

## *Journey into July 2021*



The announcement of the delay of the Step 4 on the Government's Roadmap left us all with a mixture of feelings. Talking with people in the Church and wider community there is a growing weariness, alongside an uncertainty, and for some a continuing concern about resuming activities and lifting the various measures.



As we shared in the last newsletter the PCC have considered the next steps and we have a number of proposals to implement as things happen. We will seek to ensure that all will be able, if they wish, to share in the life of our 3 churches. We will maintain areas in each church where people can remain seated at a

distance, wear face coverings and have communion brought to them. We will also encourage all of us to respect each other and continue to show that care and support for all. If you have any concerns or questions, then please do not hesitate to raise them with any of the Ministry Team.



Although not much changed on June 21<sup>st</sup> one positive step was increasing the number who could attend a wedding and we have been delighted to host 3 weddings in last few days. Sadly, some couples have had to postpone again as the restrictions that remain still affect them and we continue to hold all the couples in our prayers. As well as weddings we are

seeing a rise in Christenings and over the next few weeks we will be welcoming a number of children into the 'Christian family'.



In response to this increase in 'Life events' (as they are now called by the C of E) we have changed our system of meeting those who wish to book etc. On

**Saturday from 10am – 11am at**

St Mary's we have '**Just Ask ...**'. We hope anyone will pop by and have a conversation with us. We also hope members of the churches will also just drop by, have a coffee and support us in welcoming our guests. Hope to see you there! One of the most difficult things to follow and understand has been the guidance on singing which



has reduced the number to only 6. We are grateful to Brian for the planning and leadership he is giving supported by Matt through this difficult phase. The one benefit is those under 18 can sing in a larger number so we have enjoyed a service with music led by the Junior Choir only. Thank you to them!



As we reflect on 'Life Events' we were sad to hear in the last month of 3 deaths connected to the Parish. **Eileen Cornell** was a faithful member of St Mary's over many years and we will miss her quiet presence, her gentle humour and her smile! There will be **Requiem Mass for her on Weds June 30<sup>th</sup> at Noon**. **David Butcher**, a long-time member of St Mary's Choir (60+ years!) and fondly remembered. He died soon after his wife Margaret and is now reunited with her and enjoying the heavenly choir! His Funeral is on **July 14<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at St Mary's** – details to follow. Finally, we have just celebrated the funeral of **Dianne Boorah**, known to many of the older members of the Parish. Dianne was Colin Barrell's sister.

As we move through July we will monitor the guidance and advice for July 19<sup>th</sup> and will update you id and when things will change In the meantime we continue as below:

### Private Prayer and Public Worship



St Mary's is open each weekday (Monday to Friday) from 9am – Noon for Private Prayer

At **Noon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday** at **St Mary's** there is a **Eucharist** (which is also streamed).



In addition, on **Tuesday at 9.30am at St Faith's** and on **Thursday at 10.30am at St Wilfrid's** there will be a Eucharist (these will not be streamed)

There will be a **streamed reflection** around Noon on **Tuesdays and Thursdays**.



**Sundays** there will be services at **8am and 10am at St Mary's;** **9am at St Faith's** and **11am at St Wilfrid's.**

## Young Families



We have a monthly service and activities in St Mary's Church with tables and craft for families to share in. The next one will be on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July at 11.30am** perhaps followed by a picnic in the churchyard?

### Coffee and Chat in the Churchyard



You can gather and catch up with others at **Coffee and Chat in St Mary's Churchyard each Monday and Friday at 11am**. This will mean you could stay on at the end for the Noon service if you wish. There is also a chance for

Coffee and Chat at St Faith's on a Tuesday and St Wilfrid's on a Thursday after the service.

On **Wednesday July 21<sup>st</sup> at 12.30pm** we will also host a **picnic lunch at St Mary's** for those who wish to meet and catch up, especially those who used to come to Fellowship on a Wednesday.

## Being with others

The PCC was also clear to ensure that everyone can come and feel they are entering a safe space. So, for the moment we will **not be permitting any physical contact at the sharing of the peace** in the churches. Likewise, please **be aware of others and respect their space** outside of the church – not everyone will want to be hugged!

## Other events

**Saturday July 3<sup>rd</sup> Re-licensing of Diocesan Readers** at the Cathedral. Numbers are limited but you can share in the service online. We particularly give thanks for Jenny, Fi and Mandy and their ministry in the Parish.

**Sunday July 4<sup>th</sup> From 2.30pm Strawberry Tea at St Mary's**  
A chance to enjoy a tea and conversation and to be entertained by live music in the Churchyard.  
**Please book a space (£4)**. As it is Thank you NHS day for the Church of England NHS staff will only be charged £2

**Monday July 12<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Julian Prayer Group** meets at St Faith's. A time of stillness and reflection.

**Wednesday July 14<sup>th</sup> 2pm David Butcher's Funeral** at St Mary's

**Sunday July 18<sup>th</sup> 11.30am Young Families** at St Mary's

**Wednesday July 21<sup>st</sup> 12.30pm Fellowship Picnic** at St Mary's

Bring your lunch and join us for a chat.

*Looking further ahead we hope to host:*

**Saturday August 14<sup>th</sup> An indoor Market at St Mary's**

*followed by*

**Sunday August 15<sup>th</sup> 10am Parish Outdoor service**

**Noon Fratton Big Local Community Picnic**

*– with music and entertainment in the Churchyard*

We will continue to explore and seek to maintain that deeper sense of being a community together that has grown over COVID. We need to be conscious that we will each react in different ways to the changes as they happen, and some will be more comfortable to do things than others. Please do share with the Ministry team any concerns or questions you have so that we can be aware of them as the plans for development are prepared.

The Standing Committee, when it met recently, agreed to continue to suspend the 3 DCCs until we can meet together, there will be a **PCC on July 27<sup>th</sup>** in the evening (the timing and format to be decided). We are particularly going to be considering our finances and fundraising. We need to identify how best we can make up our shortfall (in current climate we suspect that will be approx. £30k) as well as agree a priority and range of 'projects' that will need funding found for them.

Can I end as always by thanking all who have supported us through the last weeks through the giving of their time and skills, for my colleagues on the Ministry Team and for all who generously made donations or regular contributions. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to make a donation to set up a regular contribution.

Finally let us all continue to hold one another in our prayers and thoughts, and to be aware of other prayers and care for each of us.



*Best wishes Father Bob 023 92 822687*