

Parish Church of
St. Edmund King & Martyr
West Kingsdown



Rector:

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Dear Friends

It's 'Sod's law' isn't it that just as lockdown restrictions are lifted slightly and we are able to meet up at a social distance, in gardens with up to six people, the weather changes! Since the 17th March hardly a drop of rain and blue skies, since the easing of restrictions, low cloud, mist and murk and rain, sometimes torrential, but that's the way it goes. It is good news that very slowly we are able to return to doing a number of things. For some, you must be delighted that after more than twelve weeks of being alone you are now able to become part of a support bubble and spend time with one other household, both inside and out and also staying overnight if you wish. If that's you ENJOY!

Other good news to be announced last week was that places of worship could be open for private prayer from 15th June, the government then changed the date to the 13th June, which is today – great news. But as is often said, 'do you want the good or bad news first? Sadly I've given you the good news but here follows the bad. However much we would like our 'church in the woods' to be open we can only do so if it is safe. Safe for those coming in to pray or for a time of solitude, safe for those who will need to open and close the building and also safe for those that will need to clean it. To that end I, in conversation with Angela, as church warden, and Rev Harriet, have been working on a suitable plan which follows all the guidelines that have been given. There is still much to do and I will be putting a proposal before the PCC before any final decision is taken. Churches have also been given permission to once again hold funeral services within them, as long as all the advice concerning numbers and social distancing are adhered to. Unfortunately, whilst the 2 metre distancing rule applies, the size of our beautiful building and particularly lack of space at the door and in the chancel, prohibits this happening and so for the time being no funeral services will take place inside the building. This we will keep under constant review.

Although it might appear to be all doom and gloom please try and hold onto the positive, we are making small steps forward and hopefully in next week's letter I will have some more positive news on the opening of our building.



I thought this picture of George Cordier with his wonderful smile, outside our church last weekend, might cheer you up. It certainly did me. He asked to be able to go to the church on his bike and that his mum send his picture to me to be shared on my next letter. Thank you so much George, it's great to see you outside St. Edmund's.

Togetherness

The longer the restrictions that this pandemic are putting on our lives the harder it can be to feel connected as a church community. However I know that people are trying their best. Since restrictions were lifted slightly, allowing people to travel further from home, Rev Harriet has been down to the village on a couple of occasions and managed to catch up with people as she has walked around. She and I also managed a face to face to catch up in the rectory garden earlier this week. I know that she, as well as others, have also been keeping in touch by phone. I try to make sure I reply to all your lovely emails and phone calls and can only apologise if I haven't caught up personally with you but hope that you at least feel a connection via this letter. I am here for you all but unfortunately there just aren't enough hours in the day to complete everything I have and would like to do. Please do pick up the phone and give me a ring or 'ping' me an email. Thank you so much to all of you that are making those connections trying to keep our community together and checking up to see how each of us are.



Jon Battershill has now completed his doorstep photo montage and is on to another project, 'Bosco; The Rectory Dog' (included in this week mailing!)

On Thursday this week (18th) we are going to hold another churchyard maintenance morning from 10-12 noon, all at social distancing of course. As before please could you bring all your own tools and refreshments and the toilets still **will not** be available I'm afraid. If it is raining heavily this will not take place. This is another way of feeling connected, so even if you aren't able to do any heavy work but would like to feel part of the group it would be good to see you.

I thought I'd share this picture with you. Are your sunflowers looking as beautiful as mine? Seriously, we ran out of seeds and so I didn't get to plant any, this is just a beautiful picture I found. Heather Waddington told me this week that she had two coming along beautifully but she got up one morning to find that one had been eaten by a squirrel and that she is now having to keep a close eye on the remaining one. When yours do start to bloom please take some pictures and perhaps even measure how tall they are. We can then make a record of our Coronavirus Sunflowers. I look forward to seeing them



Prayer and Worship

The space left here to write about prayer and worship is small but that does not reflect the importance of this aspect of our daily lives. I hope that you are all managing to find what is right for you on a daily and weekly basis. I know that it can be a struggle when we are by ourselves. Please do use the resource list that I have sent out in previous letters to aid you. As always I attach an act of worship for Sunday with some YouTube references if you are able to play them. Rev Harriet and I lead a Zoom Act of Worship with the school community this week, which was a joy. She and I are meeting once again in the rectory garden this week to discuss how worship may look in the weeks and months ahead. I hold each and every one of you in my thoughts and prayers.

With every blessing Rev Sarah