

Parish Church of
St. Edmund King & Martyr
West Kingsdown



Rector:

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Newsletter 29th November (8)

Tier 3

On Thursday we heard that on coming out of lockdown here in Kent we will go into Tier 3 on the 3rd December. What does that mean for us as a church? On a positive note we are able to **open the church once more for public worship** with all previous guidance still in place and continue with opening for private prayer. Sadly though we are unable to hold our Christmas Tree Festival because this is seen as being for entertainment. However disappointing this is I totally understand that we must do this. I know that COVID numbers aren't as high here as in some other parts of Kent and we are probably feeling rather miffed that we are all being lumped together. As I write this (Sat PM) it is reported that the numbers in Sevenoaks are coming down. But it isn't all about numbers it is also about the NHS being able to cope. This is what Laura Trott our MP wrote

'While figures are important, it was ultimately the capacity pressure in our hospitals which convinced me of the need for the tougher tier 3 status:

- ! *Pembury is currently at 90% capacity and Darent Valley is full - but trying to add additional beds to keep up with demand. All 15 of the intensive care beds in Darent Valley are occupied and they are using mutual aid (where other hospitals pick up some of their intensive care demand)*
- ! *Medway and Swale have some of the highest case rates of COVID in the entire country and as a result the NHS in Medway and Swale is deploying full 'business continuity measures', which basically means they have declared a major incident and can no longer accept new cases. As a result, Pembury, in particular, is taking a number of cases from wider Kent, with a third of its critical care patients diverted from other areas. At times up to 20% of ambulance admissions at Darent Valley have been diverted from elsewhere*
- ! *Both have had to start cancelling some elective operations*
- ! *The number of patients being admitted with COVID continues to increase daily. In the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Trust (the NHS Trust that manages Pembury Hospital and Maidstone hospital) five of the 20 operating theatres available have had to close so staff can be redeployed to the wards'*

It all sounds rather bleak doesn't it **BUT** we must continue to be strong and remain resilient. There is light at the end of the tunnel – three vaccines are on the horizon. I know that doesn't particularly help with the here and now and the loneliness and isolation you may be feeling. I have a prayer that I often say when the tasks ahead seem insurmountable. It's called [Nothing is too Difficult](#).

Lord help me to remember, no task I face today,
will be greater than the strength you give,
to help me on my way, no burden is too heavy,
if shared my Lord with you, nothing is too difficult for you and I to do.
However hard the task may be, that I have got to face,
sufficient strength you give to me, with your unfailing grace.
Lord help me to remember that you are always there,

your loving arms surround me, and my whole life you share.
Amen



Advent

Today is Advent Sunday and this is a photograph of our Advent Wreath in church. Many thanks go to Pauline Jenner & Pat Bosley for this beautiful wreath and also to Trica Townsend who has made two more for our church school. I lit the first purple candle reminding us of the Patriarchs' God's people from the Old Testament who prepared for the coming of Christ, Abraham, our Father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. For more information on the Advent Wreath see the front cover of this weeks service sheet.

Advent Course

In last weeks newsletter I mentioned a virtual Advent Course which will be via ZOOM. If anybody would like to be part of the course and is unsure about what they need to do to sign up to ZOOM just drop me an email and I will help you to sort it. It truly isn't too difficult. I'm delighted to tell you that the course has been put together and will be led by Rev Harriet. It will be on a Tuesday at 4pm lasting 3/4 weeks and starts this coming Tuesday 1st December. There are still a few places left. If you are interested in being part of this please drop me an email to let me know. I can then liaise with Rev Harriet. I look forward to being able to take part in the course myself.

Information on the course from Rev. Harriet

The candles in our Advent wreath are often taken as symbolising (in turn) Patriarchs, Prophets, John the Baptist and Mary. But why do we remember these people in this way? Our Advent course will look at them in turn, thinking about who they were, what it means to remember them today, and what we might learn from them about God. We'll have a week each on the prophets and patriarchs, then (because of time constraints) look at John and Mary together. Each session will last about an hour and will begin with a general chat and catch up before we discuss the week's theme.

Worship

From next Sunday, Advent 2, 6th December we will be back in church for worship. All guidance remains as it was before. You will once again need to **indicate your intension to attend** by phoning **Angela Beale** on **01474 852513**. You can do this from this coming **Monday, 30th November**. If you are then unable to attend please also let Angela know in case there is anybody else who would like to take that place.

Morning Prayer on a Wednesday will begin again on **9th December**.

Morning Prayer Readings for the week

Date	Psalms	Old Testament	New Testament
29.11.20	44	Isaiah 2:1-5	Luke 12:35-48
30.11.20	47, 147:1-12	Ezekiel 47:1-12	John 12:20-32
01.12.20	80, 82	Isaiah 43:1-13	Revelation ch 20
02.12.20	5, 7	Isaiah 43:14-end	Revelation 21:1-8
03.12.20	42, 43	Isaiah 44:1-8	Revelation 2:9-21
04.12.20	25, 26	Isaiah 44:9-23	Revelation 21:22-22:5
05.12.20	9	Isaiah 44:24-45:13	Revelation 22:6-end

The church will be open this Sunday morning, 29th November, from 9.30-11.30am for Private Prayer and will also continue to be open for Private Prayer on a Wednesday afternoon 1.30-3.30pm

Birthdays

We have no birthdays that I know of this week. If it is your birthday and you are not on my list, I hope you have a lovely day. Please do let me know so that I can add you on.



Christmas Worship

As you can imagine it has been extremely difficult to plan our Christmas Services. The services this year will of course be fewer and different from usual.

Christingle

There will be no Christingle in church, but I will be holding a Christingle service with each 'Bubble' in school before they break up for the Christmas holidays.

Carols by Candlelight Sunday 20th December at 3pm_

This will be a service of readings and carols, as I write we are still not allowed to sing but **we will be able to listen to some of our favourite carols** in our beautiful church and all in candlelight. If you would like to attend please phone Angela (01474 852513) to book your place. You can do this from this coming Monday 30th November._

Christmas Eve

The church will be open for private prayer and the lighting of candles from 10am – 4pm.

Christmas Day

There will be a 10am Eucharist Service, for which you will need to book a place. You will be able to do this from Monday 21st December

Christmas Draw

Thank you so much for your amazingly generous donations for the hampers. We now have plenty to fill them. **Thank you too** to those of you who have already sold draw tickets. We still have plenty to sell and so if you are able to help out by buying or selling some tickets please do.

Tickets are a £1 each, come in books of 10 (individual tickets can be bought) **and are available from the Rectory or by calling Don on 07769708251**. We will deliver books of tickets to you. Stubs and money can either be returned to the Rectory or we will pick them up from you if you are not able to get out.

There are **10 prizes**. 1st prize is £50, 2nd 10 bottles of Wine, 3rd Christmas Hamper (1), 4th Chocolate Hamper, 5th Christmas Hamper (2), 6th Bottle of Champagne 7th Christmas Floral Arrangement, 8th Bottle of Southern Comfort, 9th Fat Face: Ocean Escape Gift Set, 10th Tub of Chocolates.

Christmas Tree Festival

Sadly, as I mentioned earlier, because we will be in Tier 3 the Christmas Tree Festival is **CANCELLED.**



If you have already completed your tree or have everything made for it do continue to decorate it. Then, please ring Geraldine (01474 852201) about sending her a photograph or, alternately, she will arrange to come round, you stand your tree outside and she will take the photo for you. The photos will then be displayed at the back of church and put up on the website. _

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Geraldine for all her hard work and many hours of preparation for the festival. Let's hope for better luck next year.

Please do remember if I can be of any help or you would like a chat either give me a ring or drop me an email.

Every blessing Rev Sarah