

Update from the Vicar, Revd Gerry Foster, on 30th August 2020, as we continue to emerge from Lockdown....www.stmaryswatton.org

On the threshold of September, after five months of Lockdown (and more for some who started shielding earlier) and emergingwe are

Looking back and to this day with Gratitude.....

Looking forwards with Hope.....

and with Huge thanks.....

To Buddy Leaders

To all Buddy Leaders, who have been keeping in touch with many, also including through their own Networks. Please continue if you can (and do let me know if this is not possible, thank you) with this vital connection, as some may still be unable to join us at St Mary's or be out in circulation.

To Everyone who has been 'loving their neighbour' in their care of each other.

For Reflections

To Kyla who has been organising, amongst many other things, all those who have been writing Reflections, which have been so greatly appreciated. And so, thank you to those who will continue contributing twice weekly on a rota for Tuesdays and Thursdays.

To Charlie, who has taken us to places where we can take long breaths, through her Weekly Wild Church Reflections, which have been so crucial, when many of us have been kept indoors. Many thanks to her for continuing to connect us with the wonderful world of God's creation, in which we live. Please find on the website links to some of the emerging far wider Ministry for Wild / Mossy Church, for which Charlie is part of this pioneering exploration in the Diocese and beyond. Her article 'By the Mossy Moot' celebrating the spiritual benefits of the outdoors, was published in the Church Times no 8210 24th July 2020, and a copy is on the noticeboard in church.

To You All

For joining us at Prayer on Wednesdays when we've been open since 1st July.

For your prayers and presence, as we are now open for Services within the current guidelines on **Sundays for 8.00am for Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion** (no booking required);

for **Sunday Services at 10.00am**. Booking is still required, but we are now trying to look further than 2 weeks ahead for 10.00am Services, **including:**

10.00am 20th September for a Service on the Green, to celebrate being 'outdoors' with Charlie on the day after her Licensing, as Licensed Lay Minister / Lay Reader.

6.30pm Choral Evensong 27th September (no booking required).

Wednesday Services are restarting at 9.30am from 2nd September (no booking required).

Now we're opening up church, we're no longer going to be saying Prayers and ringing the bell every day at noon.

To Licensed Leaders

Revd Kyla Sorensen was ordained Priest at St Mary's on 7th August after all the uncertainties through the Coronavirus and the cancellation of the long-awaited Cathedral Ordination Service.

The wonderful Livestreamed service is on St Mary's website.

Huge thanks to **Revd Dave Foster and Ray Rodgers** for all the IT experience, creative thinking and time they have invested, to facilitate Services on the Website. This will continue regularly, when we have the resources. We hope it will include taking out service recordings on DVD's to those at home.

For all their ministries shared with us:

Revd Angela Nicoll, who is still shielding, but very much wanting to be back soon

Licensed Lay Minister/Reader **Shirley Blake**

Licensed Lay Minister/Reader **Jackie Cook**

Licensed Lay Minister/Reader **Margaret Enger**

Licensed Lay Minister/Reader **Elaine Rodgers**

To **Charlie Houlder-Moat**, to be Licensed as Lay Minister/Reader on **Sunday 19th September 2.30pm at the Cathedral**. Please hold her and Alysha, her Family and Friends in your Prayers, as gatherings for these occasions are not what was originally planned to celebrate the years of work and crucially the achievements.

We are now able to extend the numbers for services with a special Risk Assessment. Please book your place at Charlie's special Service outside church, following her Licensing at 10.00am on Sunday 20th September and inside church for Harvest at 10.00am on Sunday 27th September.

To **Ken Webb**, for his Licence as Authorised Worship Assistant, and all the many ministries he and Pat have brought to us, as he now stands down. He and Pat will always be friends of St Mary's.

To **David and Rayne Stoner**, as they stood down from their Authorised Worship Assistant roles with other Ministry involvements and latterly, as they are still shielding, but remain part of St Mary's Church Family.

Huge Thanks

To **these many and faithful committed Volunteers**, who are juggling so much with their own family responsibilities, we include those who **share the decision-making and outworking of responsibilities**:

the dedicated Team of **Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens and PCC members and our Vergers and Deputy Vergers** and the many **Volunteers** who have helped during this period in so many ways, to support the church during this challenging time and make it 'fit for purpose'.

To the **Bellringers**, who can join us, according to their guidelines for ringing.

To **Our Organist Lorraine Eldridge** who has been waiting and is now creatively and faithfully taking us forwards musically.

To **Marianne Starling our Families Matter Keyworker**, who has been continuing to connect, with the help of others, with the young families in the community. This has been done through Facebook and messaging, through ADventure! postings and links including Walks, with the Outdoors inspiration of Charlie's Links and suggestions and the Labyrinth mown on our Church Green.

To **Peter Sorensen** for his ongoing work with this mowing and the upkeep of the car park.

We will have a different arrangement of chairs over the south side of church from 6th September, to reserve an area specifically for our families joining in 10.00am Sunday Service worship

Huge Thanks

To **Paul and Christina Weatherill** for their care of the Gardens including in the preparation for our first service back in church.

To **Gill Smith and the Brass cleaning Team** who have made sure it was gleaming for our first service back in church.

To **Gill Smith** for her commitment to keeping the website up to date amidst all the challenges and to **Kyla** for liaising with her.

To **Linda Benton and Jill Conie** and all those involved in the fresh and silk arrangements of flowers to dress our church beautifully.

To **Malcolm Jones**, for his conscientious commitment to keeping St Mary's clean up to lockdown. He is stepping down from Church cleaning, while we are still at the early stages of reopening church.

To **Lucy Davey**, whom we welcome back from furlough, as our Parish Administrator, from the week beginning Monday 7th September.

To **Margaret Cator**, who has been faithfully supporting administratively, while the Office has been closed and through her ongoing work with Church Fees both for Watton, Ashill, Carbrooke, Ovington and Saham Toney.

To **Marianne and Kyla and Elaine and others**, who have kept working towards the future of the Charlotte Harvey Youth and Community Centre as a building and area, at least in the short term, which we can use as a Centre / Community Hub, to complement the other long term plans for Watton.

To the **Watton Town Council Trustees of the building, who, along with Sue Dent**, (Events and Projects Support Officer for Swaffham and Watton Town Councils), and others, have formed an Action Group driving this forwards. The building is already reopening.....

It has also been a great privilege for us to be in partnership to provide a **Holiday Kitchen** for families in 3 locations throughout the school holidays at the Charlotte Harvey Building, on Blenheim Grange and at St Mary's. Special thanks to **Marianne and Kyla and Sonja Warnes and Angela Clark**, who have liaised with providers of food from: Dereham Morrisons and Greggs, Watton Tescos and the Bakery, Councillor Don Saunders's connections and Food Bank. Thank you to Everyone who has provided donations of food, vouchers and money. We started in February Half Term and will continue if helpful to do so, on behalf of the schools, in October Half Term.

Thank you to **Everyone** who has continued to supply the **Food Bank** and to **Gill Smith and Helen Riley and others** who serve **the community** there.

We look forward to other activities and events starting up in due course. Please keep a lookout on the website.

And starting the week beginning Monday 7th September, you are invited to socially distance and meet for Prayer in St Mary's Church on:

Mondays and Thursdays at 5.00pm and / or Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 8.00am

To every single one of you and I include in prayer all those who cannot read this appearing the Internet (but a copy will be pinned to the Church noticeboard):

Philippians 1: 2 – 6 The Apostle Paul wrote: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to a completion until the day of Christ Jesus".