

St Mary's Speen Pew News 376

1) A Message from Rev Joy Mawdesley

Dear Saints of St Mary's,

'Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.' Romans 12:12

This short verse was one which came to me at the point that this most recent lockdown was announced. I have to say that coming when it did, this lockdown took me a little by surprise. I think I thought of this verse because of the fact that the word 'hope' is in it. We all need a bit of hope right now and this verse talks about being joyful in hope. Hope and joy are such positive words. In general use, we use the word 'hope' to talk about something that we wish to happen, but without any real certainty that it will. In the Bible, our hope has certainty about it, because it is based on what has already happened, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – and the fact that he is coming again one day to sort out this troubled world, to renew creation and for us to be with him forever.

And then there is patience in affliction. 2020 has been a year of affliction, and just when we thought life had returned to some kind of normal, lockdown no. 2 was upon us. We all have to be patient once more – patient to wait for it to lift, patient with the restrictions on our lives and patient about not knowing yet what we can plan for Christmas, both at home and at church. Please be praying for Christmas at St Mary's – some planning has started, but it is hard to know what might be possible.

And finally, faithful in prayer. Now more than ever, we need to keep praying – as individuals as we seek to walk closely with God each day, and as the Body of Christ. Scattered as we are in our homes, we join together as we pray. And we know that no prayer is ever wasted, our prayers achieve more than we can imagine, changing people and situations in ways we could not have anticipated. The church building continues to be open for private prayer on Sundays at 10.30-11.30am and on Wednesdays from 2-4pm, if it is helpful to come and sit and reflect and pray. We anticipate the church being open for public worship again on Sunday 6th December unless the lockdown is extended. Let's do what we can to encourage each other, to keep each other going – a phone call, a card – and do let me know, or Mavis know, if there is anything that you need help with or if you become aware of a need near to you.

Every blessing, Joy

joy@st-nics.org 07786 106636

2) **ST MARY'S IN CHURCH.** Due to the national lockdown, St Mary's is still closed for public worship for the next three Sundays. We anticipate that our next service will be on Sunday 6th December.

However, **the church will be open for an hour between 10.30 and 11.30am on each Sunday and on Wednesday afternoons between 2 and 4pm** for private prayer if you would like to come and enjoy some time for your own reflection and prayer in the church building.

3) **DIOCESE OF OXFORD CHURCH AT HOME SERVICES**

Church at Home is available to watch, or listen to in higher quality, each Sunday at 10am.

You'll find full details on the website at <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/livestream>

Dial in telephone service:

For those unable to watch or listen online dial 01865 920930 and, once connected, dial 0 for the full version of the service, or dial 1 a short version of the service. Standard call rates apply. There will be a few seconds of silence before the service starts.

4) **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

Please read the attachment to this week's email about our APCM.

5) **PHOTOS FROM LAST WEEK'S CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE AT THE SPEEN WAR MEMORIAL.**







- 6) Anna has left a box of interesting books of a religious nature, in the foyer. Feel free to take what you like. They will be there for a couple of weeks.
- 7) And the other Good News is, of course: Anton is the new judge on “Strictly” tonight. He can be very entertaining. Enjoy.

Best Wishes, Mavis
01635 43120
mhughesdon@hotmail.com