

Latest News – 9th January 2022



Watch the service – The 100th national online service

100th Online Service:
A service of the Word for the Baptism of Christ

with members of the worshipping community

"As God is with us in Christ and the Holy Spirit, so we are glad to be with God and one another through the gift of the internet." - Rev Dr Sam Wells. Thousands of local churches have provided online services since 2020, and hundreds have led our national online worship.

Join us from St Martin-In-The-Fields to mark the 100th national online service. Our intercessions are led by the online community who join us from their homes each week and St Martin's Voices lead our sung worship..The service is broadcast on the [Church of England's website](#), [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#). The service remains available to view afterwards.

All of the video content is manually subtitled. To turn these on, go to the bottom left of the video and click the filled-in box with two broken lines inside. The service is BSL-interpreted throughout.

Local Services

9th January 2022 9.00am New Bolingbroke for Holy Communion; 10.30am Sibsey for Morning Worship
10.45am Langrick for Holy Communion.

New 'cathedral' of digital worshippers emerges from online broadcasts

Members of a new "cathedral" of online worshippers formed since the first lockdown are to play a key role in the Church of England's 100th national online service to be broadcast this weekend.



Prayers will be read by people who joined a regular digital worshipping community that grew through YouTube and Facebook broadcasts of national online services.

The first national online service was broadcast from the crypt chapel at Lambeth Palace on Mothering Sunday 2020 as the nation went into lockdown. Since then a service has been broadcast every Sunday – with additional services broadcast over Easter, Advent and Christmas.

The broadcast on Sunday, marking the milestone of the 100th service, will led by the Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields Dr Sam Wells, with a sermon from Revd Dr Isabelle Hamley, who oversees the Church of England's national online services.

Dr Hamley, who took part in the first online service broadcast in March 2020 from the Crypt chapel of Lambeth Palace, will pay tribute to the work of both the national and local churches in providing online services during the pandemic.

She describes the "bittersweet" milestone of the 100th service after the "grief, pain and anxiety" suffered because of the pandemic. The success of the online broadcasts has highlighted the number of people who were previously excluded from in-person worship, she will say.

"We now know there is a regular worshipping community online, alongside many others, who meet as a community and pray for each other," she said.

"This is something that is new and has taken us by surprise

"This was never something we set out to do but a truly diverse and international community has formed in the comment section while watching the services.

"It's a bit like an online cathedral - we have a solid core of worshippers and lots of visitors who stream a service occasionally."



Those saying prayers in the service include Chris Atkinson-Price, based in Bavaria, who was confirmed in 2012 in Bingley, Yorkshire, but went to Lutheran services near her rural home in Germany.

The first lockdown prompted her to search for online services in English.

She said: "There were two things I liked – one was the services themselves and the other was the community chat that went along with it. I've met new people and we've become friends.

"I've got one new friend based in Japan and another in India and we're talking all the time on Facebook Messenger now. We support each other and we've set up a Bible reading group – we've got a reading plan which we discuss each day."

Natalie Rispin, a financial administrator, from Baldock, Herts, and a member of the online worshipping community, also says a prayer during the service.

"The online service is a fantastic resource, it brings together people from all over the world. Before the service, there is a live chat page that is opened and everyone goes in there early and checks up on each other, making sure that each other is okay. It's a really lovely group of people.

"When the service is on, people sometimes type 'Amen' or 'Thanks be to God'; so we feel like we are worshipping together. A Facebook group has been formed when we discuss the service afterwards."

At the start of the service, Dr Sam Wells will say: "As God is with us in Christ and the Holy Spirit, so we are glad to be with God and one another through the gift of the internet.

"With the imagination and creativity of God's people and the power of the Holy Spirit, these 22 months since church buildings closed their doors have seen ways of worshipping, we'd never thought possible springing up.

"Today we mark not just the Church of England's own online service but those of many churches large and small throughout the country."

The Church of England website has received more than 92,000 page views for its blogs to help church leaders with live streaming and online services since these were launched in March 2020. Half of the 20 most read blogs on the website are on livestreaming and video skills.

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, said: “In the last (nearly) two years we have seen a kind of digital coming of age.

“The national online services from the Church of England have enabled many people to be part of a worshipping community during this most difficult and potentially isolating of times.

“There is a real place for these online communities and we recognise online worship is here to stay, not as a replacement for worshipping in person, but as a way of worshipping and building community in innovative and accessible ways.

“The national services have been a great team effort. Services have been put together each week.

“I am very thankful to all those whose creativity, faithfulness and commitment have been a part of making it happen.”

Lincoln Cathedral – Chapter Letter – 9th January 2022

It may only be the beginning of January, but Christmas seems a long way behind us; I would guess that many people have long ago packed away the decorations and taken down the cards. Possibly because Christmas seems to start so early – some would say around mid-October! – there can be a wish to finish the celebrations as soon as Boxing Day is over and return to whatever we think of as normality.

The Christian calendar, on the other hand, asks us to continue to contemplate and celebrate the mystery of Jesus’ birth and incarnation for a while longer. Partly this is because its significance is such that it cannot easily be passed over as the days go by and the year unfolds around us. One of the greatest meanings of the incarnation is the hope it offers of a new beginning; that things won’t simply go on as they always have and that, in God’s good time, something better awaits us.

I’m sure it won’t have passed many people by that mid-January is often seen to be the low point in people’s lives and a time when they often report feelings of depression and a general sense of unease. While some of these reports may be exaggerated, there is still a real possibility that a combination of long, dark nights, short hours of daylight, cold weather, perhaps the realisation that we’ve over-spent on our Christmas celebrations and that spring still seems a long way off does seem enough to daunt even the most optimistic person.

The hope which Christmas celebrates isn’t, of course, a “quick fix”, a simple antidote to mid-January gloom; but perhaps it does remind us that there are greater possibilities for us and for humanity as a whole than we might have imagined. Things don’t have to simply go on as they always have; there may be other ways of living, other futures for us and for those we care about. Perhaps too, hope can overcome despair; perhaps love is more powerful than hatred; perhaps things we hoped for really are possible.

This is my final contribution to these Chapter Letters, since I retire at the end of the month. My thanks to you all for your welcome and friendship and I hope what I have written over these recent months has been of help to you.

NEIL BURGESS, VICE-CHANCELLOR

Your dream wedding



As COVID restrictions have lifted, many couples will be thinking about their dream wedding and 'setting the date'.

Estimates of the average cost of a wedding today range between £16,000 and £30,000, depending on what you include. This is beyond the budget of many people. But you could get married in church for less than £1,000 including music and bells in a ceremony that is personal and meaningful.

Wherever you have the celebration afterwards you could hold the ceremony itself in a beautiful church in the parish where you live, in a church to which you have a family connection or you can make your own by attending that church's usual services for six months. Many people think they're not allowed to be married in church, but you don't have to have attended church regularly for years and you don't have to be 'religious'. However, it is a religious ceremony in that you will take your vows in the name of God. To many people, the spiritual element is very powerful.

Revd Andrew Roberts, Diocesan lead for promoting weddings said: "I love doing weddings and a church wedding is very special. It's wonderful for families to come together to celebrate, but the really meaningful part of the day is that the two people have come together and made promises to each other to last their lifetime. You can do this very simply and still have a beautiful day. I have many weddings booked for this year and 2022 and I hope as restrictions have lifted that I welcome more couples into the church as they take this next step on their journey together."

To see what a Church wedding can offer go to <https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/> And to find the contact details why not wander down to your local church and look at the Notice Board, or simply go to <https://www.achurchnearyou.com> and search for where you live or the church where your family are.

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‘I’m a mate for the journey’ – Britain’s first chaplain employed to the construction industry

27/12/2021

Chaplains have continued to serve vulnerable and dispersed communities throughout the pandemic, including those in industry – like Ewen Huffman.



Previously an electronics engineer, and then a church leader for 30 years, Ewen Huffman was seconded to the Diocese of Bath and Wells in January 2020 and appointed as Chaplain on the site of the new Hinkley Point C (HPC) power station in Somerset.

The workforce at HPC is a diverse community of more than 5,000 people – predominantly male, and younger and more multiethnic than the surrounding areas on the Somerset coast.

As Chaplain, Ewen is there for everyone, of all faiths and none, providing spiritual leadership amid a pressured workforce and drawing together people together across boundaries, nationalities, beliefs, and religions.

Ewen’s presence also offers the opportunity to bring faith into the workplace. He has held ceremonies of prayer before tunneling and concrete pours and provided a pastoral presence and spiritual support in times of trouble.

“People are spiritual beings,” he explained.

“Even the people who say they are irreligious at times want me to pray with them, and they want to receive a blessing and the peace.”

Throughout the pandemic, Ewen’s role has been for the most part centred on supporting a workforce “trying to find their life and rhythms during Covid.”

“I’m a mate for the journey,” he said.

“I’m big into building friendships, it’s a privilege to get to be there for people when they have a significant need and to get to talk with them about spiritually significant things.”

Report your daily status on the Covid Symptom Tracker app even if you are well. Help science beat the virus.

Find out more at <https://covid.joinzoe.com/>

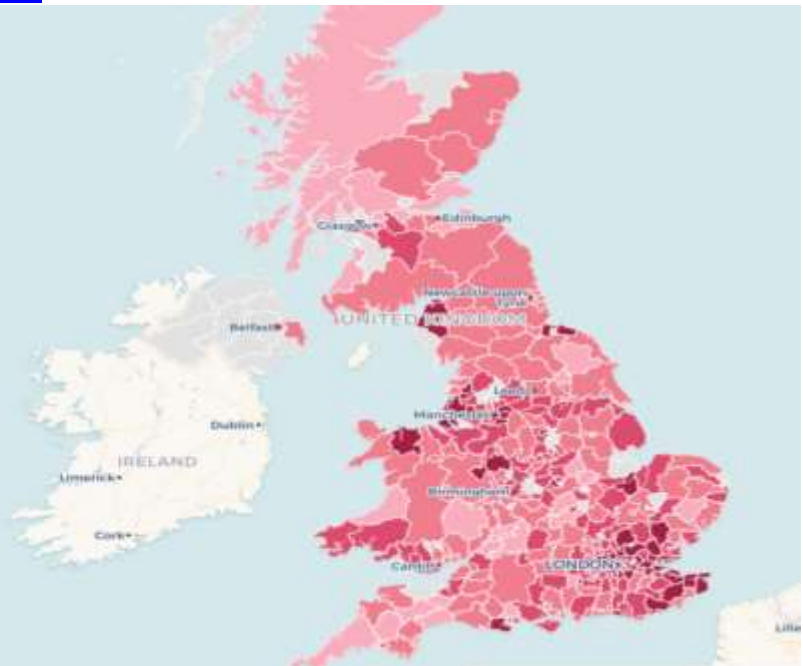
2,672,293

people are currently predicted to have symptomatic COVID in the UK

Estimated cases per million

- Not enough data
- 0 - 10,000 cases pm
- 10,000 - 20,000 cases pm
- 20,000 - 30,000 cases pm
- 30,000 - 40,000 cases pm
- 40,000 + cases pm

Updated 7 January, 5:00am

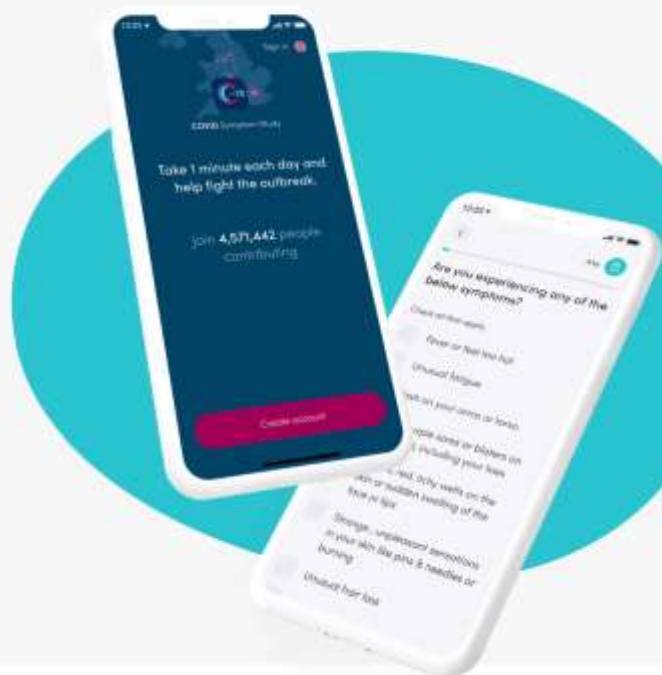


4,719,161

CONTRIBUTORS

People of all ages and backgrounds are joining together to fight COVID. Support the NHS, help scientific research and help us get out of this pandemic safely.

Take 1-min to report your health daily, even if you are well.



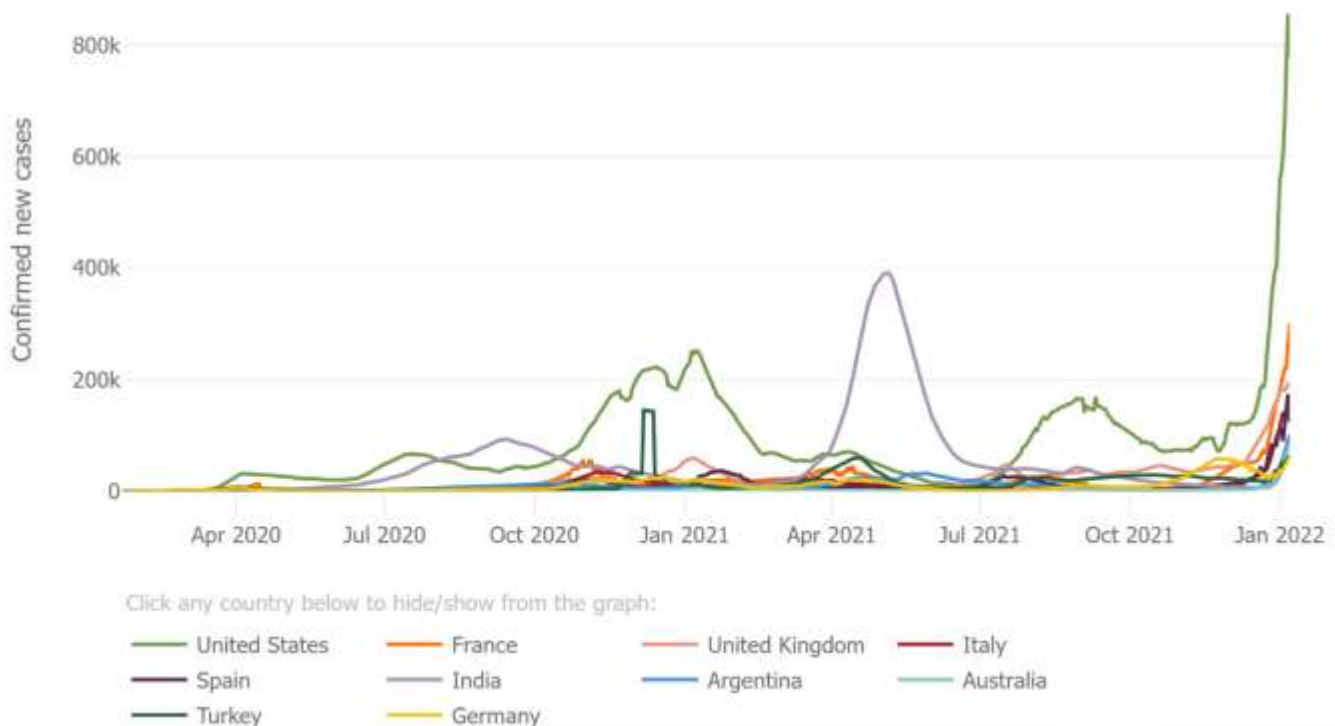
Latest figures

The John Hopkins University, USA collates international Covid data on their website updated daily.



DAILY CONFIRMED NEW CASES (7-DAY MOVING AVERAGE)

Outbreak evolution for the current most affected countries



Topical Prayers

The Church of England website offers words you can use in your prayers for all kinds of situations ranging from the everyday to personal situations, family events and prayers for others. If you need some help finding the right words, please go to the Church of England website here

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers>

Daily Hope

Daily Hope is a free phone number (0800 804 8044) offering music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. This will enable as many people as possible to access the content we are developing.

St Botolph's Church – Boston Stump



Service Times

Services are available in-person and some are available online, via Zoom. To obtain the login details for our online service, please email admin@parishofboston.co.uk or call (01205) 310929. You are most welcome to join us. Please note that COVID-19 safety measures are in operation.

Weekly News is published in Pilgrim Progress at <https://parish-of-boston.org.uk/news/>

Sunday services

First Sunday of the Month

8am – Said BCP Eucharist

11am – Sung Eucharist (also available online)

5pm – Choral Evensong (also available online)

All other Sunday's in the month

11.00am – Sung Eucharist (also available online)

Wednesday mid-week service

10.30am – Said Eucharist (also available online)

Christmas Eve

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

9.30am Christmas Day Service



Do you need some help while self-isolating?

If you need a hand with collecting shopping or prescriptions, or just want someone to talk to, our NHS Volunteer Responders are here to help.

Call **0808 196 3646** or visit **nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk**