

Parish Church of  
**St. Edmund King & Martyr**  
West Kingsdown

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**Rector:**

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**Dear Friends**

This is my second letter to you trying to keep you informed and up to date in what are continually changing and challenging times. Whilst we are not able to physically meet together I am hoping to produce a weekly letter to keep us in touch.

First of all and very sadly I have to inform you that our dear friend **Margaret Lane** died on Thursday. Margaret was always so positive, with a beautiful smile even when not in the best of health. I know she will be missed by us all. Our prayers are with her daughters Sue and Melinda and all the family. Once we are back to some sort of normality, whatever and whenever that might be, there will be a memorial service where we will celebrate and give thanks for her life. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

**Closure of all church buildings**

On Tuesday we were informed that all places of worship were to be closed until further notice. Up until that time our 'church in the woods' had remained open for people to enter and in which I was able to say Morning Prayer each day. Sadly as I have said this is now not possible. The church building may have closed but 'church' most definitely hasn't, for as we know, 'church' is not the building but the people. So wherever we are we can be church together but in a different way.

**Prayer and Worship**

I have set up a reflective space in my study and set a pattern of prayer throughout the day.



**9.30am Morning Prayer** – either using the 'Daily Prayer' app on your iPad or phone or the printed order attached. From now until Good Friday we say Morning Prayer for Passiontide and the readings are on the sheet I sent last week.

**12noon** – I stop for 5 to 10 minutes for quiet reflection and prayer, usually ending with the prayer at the end of last week's letter. I also attach some others that may be useful.

**4pm** – I say a form of Evening prayer

**7pm** – I light the candle in my window as a symbol of the light and hope of Christ.

I pray that you may be able to join in with whatever suits your day. We may be separated by distance but it's good to know that we are sharing worship together wherever we are For **Sunday worship/reflection** Harriet has produced a sheet which I attach.

There also continue to be services on television and radio. At 9am tomorrow morning there will be a virtual service conducted by the Archbishop of York on the Church of England website – [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org) click on Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for churches, then on the left hand side click on 'join us for church on line'. Sharon Rivers has also informed me that you can listen to choral evensong on Radio 3 at 3pm on a Sunday and then again at 3.30pm on a Wednesday. Jon Battershill has shared that 'Pray As You Go' (<https://pray-as-you-go.org>) has started up 'Pray As You Stay' which is really worth listening to.

I hope during this next week (with a little help from my friends, Keith Cass and Rev Harriet) to regularly post some inspirational verses on our website and Facebook page.

### **Togetherness**

Let us all look out for one another in the days and weeks ahead. There are people to help in all sorts of ways from shopping, collecting medication to providing hot meals delivered to your doorstep. Call me and I can point you in the right direction ([01474 852265](tel:01474852265)). If you feel you would like to do more and would like to volunteer in some way you can register with Sevenoaks Council by phoning [01732227000](tel:01732227000). Most of all phone one another, look out for your neighbours and keep in touch. Harriet and I are working through trying to speak to each of you. I'm sorry if you haven't yet received a call but please don't hesitate to call us.

Tomorrow (29<sup>th</sup>) we would have been celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> birthdays of our 'Three Lovely Ladies' – **Hilda, Shelia and Rosemary** and although the party has been postponed until a later date I ask you to raise a glass to them especially our **Shelia** whose birthday is actually tomorrow.

**Happy Birthday Shelia**

### **Community Cupboard Food Bank**

If you are able to provide any extra bits for the Community Cupboard foodbank they would be very gratefully received as stocks are running low, especially tinned fruit and all cleaning products. If you need anything collected please let me know.

Lastly a number of people have contacted me and asked about their regular giving to the church, which is very thoughtful, especially at a time when finances are very tight. If you are still able and would like to continue to give a regular donation and have weekly envelopes please continue to put your money in each week, if you don't have envelopes you might like to put what you would normally give to one side and then when we are back together again we'll have a bumper collection!

I pray that we may use this time wisely and think about how we can play our part to make the world a better place. With every blessing **Rev Sarah**