

Parish Church of
St. Edmund King & Martyr
West Kingsdown



Rector:

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Dear Friends

I thought I would begin this week's letter with some reflection. We have endured much during the past two months and we are nowhere near being back to normal, whatever that may turn out to be. It will be a 'new' normal and our village, our country and the world will not be the same again. Any disaster however big or small changes us as people and as communities. We are learning to live different lives whilst our earth heals. Through the frustrations that we have felt we have had to learn a patience that many of us probably thought we didn't have in us. Progress is being made and we are now into the next phase of this long and difficult journey but there is still a very long way to go. I have said so much over the past weeks about God's wonderful

creation and how lucky we are to live and worship in a place surrounded by such beauty. This first picture, although not breath taking and wonderful in the way that last weeks was, gives me such hope, it is a reminder of the intricacies of the cycle of life. Only two weeks ago Don and I thought it was dead, that it had not managed to survive winter but we were so grateful that it proved us wrong. This was the tree that we planted last summer in the front garden of the Rectory, in memory of a dear friend of St. Edmund's, Ann Sharman and it is bursting with new life. Out of the darkness of winter has sprung the new light of spring.

Reflecting and remembering is good for us and this period has surely given us time for that. Sadly it has also been a time when we have had to say goodbye to members of our church community and on Tuesday of this week (19th) we bid Derek Kirby farewell. It is difficult enough to bid farewell in normal circumstances but in these times when numbers of mourners are limited it is even harder. If you are able, it would be wonderful if you could stand along the road as Derek leaves West Kingsdown for the last time. His funeral cortege will leave his home in School Lane between 9.10 and 9.20am and then drive along London Road towards Farningham for his cremation at the new Bluebell Crematorium at Halstead. There will be an opportunity for us all to join in a service of celebration for his life at a later date.



Togetherness

I was sent this picture a couple of weeks ago by Judith Driscoll, one of her granddaughters had taken it whilst she was out on one of her daily exercise walks. It's a beautiful reminder of togetherness and the need that we have of others, here the baby ducklings appear to be almost glued to their mothers' side. Although you may feel very much

alone at times remember that you are not. God is there beside you all the way. I am reminded of the prayer from St. Patrick's Breastplate

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quite, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

I have also received some lovely photographs of rainbows created by members of our Toddler Church, their families and friends. As they come in I put them up on the glass door that leads from the churchyard into the Millennium Room so all those passing by our church may share in them too.

Thank you to all those that else would like to join in photograph of your finished photograph at this angle me in the picture as well.



have sent a rainbow in. If anyone please do and send me a picture. I had to take the otherwise you got a reflection of

It's also good to hear how another through this time. A of help. Just knowing that you much. Angie Skinner has thanks to Jon, for being that miss seeing you all but love email, video or ZOOM. It was sisters, Ella and Amelya, from our school joining in with words and actions singing 'Our God is a great big God.'

people are supporting one kind word a phone call, the offer have people who care helps so asked me to pass on her heartfelt good friend, that listening ear. I catching up on the phone, via a delight to watch a video of two

This week we say a very special **Happy 90th Birthday** to our dear friend **Rosemary Griffiths**. We know that you won't be having the celebrations that were planned but we wish you a happy day and look forward to the day when we can all celebrate with you.

Prayer and Worship

I hope that each of you has been able to find a daily structure for worship and prayer especially on a Sunday. It can be so much harder when we are by ourselves. Please do look at and use the resources that I have mentioned in previous letters. Today I attach worship for tomorrow and for Ascension Day on Thursday. We also start a new form of Morning Prayer on Ascension Day through to Pentecost which is attached along with the daily readings. Lastly I would like to share with you the prayer that one of our young people, Isabella Herbert, wrote on the theme of the Good Shepherd (Easter 4). Thank you so much for your beautiful, thoughtful prayer Isabella,

Dear Lord, Jesus is our good shepherd,
help us to recognise and hear his voice and to follow his light.
Help us not to stray off the correct path
and please help those people suffering from the Coronavirus. Amen
Every Blessing **Rev Sarah**