



Dear friends,

1) Our hymn for the week has been chosen by Doreen McCarthy and it is "O God our help in ages past". It speaks for itself. Click on the blue text below to listen to Kings College Cambridge choir.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4WCLIC-LLs>

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:

Beneath the shadow of thy throne,
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

2) **A NEW CURATE**

Message from our Rector, Rev Will Hunter Smart:

We delighted to let you know that we have a new curate joining us at St Mary's and St Nic's over the summer. Jackie Fountain is currently due to start ministry in the Benefice in July, although exactly what the start of her ministry will look like depends on current restrictions. Jackie is currently the Community Development Worker at New Hope Church in Reading. She is married to Paul and they have three grown-up children. We will let you know more details in due course. In the meantime, please pray for Jackie and her family as they prepare to move from Reading and join us in Newbury.

3) **CHURCH FINANCES**

A message from our Treasurer:

We are so grateful to all those who support St Mary's financially on a regular basis. Of course, despite the fact that the church building is closed, we continue to care for our beautiful building and grounds and so we hope that you will keep supporting us at this time

of great uncertainty for us all. This is less of an issue for those who give by direct debit. For those who usually give on a Sunday, if you are able to continue to set aside your weekly gifts for when we meet again, that would be really helpful. Alternatively, you can put envelopes through my door at 44 Speen Lane or contact me on 43120 to discuss other ways of giving during this time when we are unable to gather together.

Thank you so much for all your support for the life of St Mary's.

4) **SHOPPERS.** It has come to my ears that we have quite a few in the congregation who are able to help our stuck-at-homers with shopping. **A BIG THANK YOU** and a hearty clap for these lovely people. Not that the rest of us aren't lovely, but..

5) **LIGHTING A CANDLE**

A message from Jill Wilson

On Sunday 22nd March, Churches Together in England, suggested that at 7.00 pm we light a candle in the window of our homes as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer. This could, perhaps, become a daily occurrence, a light shining in the darkness. Since then, I have lit a tea light every evening when it starts getting dark. Maybe others would also like to light a candle of hope. A little personal note: My cat is called Pandora, who besides releasing all the troubles into the world also released hope. We are safe in the sure and certain hope that that if we trust in Our Lord, light will win over the current darkness engulfing the world.

Peace, Jill

6) **ROBERT SANDILANDS SCHOOL**

Pam Harrison one of our cake makers, kindly made a lovely squidgy looking, (no I didn't taste it) Victoria sponge which I took, together with a card from St Mary's, round to our local school, where I was received with some astonishment, delight and thanks. There are a few children of keyworkers in school daily, but of course the teachers continue to teach on line if possible, and have particular concerns for vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties. Please pray regularly for the teachers and pupils with their various needs.

7) Thank you everyone for your ideas and contributions to Pew News. Keep them coming!
Thanks, Mavis.