CHRIST CHURCH BARNSTON ST MICHAEL'S PENSBY

Dear friends,

We were asked a good question in the Generosity Project at the Hub on Thursday last. What steps can you take to cultivate a growing attitude of cheerful giving? It is a good question, because it is not superficial. Changing our attitudes is something deeper than merely changing our behaviour. How do we change our priorities, our desires, our hearts, as this question (and the Bible) implies we should? Well, there were helpful answers: it's the work of God's Spirit to change us (think of the fruit that Paul writes about in Galatians chapter 5) so if we are willing for this change, we should pray for it; it comes as we find greater joy and security in Jesus Christ - the more we trust that he will provide for us, the more cheerfully generous we will be. And it comes as we act generously. Paul's reassurance to the Corinthian Christians is that "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work". God gives us much more than we need in order that we can give generously. And as we do give generously, in time, concern, work or money, God supplies all that we need and more, so that we can keep on giving. It is a wonderful dynamic to be part of.

I am convinced that our communities, as well as those in our church family, will need this distinctive, sacrificial Christ-empowered generosity more than ever in the months ahead. It was also pointed out on Thursday that we may feel that people are not in great need around us, but that we do not need to look too far outside our immediate circumstances to see a different picture. Our mission partners, in Rock Ferry, in Kenya, in the Barnabas Fund would say a hearty "Amen" to that.

Lord Jesus, teach me to be generous;
teach me to serve you as you deserve,
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds, a
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labor and not to seek reward,
except that of knowing that I do your will. Amen.

Again, much love in Christ to you all.

Peter

<u>This week's news:</u>
Included in this mailing is a sheet explaining how we will go about opening up for services. We want to take steps to meeting again, but to do so in a way that is safe and fair. So please read it carefully and let us know if you would like to come to a service.

Faculty application.
In order to do some necessary work at Christ Church we have to post a faculty application on the door of the church. Because of the current situation we are also asked to make it available to view on the church website. You can see it there in the resources section.

We have had good news **financially**, benefitting from a kind legacy and from a larger gift, of £2,000, from the Diocese. This is most welcome and means that this month we have had a small surplus. It is also encouraging to see that our income as a church has held up relatively well, at least compared to many other churches, where there is greater reliance on giving on the plate on a Sunday. But this good news ought not to mask the continuing reality that our income is short of our expenditure, by about £2,000 a month. This is a significant shortfall but would be remedied if each person were able to give an additional £2.50 per week. Would you consider if this is possible for you? We have been helped by a number of people taking out standing orders in recent weeks - if more were able to do this it would make a real difference to the predictability of our income. Do contact Bob Jarvis (342 2143) for any advice or help in making changes.

Do join us as we **pray** this week
To join in Morning Prayers
From Tuesday 7th July to Friday 11th July from 9.00 to 9.20.
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89924156543
To join in Pray at Home
We pray from 7.00pm to 7.30pm every Thursday. To join us on Thursday 9th July
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82193322586
This week will include prayers for our Mission partners, Sena and Jane in Caen

The Hub will conclude our looking at the Generosity Project. It has been a really challenging course for us, but we trust a great blessing as well. Do look out for new courses in the Autumn!

To join us on on Wednesday 8th July at 10.30 am
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81338428653
To join us on Thursday 9th July at 8.05pm
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82193322586

Do keep on listening to Flame radio (**1521MW)**. Our morning service is replayed at 6.00 pm every week, and a shorter version of the previous week's sermon is on their Sunday morning show as well. Last week's service (June 28th) was hit by technical problems but we think all went well this week.

Pray for those who have been bereaved, including the family and friends of Linda Bailey, Donald Stroud, Annette Stainsby, Margaret Jones and Caroline Harrison and remember our mission partners, Sena and Jane in Caen

Opening up for services at St Michael's 3rd July 2020

As you may have heard, we are planning to allow a small number of people to come to the morning Service at St Michael's from July 19th. This will be our 10.30 service, with some parts of the service live and some parts pre-recorded and shown on the screen in the church. The whole thing will be live streamed to those watching at home and a recording will be available through the week.

Please do not feel under pressure to come to the church - if you are comfortable watching at home, then do continue to do so! It is great that we can do this, and it will be good to welcome people back to church. At the same time, the government and the Church of England have issued guidelines for services and there are a number of things that we all need to be aware of.

- A limited number of people can attend. Based on the current social distancing requirements.
- We think that up to 40 can attend, though the exact number will depend on the size of the household groups that come.
- People who come need to be free of any symptoms of COVID-19. If you feel unwell, or if you have been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 you must not come to the service.
- Those at extra risk and the "clinically extremely vulnerable" should be aware of the risks of attending public worship, but it is for them to decide whether or not to do so.
- The "two metre rule" will still apply. Where this cannot be maintained extra Public
- Health precautions need to be taken.
- Wearing face coverings is voluntary.
- We won't be able to sing. We will, though, be listening to pre-recorded songs from our music groups, as we have done in our live-streamed services.
- We will not be having refreshments afterwards.
- In due course we will issue a short guidance sheet letting everyone know what to expect if they come - as they arrive and during and after the service.

Coming to the service.

We don't know how many people will want to come. It is possible that more will want to come than we can safely accommodate. We will not allow people in if we have reached capacity, so to avoid causing embarrassment or wasted journeys we will determine in advance who is coming.

We are also required to keep a record of the names of those who attend the service for 21 days, to help with the government's track and trace scheme. Knowing in advance who is coming will help towards this. Therefore, if you would like to come to a service one Sunday, please could you tell Cecelia in the office by noon on the Wednesday before. If would you like to come on 19th July, please could you tell Cecelia in the office by noon on Wednesday 15th July. If there is more demand than we can accommodate we will draw out the names of households at random. These people will be told in advance that they are able to come. Please wait to be told that you can come before making your way to church! People who are unsuccessful on a particular Sunday will get priority the following week.

Obviously this is not the way most of us would want to come to church, but this is what we have to do for the time being, so that people can come and worship and be confident that they will be safe. It is also good to remember that whether we are in church or at home we are united. In Jesus Christ, "we are his people, the sheep of his pasture." Psalm 100: 3.