

Littlehampton United Church

Mini
Newsletter 17



Keeping
our church
together

Dear Friends,

After six weeks of Sunday worship, it has almost become “Normal” to do things differently. Entering the church through the “old” entrance, for example, and being greeted by a steward with a jar of hand sanitiser. I’m not sure that it will ever feel “normal” not to sing when a good hymn tune is played, although I have noticed a few people tapping their fingers and quietly humming behind their masks. We are fortunate, here on the South Coast that we can enjoy many things as almost normal, when friends and relatives in the North of our country are almost in lock down once more. However, “Normal” is a relative term. It now feels normal to make plans that might have to be changed at short notice. Last weekend Val and I were looking forward to a visit from one of our daughters. We ended up having a video call while her family isolated themselves waiting for the results of a covid test. (Which, I’m happy to say was negative) At church, we are experiencing regrettable delays in the refurbishment of the Coffee Lounge and Knight Hall—one reason being the need for different members of the workforce to isolate following contact tracing.

Se we continue, planning, hoping and praying. Thanking God for all He has done and is doing.

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ His Son.
And now let the weak say “I am strong”, let the poor say “I am rich”,
Because of what the Lord has done for us.

(Words by Henry Smith)

Leaders of worship in November are planned as follows:

1st Nigel Stapley; 8th Chris Azzaro; 15th Wendy Corney; 22nd Naison Hove (Communion); 29th Nigel Stapley.

Remembrance Sunday is on the 8th November when the service will be slightly longer in order to include the act of remembrance at 11.00am. I am informed that there will be no service at the War Memorial this year but St Mary’s Church will stream the Town’s act of remembrance on line. Some people might rather follow this alternative.

Reminders: Please don’t come to church if you are feeling unwell; When you arrive use the hand sanitiser; Wear your face mask throughout the service; Maintain a safe distance between other worshippers; At the end of the service, remain seated to talk to others or move out into the garden where there is room to keep the social distance.

This newsletter was written and edited by Chris Azzaro, who can be contacted on 01903 718070 or by email: christopher.azzaro@sky.com

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome

There is also information about our church on the website: Littlehamptonunitedchurch.org.uk

News of the Family

We welcome home our Minister as he returns from Zimbabwe this weekend. We look forward to hearing from him soon although don't expect to see him for a few weeks as he will have to quarantine himself.

Please remember Alison Spencer in your prayers as she recovers from surgery.

John Stevens is still awaiting hospital treatment.

If you would like more details on the refurbishments of Coffee Lounge and Knight Hall , please contact Malcolm Nichols, Norman Redington or John Stevens.

THANK YOU



Many of you have read the Newsletters published by The Friends of the Mombasa Children and have generously responded to the needs of children and families in Mombasa, who have been hard hit by the effects of Coronavirus.

I was encouraged to receive pictures of children returning to school—suitably masked and socially distanced. The new handwashing facilities are now in place. Once again, thank-you for responding to the appeal for money to enable these facilities to be purchased. The government announcement that some year groups could return to school came as a surprise and managers and teachers had to move quickly to get things ready. We expect the rest of the school to return next week. Schools in Kenya usually break up for the long “summer” holiday in early November. This year term will end on Christmas Eve in order to start making up lost teaching time.



Don't be fooled by the images of children wearing jumpers. The temperature in Mombasa at this time of year is around 25 degrees. If you were to suggest that they might be more comfortable without their jumper, they will tell you that they would feel cold!

Christmas is coming—but probably not as we know it!

The Leadership Team have begun thinking about how we might celebrate Christmas this year. One casualty is the Christmas Tree Festival, although we will decorate the church and have the nativity display in the foyer to be seen by passers-by. We are also thinking about the Christmas Card presentation. Christmas services may well depend on Covid restrictions in place at the time.

Littlehampton Churches Together are also looking at what can or can't be done this year. Plans are progressing for an on-line advent service in the evening of Sunday 29th November.

Watch this space.

What is religion all about?

A question often asked by those who are not committed to a faith—or, more often, wish to make the point that religion has no point.

The answer often given, wrongly, is that religion is about rules and rituals. Rules, which many would say they can follow without the need for the rituals or faith in a God. Sometimes they see the rules as meaningless.

So what is the right answer?

Religion is about the observance of faith, and at the heart of faith is relationship.

In Matthew's gospel (chapter 22, verses 34—40) the Pharisees asked Jesus a question. Previously, the Sadducees had tried to trick Jesus by asking testing questions about marriage in heaven. (A strange choice of topic since the Sadducees did not actually believe in life after death). Jesus avoided their pitfalls, now it was the turn of the Pharisees. A lawyer asked him: "Which is the greatest commandment?" Jesus replied by quoting the first commandment "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind." Then he added "And the second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself". Jesus' answer was clear and unequivocal.

It is living in a loving relationship with God and our fellow humans.

One may wonder why it is still necessary to ask the question. Perhaps because the church, over centuries has become known for ceremony and rituals; relationship has sometimes been abused—and always ends up in the wrong kind of headline. The question we need to ask ourselves is "**How can Jesus' answer be more effectively conveyed to the world?**". In describing ourselves as a church that is here to serve the community in which we are placed, we have already challenged ourselves to convey the answer.

We are defined by the way we conduct our relationships. Through this we show our faith in God.

Based on a sermon suggestion found in "Roots for Churches"



Sheffield Park Gardens on a fine day in late summer

