

Dear all,

How are you? How are you *really*? By this stage many of you will be thoroughly fed up and want things to change quickly. Some may be actually quite enjoying the solitude as a time to read books you always meant to get round to or working in the garden. Some of you may be really suffering from not being able to go outdoors whenever you want and meet real people. The media has been reporting on the rise of mental health issues and also the increase of cases of domestic violence. Many marriages and other relationships have come under acute pressure due to people living in close proximity with one another over extended periods of time. Tensions can occur when we live together, but in isolation.

As a church family we continue our discipleship based around our own households. We are still praying, worshipping, serving. We are still seeking God's guidance as we read our Bibles. Restrictions are being eased, but this present crisis is clearly going to be a much longer, more drawn-out affair than many of us imagined. At the moment, the diocese is now allowing clergy back into church buildings to pray and to record or stream live services.



However, I will continue to put on live services from the Vicarage from the time being, as there seems little point in just a few members of the Cinnamond family recording from an empty church. Over time, it may be that some form of services may restart in our building, but with social distancing measures in place. It would still leave large question marks over the numbers who can actually then attend, how to distribute Holy Communion, do we sing etc. etc. I am, of course, very much aware that many people will still not want to attend large gatherings, as they are part of an 'at risk'

group and may not want to venture out until a reliable vaccine is available. In other words, it could be a long time before anything resembling 'normality' happens. Together with the wardens and the PCC I will endeavour to keep you as up to date as possible.

Parish Book Club – 'The Pilgrim's Progress'

It is easy to fritter away our time- we all do it! Instead, why not commit yourself to feeding mind and soul by reading a good Christian book? From next week onwards we are offering a weekly Book Club for anyone interested in reading through the classic 'The Pilgrim's Progress' by John Bunyan. After the Bible, it is the most translated book in the world (over two hundred different languages and counting...) and it has never been out of print since the 17th Century. It is an allegory of the Christian life as a journey and has inspired and encouraged countless generations of Christians around the world. Join us on Zoom as we read this marvellous book together. We will also watch an introductory video to whet our appetites and give some background. The group is for anyone, whether you have read 'The Pilgrim's Progress' before or this will be for the first time. You can join in the conversation as much or as little as you want! You can use whatever edition you have, but I will be using the Penguin Classics edition, edited by Roger Sharrock- plenty of cheap copies on Ebay and elsewhere. **Mondays at 10am – from 18th May.**

Zoom link – [click here](#)

Meeting ID: 835 5778 0535 and Passcode 398005

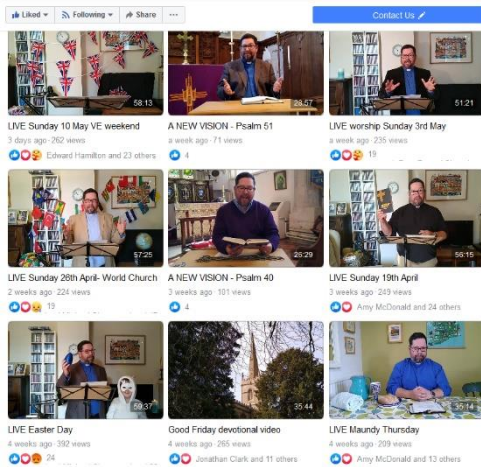


John Bunyan dreaming about his new book...

REMINDERS:

Sunday services

Join us live from the Vicarage, 10am every Sunday, on our church FACEBOOK page- link below. You do not need a Facebook account! On this page there are also recordings of previous services and teaching videos on the Psalms. LINK to see all videos – [click here](#)



Midweek Groups

Please join us online via ZOOM software- you may need to download some software to your computer. For security reasons we are not making public the login details- *please see below for the links OR contact the vicar.*

1. Prayer Meeting- 10am every Wednesday

An opportunity to join with others online to pray for ourselves, our nation and the wider world.

Zoom link – [click here](#)

Meeting ID: 847 8088 5116 and Passcode 341733

2. Bible Study groups, looking at Philippians- 7:30pm every Thursday

We meet all together online to sing, pray and watch a video, then split into smaller online groups for discussion.

Zoom link – [click here](#)

Meeting ID: 829 8226 9981 and Passcode 208240



Families

I am very conscious that this lockdown can be a very tough time for families, what with the rigours of home schooling, children missing their friends, sibling rivalries and many children being anxious and worried about the future. It is important that we remember and pray for the spiritual life of families and young people during this crisis. To that end, there will soon be a new video available for primary school children based on the study of Jonah. Here is also a link ([click here](#) or [click the picture](#)) to Colin Buchanan, a multi-talented Australian songwriter and musician, and some of his devotions for kids - enjoy!



A Final P.S.

It was great to have Paul Cobb, our local military historian, produce a short video on VE Day in Lechlade for our service last Sunday. You can view it again on our Facebook page by [clicking here](#).

I will finish with this blessing, which the LORD gave to Aaron and his sons to bless Israel:

*The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace.*

Every blessing in Christ's name,

Andrew Cinnamond

Vicar – St. Lawrence, Lechlade (01367 253651)

