pray when you can, pray as you go, pray from where you are! And pray as often as you are able. Pray for the people in our Benefice, the young and the old, that they might hear God's voice and respond. Pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit as we discern the way forward for our Benefice for the months and years ahead.

### **Our own Website**

Have you looked at this recently? <https://winsandchurches.org.uk/> David Ashton Hilton, assisted by Jo Claridge, have done excellent work in creating this, and you will now find:

- A Children's page with links to a variety of resources with plenty of ideas for kids to get involved with. There is a Messy Church area too and a Lego challenge; and
- A Men's Refresh-men-t Page

You will find them in the 'Church Life' section.

The resources will be updated weekly so there will always be something new.

### **Feedback on the Newsletter**

Thank you to everyone who has already responded. If you have not had time to give your feedback, we would still welcome your thoughts. The questions are at the bottom of this Newsletter and the deadline for replies is extended to close of play on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June