

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As 8pm approached on Thursday, 26th March 2020, people appeared at open doors and windows some holding a pan and a spoon. On the hour they started to clap, some banging the pan with the spoon. It was very different from the ringing of church bells and the lighting of beacons. And the reason was different too. The nation was in lockdown, household isolation, to prevent the rapid spread of corona virus, COVID-19, the cause of a pandemic.

In hospitals, National Health Service (NHS) staff were working day and night, fighting to save the lives of patients infected with the virus and at risk of losing their own life. And the nation was showing its gratitude.

For many the televised scenes and the accounts by hospital staff would be the enduring image, end of life scenes of patients dying with no family or friends at their bedside, instead, caring and understanding hospital staff forming this last link.

The pandemic came to a much divided world, and to a British society losing social cohesion and with many disadvantaged. Yet the world is otherwise a global village: climate change, pollution, electronic communication, trade, movement of people.

And what of our response?

We saw the best in people and we saw the worst. There was no hiding place. Tarnished images were exposed, the good in others revealed, and it is the latter which will be first remembered, perhaps with a little surprise, where neighbours had been strangers.

We saw more clearly the disadvantaged: the homeless; the homes without the internet or without information technology (IT) skills to enable working from home, communication and home schooling; the homes without gardens or with multiple occupancy of rooms; the homes threatened with loss of employment.

But we also saw more clearly the many who give generously of their time, talents and possessions: the elderly who telephoned someone isolating alone; the young who gave electronic communication advice under the supervision of a responsible adult; the large number of people who acted as a delivery service. The Queen broadcast words of comfort and hope. We saw in practice the second great commandment of Jesus, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

It was a time for Christians, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to be visible as under-shepherds of Jesus, caring for his flock, to be ambassadors of Christ bringing the Gospel message, the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and so to bring comfort to those who are alone, to those who suffer, to those who mourn and so be like Jesus when he walked on this earth.

Written on 1 June 2020, the pandemic in the United Kingdom was in decline but not over and with the risk of a second peak. From a member of Thorner Methodist Church.



All Saints'
at the heart of the
community

TRINITY SUNDAY
7th June 2020



Dear all,

I hope all is well! I highlight a few things. Firstly, I am praying for the recently bereaved live on Sunday evening and then singing Compline. I have a dial in facility for folk without the internet (using Zoom). This may be of interest to folk. We'll see how it goes as the technology is a bit of an innovation. I have also written a note about my secondment to Kippax, which is now on and included a message about fundraising for St George's Crypt which Alan is initiating. Please use anything below that you find useful.

Blessings, Bob

2 Corinthians 13.11–13

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Matthew 28.16–20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

The open space of God

Trinity is a special Sunday for the Benefice (it is in our name!) and marks the anniversary of one of the most memorable and joyful services during my curacy.

Last year among the wonderful puppets, choirs and coming together of the three churches was an Absolution based on Romans 5: 3–5. It is from *The Message* translation of the bible and captures the joy of salvation in the phrase “We find ourselves standing... in the wide open spaces of God’s grace”. Our two readings for today describe the Christian communities response to that grace in fellowship and worship. This year we are physically separated and we might reflect on how we can “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”. What does this mean when we cannot baptize or greet each other with a holy kiss?

Andy touches on this reality in his letter below. We are a long way from a return to anything we would recognise as ‘normal’ in all areas of life, including the life of the church. The change of everything is exactly what faced the disciples after the resurrection. It is reassuring that some even doubted what they were seeing. Hardly a surprising reaction! The life of resurrection was about to become the ‘new normal’, our extraordinary normal. This new life does not leave us alone or unable to ‘obey everything that I have commanded you’, the greatest being to love. We participate in the mutual love of the Trinity, the self giving of God. We baptise through our care of others, greet with holy kisses via the telephone and continue as a community found ‘in the wide open spaces of God’s grace’. As the disciples stood in awe worshipping the risen Jesus they must have also wondered what was next? How would they live and worship? What would their new community look like? Maybe they grieved for the loss of certainty and the suffering that was to come? Maybe we are doing the same, but we do it with the promise ‘I am with you always’. *Bob*

Absolution – God’s promise of forgiveness (based on Romans 5: 3–5)

We throw open our doors to God and discover at the same moment that he has already thrown open his door to us. We find ourselves standing where we always hoped we might stand—out in the wide open spaces of God’s grace and glory, standing tall and shouting our praise.

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God,
you have given us your servants grace,
by the confession of a true faith,

password: 763953 on your keypad.

Watch June’s Messy Church

at <https://youtu.be/Fm5RhisEYt4?t=91>

With craft, song and story telling we explored the theme of friendship through the story of Ruth and Naomi. Barwick Primary School perform a song in Makaton and Bob makes Armpit fudge! Five other crafts to try your hand at from things easily found at home. Send in your creations to be shown next month to Becki Stennett at becki_stennett@yahoo.co.uk or Bob Bailey at rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com. Our next Messy Church is Tuesday 7th July at 12.30pm.

Dad’s Club, Saturday June 13th live on Zoom at 10.30am.

Dad’s Club is still happening online with a Zoom meeting at 10.30am on the second Saturday of each month. Sadly we have to cook our own breakfast! More details to follow. All Dads with younger children are welcome for a catch up, games, craft and song. Contact Bob for details of how to join us or find us on Facebook. rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com

All Saints All Stars, Wednesday June 17th live on Zoom at 3.45pm

Last month’s get together was truly international! Open to any families in the Benefice, we explore the readings for Sunday, have an activity together and a sing. All children are welcome with their parents. Contact Bob for details of how to join us or find us on Facebook. rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com

For further information;

prayer, pastoral care, practical help or some conversation contact;
Revd Andy Nicholson 0113 289 2437 reverandy1@gmail.com
Revd Kathryn Elliott 07597 078567 kathrynellott60@yahoo.com
Revd Bob Bailey 0113 260 7721 rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com
Leslye Thomas 0113 281 2488 leslyeanglican@btinternet.com
Carole Cassidy 0113 281 2149 carole.cassidy39@gmail.com

If you would like to pray with us via Zoom on a Thursday morning, please use the details below. It is now also possible to join the meeting by telephone.

To join the Zoom meeting by telephone dial 0203 481 5240. You will be charged for the call. Follow the instructions. You will be asked to enter the meeting identification number on your telephone keypad. The meeting identification number is; 871 3972 6660, then press # as instructed. You can ignore the instructions asking for participants identification number. Just press # again.

When you are in the meeting it is possible to mute yourself and also raise a hand (an icon of a hand) so that other users who are in video mode can see you would like to speak. To do this press star and then a number.

*6 - Toggle mute/unmute

*9 - Raise hand

To join the meeting through a computer with a microphone and camera use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87139726660>

If you have not used Zoom before you will be asked to install some software on your computer. Just follow the instructions.

Sunday evening prayers and Compline (June 7th at 9pm)

This week Bob will be praying from home at 9pm, followed by sung Compline. We're continuing our prayers for the families of those bereaved during this time. If you would like a prayer said for someone please let me know. Tel. 07885 386932 / rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com. Join me for Compline live through the Benefice website at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2ID3IKIfaJisVxxttTBJJg> or dial into Zoom at 9pm to hear the service live using a normal telephone or your computer (charges apply).

To join us via Zoom use this link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83967380953?pwd=MDkzRXpiUGNIU3Y5aHR0RS9hc0g3UT09>

To dial in using a telephone (charges apply) dial 0203 481 5240 and follow the instructions. You may need to enter the meeting ID: 839 6738 0953 and

to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity
and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity:
keep us steadfast in this faith,
that we may evermore be defended from all adversities;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

Post Communion

Almighty and eternal God,
you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
and live and reign in the perfect unity of love:
hold us firm in this faith,
that we may know you in all your ways
and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory,
who are three Persons yet one God,
now and for ever. Amen

Creed

We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.

We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Blessing

Blessing and honour and thanksgiving and praise,
more than we can utter, more than we can conceive,

be to you, most holy and glorious Trinity,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
by all angels, all people, all creatures,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Hymn: Holy, holy, holy!

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye made blind by sin
thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name
in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Poem

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes—
The rest sit round it and pick blackberries.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) from “Aurora Leigh” (extract), Book Seven, (1856).

Message from Andy

Over the last few weeks as there has been a gradual opening up of society from lock-down a number of congregation members have asked when churches are going to open up again. I thought I would write a short note from my perspective and from what I have been told in order to help people see where we are and where we might be going over the coming months.

Bob's secondment

We had planned for me to be on secondment during May, June and July. The main purpose was to stretch my learning and cover for the Revd Diane Flynn in Swillington who is in need of an operation. Her op coincided with Kippax being in a vacancy. With her op cancelled due to Coronavirus it was felt sensible that I stayed put. With restrictions slowly lifting Diane's operation has been rescheduled for June 17th. With her need to stay in isolation +Paul asked if I could help at Kippax, Swillington and Allerton-by-Water with immediate effect until the end of July. Obviously this is not a normal situation as all worship is online. I will be continuing Diane's schedule of live daily worship on Facebook (9.30am, 12noon and 5pm, Monday to Thursday) and a Sunday service at 10.30am. Diane also works closely with local schools and leads a weekly Zoom bible study. I will also be providing pastoral support, looking at the opening of their buildings and taking funerals. This will mean I won't be available in the Benefice but I am planning on working with our teams to bring us Messy Church, All Saint's All Stars and Dad's Club as planned during June and July. In the meantime you will all be in my prayers and I look forward to sharing with you all I learn in the eight weeks I am 'away'. Blessings, Bob

Online links;

including daily reflections and Sunday worship.

<http://www.barwickcofechurch.co.uk>

After service Zoom Coffee on a Sunday at 11.30am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86594041181>

Meeting ID: 865 9404 1181

Direct link to the Benefice YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2ID3IKIfajisVxxttTBJJg>

Dial-in services on Wednesday and Sunday at 10am;

Dial 0330 336 0036; or from a UK mobile dial 8 7373 (or from an O2 mobile, dial 98 7373). When prompted, enter the group PIN 716 416. Charges are: landlines – your phone provider's local rate for your contract (which may be free if you have free phone calls); mobiles 12.5p/min. + VAT.). Call Alan on 0113 281 2769 if you need help or have any questions.

Thursday Prayers via Zoom and telephone, 9.15am

moment needs our support and prayers again.

The current plan is that the shelter will move to Garforth Methodist Church for four weeks. The Church Council have agreed overwhelmingly that they are willing for their building to be used for this purpose. This is no easy undertaking in Lockdown situations when our buildings are closed. However the building in Garforth allows social distancing as well as cooking and bathroom facilities. But the team in Garforth can not do this alone. The need for volunteers and support is going to need the team in Garforth as well as us as a Benefice to continue to work together. The net will be thrown wider still to include other local hosts in LS15, in order to reach the level of volunteers that will be needed to run the shelter for up to a month.

So, yet again I am going to be asking you for donations. Thanks to your generosity we are financially able to support the shelter, so thank you. But we are going to need cooks, shoppers, over night volunteers, day time volunteers, donations of cleaning equipment, food and toiletries. I do not have the details as yet as these are still in the planning stages but please if you are willing and able then think and pray about how you can again support the shelter.

It is a testament to your level of generosity and commitment that we have been asked to support the shelter and host again at such a crucial and desperate time for the guests. Please pray for Katrina and the steering group at WYDAN, as well as Rev. Becki and the lead volunteers, Tim and Sue Bean from Garforth Methodist Church. I will be in touch with more details as I have them.

God Bless, Beckie Briggs (Lead WYDAN Volunteer for the Benefice)

St George's Crypt fundraiser

The Crypt, like many charities is under great strain during Covid-19. Not only are they struggling to raise funds and receive supplies due to the restrictions but the demands on their services have increased considerably in the most difficult of circumstances, including feeding 100 people daily with hot food from the carpark outside the crypt. Many of you support the Crypt both financially and practically. If you would like to join a Zoom Quiz to raise money for the Crypt contact Alan Stanley. Details to follow. Tel. 0113 281 2769 or alan.stanley8@btinternet.com

The first thing to say is that at present only the priest, for private prayer, and certain other essential people are allowed access to the churches (e.g. to check the structure of the building). There has been no indication either from the government or the national church around when more access is likely to be allowed, but the likelihood is that there will be a very gradual and slow opening up of the churches and that 'normal services' are likely to be many months away.

If you think about the things that normally happen in church (shaking hands, sitting close together for up to an hour, drinking from a common cup, singing, chatting over coffee) and who the average congregation member is (generally in the more 'elderly' category) then normal church is a very high-risk activity with a very high-risk group of people. I would suggest that the government and the national church would put normality within church services as one of the very last things to return.

That said, it would bring a great deal of peace and comfort to some people if the churches were open for private prayer, but even this is fraught with danger. Thinking around when to open, for how long, how many are allowed in and how it is policed needs to happen. So even the most simple opening up will need to be thought through carefully. Please be assured each of the three churches are doing some of this thinking and planning in preparation for when churches are allowed to open.

A quote from a recent letter from the Bishop said this: 'advice papers are being worked on to help us prepare for when restrictions are eased: (a) Conducting weddings; (b) Conducting funerals; (c) Individual private prayer by the public; (d) Pastoral visits. These are working documents and I will pass them on when I can.'

It is clear that this is something that is being thought through very carefully both locally and nationally.

A further opening will be to hold small services in church. And in time I'm sure we will be given guidance from both the government and the national church on how this can happen safely.

Another quote from a recent Bishop's letter: 'permission to re-open a building – with restrictions – does not mean you must re-open on the day. You and your PCC must be ready for it and feel ready for it.'

In the meantime we have an abundance of services and events that people can access both on- and off-line, and I would encourage all within the

churches to engage fully with what is being offered. Below is a list of all the things we are doing and if you don't know how to access each please look out for emails in the coming days that will tell you what you need to know. Alternatively you can email me at reverandy1@gmail.com

Online services and events:

- Weekly online Youtube services that go live at 10:30 every Sunday morning, followed by a zoom coffee and chat. (Youtube channel 'Elmete Trinity Benefice')
 - Daily reflections uploaded every weekday onto Youtube.
 - Weekly 'Story time with Debbie' Bible stories uploaded onto Youtube.
 - Monthly 'Messy Church' services done live on the first Tuesday of the month and then uploaded onto Youtube.
 - Monthly 'Dad's Club' zoom on the 2nd Saturday of each month.
 - Weekly zoom prayer meeting on Thursday mornings.
 - Monthly 'All Saints' All Stars' meeting to prepare the 3rd Sunday All-age service.
 - Weekly Pathfinders every Friday between 8-9pm. (for young people aged 11+)
 - 'Singing with Matt Singalong' on Sundays at 4pm (accessed through the St Philip's Facebook page)
 - Regular emails with prayer requests and answers.
- Occasional zoom quizzes.

Offline services:

- Phone-in services at 10am on Wednesday and Sunday.
- Daily reflections printed on paper and posted through your door.

And of course, I am always at the end of a phone (01132892437)
Blessings. Andy

WYDAN update

As a Benefice we have recently supported the West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Network (WYDAN) as they continued to provide valuable support to ten homeless asylum seekers through the lockdown.

The support we provided was very different from our hosting in November, where we welcomed the WYDAN guests into the church hall at St. Philips in Scholes. This time we did still provide hot, home cooked meals as well as donations of clothes, extra food, toiletries and money towards phone credit. However, the meals were delivered to the doorstep, the bell rung and then the security guard would come and collect and distribute to individuals. Personally I have not seen any of the guests throughout the three weeks, but have been told that quite a few of the guests who were with us in November were still with the shelter. The guests did relay messages that they were very happy that we were looking after them again and that the food was amazing, with no shepherd's pies a welcomed blessing. Our volunteer cooks excelled themselves in the menu choices especially facing food shortages and very difficult shopping experiences. The financial donations were staggering and blew me away. I had to double check with the church treasurer that the amount was accurate. A huge thank you from me and on behalf of the guests. Thank you.

Life in lockdown has not been easy for the gentlemen. They are mixed with other homeless asylum men, a wide range of languages and cultures and these new, untested relationships have proved difficult for the dynamics of the group. There have been issues amongst them as frustration, boredom, combined with Ramadan and uncertainty took hold over the lockdown period. This has been managed by the WYDAN steering group who have had to work alongside the Council to provide support, (pot noddles!) and accommodation for these men.

The Benefice supported WYDAN for three weeks and did so in partnership with the hosting team at Garforth Methodist Church, who's minister Becki Stennett, is also the Methodist minister in Barwick and Scholes. It is the team in Garforth that first inspired and supported the Benefice in its involvement with WYDAN. The partnership allowed us to host for three weeks instead of just one and also made the cooking, shopping, delivering and level of donations more manageable during the shortages of lockdown.

Unfortunately with the easing of the lockdown it has been made clear by the Council that they will no longer house the guests and so they will return to the streets of Leeds, without food or shelter. WYDAN have been working hard with all its hosting teams to find a solution. That solution at the