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## **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent** **(Mothering Sunday)**

Today begins a new season in the life of our churches. Restrictions put in place as a result of the outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19) mean that we are no longer holding any public services. However, the church has not shut down. Here is what we are doing.

### **SUNDAY WORSHIP**

The church is not about our buildings. The church is about people. Although the expression of church is changed, we are still a community. **Today (Sunday) at 10.30am**, I will be broadcasting a short service on Facebook Live.

Whilst no-one is allowed to physically attend, you can attend online. To do this you will need to login to facebook. If you don't have an account you will need to create one at facebook.com and then in the search box type 'Christ Church Portsdown'. If you then select the Christ Church page, you should be able to see recent posts. Just before 10.30, the video should appear.

All of today's readings and the Collect are including at the end of this document. The service will include the reading from the book of Exodus.

Not everybody will have, or want to create, a facebook account. In future weeks we may look at other ways of broadcasting the service. There are many alternatives available. Today, all BBC local radio stations are broadcasting a service of worship at 8am. Sunday Worship will be on BBC1 at 11.45am and Songs of Praise (with a feature on Mothers' Union) will be at 1.15pm.

### **MIDWEEK WORSHIP**

Each morning at 8.30am, I will be in St John's saying Morning Prayer. It is not permitted for you to join me physically, but I invite you to join me spiritually. The words that I will be saying can be found each day by going to

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

and then clicking on Morning Prayer (Contemporary) on [*today's date*].

If you have anything you would like me to include in the prayers on these days, do email or phone me.

### **FUNERALS**

The funeral of **Harry Rooke**, a long-standing member of Christ Church, takes place on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March, 10am at Portchester Crematorium.

The funeral of **Stella Murray**, a former member (and host) of Christ Church Evening Wives, takes place on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 11.30am at The Oaks Havant Crematorium.

Please note that under current restrictions, attendance at funerals is severely limited.

## CALL TO PRAYER

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are calling us to a day of prayer and action today (Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>) and invite us to put a lighted candle in our window at 7pm, so that our neighbours know that we are praying for them. Please take appropriate fire precautions if you do this.

## ANNUAL MEETINGS

The Bishop, by formal legal instrument, is extending the deadline for our annual meetings to the end of October. Therefore I am suggesting that both APCMs be postponed. This means that all existing Churchwardens, PCC members and Deanery Synod members **continue in post** (unless they submit a resignation). We will set new dates when the situation becomes clearer.

## OTHER MEETINGS

All other meetings and groups must be postponed. I will be in touch with PCC members in due course about how we continue to conduct our business.

## CHURCH OPEN

St John's will be open most days between 9am and 4pm for personal prayer, reflection and a quiet space. If you visit, please do observe all the advice about distance from others and handwashing.

It is not possible to keep Christ Church open.

## JUST ONE

The meetings with J John, previously scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> April, have been postponed. If you have tickets, I suggest that you keep them. Further information will be issued soon.

## GIVING

Both of our churches will experience reduced income from cancelled hall bookings and the lack of collections at services. If you usually give in the plate, please do consider switching to Direct Debit (ideally through the Parish Giving Scheme). Failing that, if you deliver giving envelopes to the Vicarage, they will be passed to the appropriate treasurer. Please DO NOT send cash in the post.

## CONTACTS

<b>Vicar</b>	<b>Revd Andy Wilson</b> (day off Monday) vicar@christchurchportsdown.org purbrookvicar@gmail.com	023 9226 7261 (M) 07745 128591
<b>Associate Minister</b>	<b>Revd Laura Cameron</b> revdlauracameron@gmail.com	01329 830145 Txt: 07895 021310
<b>Reader CCP (Lay Minister)</b>	<b>Sandra Morgan</b> sandramorgan02@gmail.com	07557 524961
<b>Churchwarden SJP</b>	<b>Bill Jeffery</b> purbrookchurch@gmail.com	023 9225 7288
<b>Churchwarden CCP</b>	<b>Stephen Anderson</b> stephen.anderson@christchurchportsdown.org	07982 253597
<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Emma Evans</b> parish.office@christchurchportsdown.org	02392 379992
<b>Hall Manager CCP</b>	<b>Jacqui Wilson</b> hall.manager@christchurchportsdown.org	023 9226 7261 (M) 07745 128499
<b>Website</b>	<b>Matt Doe</b> webmaster@christchurchportsdown.org	07305 040028
<b>Pew Sheet Editor</b>	<b>Barbara Doe</b> noticesheet@christchurchportsdown.org	023 9237 5532

## **COLLECT**

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; 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.**

## **OLD TESTAMENT: Exodus 2:1–10**

<sup>2</sup> Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. <sup>2</sup> The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. <sup>3</sup> When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. <sup>4</sup> His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

<sup>5</sup> The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. <sup>7</sup> Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' <sup>8</sup> Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. <sup>10</sup> When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

## **Psalms 127:1–4**

<sup>1</sup> Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain. <sup>2</sup> Unless the Lord keeps the city, the guard keeps watch in vain. <sup>3</sup> It is in vain that you hasten to rise up early and go so late to rest, eating the bread of toil, for he gives his beloved sleep. <sup>4</sup> Children are a heritage from the Lord and the fruit of the womb is his gift.

## **NEW TESTAMENT: Colossians 3:12–17**

<sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**GOSPEL READING: John 19:25b-27**

<sup>25</sup>Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.