

June 2020



Yes, another email version this month. It looks as if there may be some easing of the restrictions soon but we continue to wait. You may have been following all the predictions for the future - will we be travelling less, less commuting to work, the shape of work and so on. Some are saying there may be radical changes and some say we will all be back to normal (whatever that means).

It is disappointing to see the road closed, yet again, into Tiverton. There must be some who are wondering how much this road is costing over the last few years. Interestingly the damage seems to be caused by heavy vehicles. Looking at the statistics did you know for example a 44 ton truck causes 138,000 times more damage to a road than an average car and it is estimated that damage to roads by trucks costs

us taxpayers some £6 billion a year. Whatever happened to the railway? Dr Beeching comes to mind!

On the subject of railways thanks to the Parish Council for approaching Devon County Council to put pressure on for the off road provision along this route from Exeter to Tiverton. We understand the County looked at this some years ago and with the so called £250 million available for cycle routes surely now is the time to get this route up and running?

Lastly do try and support our local businesses. Details are enclosed - with a final thank you to Richard and team for the provisions at the village hall twice weekly and those doing so much to ensure we are all looked after.

**Your editors,
Steve and Michael**

Tiverton Market continues to provide essential services to the community



The Traders at Tiverton Pannier Market have really risen to the challenges posed by the current pandemic by adapting their businesses to continue providing the local community with essential groceries and foods.

With over 2,000 combined vegetable box deliveries since the 23rd of March, both Kelland's Fruit and Veg and The Healthy Root have played a vital role in supplying the elderly, the vulnerable, key workers and those who are shielding with fresh and healthy produce right to their doorstep.

Both businesses have scaled-up their delivery services for greater reach and have implemented phone and collect services, with designated collection points for those who are able drive to the market. BACS payments are available on all veg box orders.

In addition to fruit and vegetables, Kelland's are delighted that they are able to add eggs, milk, bread, cheese, butter and flour to any box orders (subject to availability).

Similarly, The Healthy Root can also add eggs and honey to any orders, and they have recently added a new 'produce page' to their website that lists all the produce they sell and specifies what is currently in season! Visit thehealthyroot.co.uk to take a look.

On Tuesdays and Fridays, G & M Butchers are available at the market offering stock joints of meat, burgers, sausages, bacon and pasties. Orders can be placed in advance for collection by calling Gary on 07963869315.

Fair and Ethical trade on Fridays and Saturdays, selling local honey, preserves, homemade pies, pasta, tea, coffee and fair trade chocolate.

Jonas Fishmongers have recently resumed trading at the market and will attend on Fridays with a selection of fresh fish.

The market is open weekly on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays for customers who are able to visit in person. The market team have put in several new safety measures to ensure the safety of traders, staff and customers attending the market, including strict social distancing rules, signage, enhanced cleaning routines, hand sanitisers and a limit on how many customers are allowed in the market at any one time.

Veg boxes can be ordered and picked up from Bickleigh Village Hall. Contact Richard rsomerwill@hotmail.co.uk on for more information.

An update from Clive

When my wife Judith and I moved here from Southampton just over two years ago we were a little concerned about how we would manage living in a small village compared to a large city. As neither of us had ever lived in a village before we didn't know what to expect - we imagined the village would be inhabited mainly by retired Devonians and that it would be at least ten years before we would be accepted, despite the fact that I was actually born in Plymouth and love cream teas the Devon way!

Fortunately we very soon discovered that our concerns were completely unjustified and in fact we couldn't have been more wrong!

Admittedly, I've no other village to compare it to, but we both just love living amongst such a friendly, neighbourly and active community. Nowhere is this demonstrated more than during the current Coronavirus crisis with so many villagers joining together simply to help each other.

In recent weeks we have seen the village hall being used for a food collection service with the choices increasing weekly. We've seen villagers coming together with ribbons and other material to help make matching hearts for those separated from loved ones at this time. We've also seen a tremendous response to the appeal from CHAT for food and groceries for the Food bank in Tiverton and our band of hearty volunteers continue to run errands for villagers in need of some help.

Although St Mary's sadly remains closed the church is open both locally and nationally with a plethora of online services to match every religious flavour. The Bickleigh Bible Study group continues to meet on a Thursday evening via Zoom before venturing

out to our doorsteps at 8pm to bash our saucepans or in some cases to ring the church bell.

Although I miss tremendously my two daughters, currently living in New Zealand (and not forgetting my son in London), I am slightly envious of them as they emerge from their lockdown and fortunately now able to see each other. I can't help but think that if you have to be locked down somewhere, and New Zealand is out of the question, Bickleigh has to be at the top of the list!

From cleaner air to liberated wildlife, the lockdowns across the world have had a positive impact on the environment. Here are just a few examples:

Cleaner air - citizens in northern India can view the Himalayan mountain range for the first time in their lives.

Clearer water - in Venice locals are now able to see clear views of shoals of small fish, crabs and multicoloured plant life normally obscured by the churned up waters of the lagoon.

Closer to home it is believed that wild flowers could bloom in their greatest numbers for years as councils have cut back on mowing services particularly roadside verges.

At the time of writing, Bickleigh Primary School will reopen on 1 June so our thoughts are with the teachers, pupils, parents and everyone involved in what is an essential step towards normality but nevertheless an uncertain time for many.

Until next time, Stay Alert and Stay Safe.

Clive Williams

Diana Messer

I am sure most people will have heard the sad news of Diana's death on 5 April. Diana moved from Court View in Bickleigh to a retirement home in Oxfordshire a year or so ago. Diana and Michael lived in the village for many years. Michael died in December 1992 and was buried in the churchyard.

Diana's funeral took place in St. Mary's Churchyard on 18th May. Sadly, due to the current restrictions, only representatives of her immediate family were able to attend. However, her niece Deborah, nephew William

and two great-nephews made the journey from Oxfordshire. They were made to feel most welcome when they had a stroll around the village in the sunshine following the short service. They are pleased Diana's wishes have been fulfilled and she has been re-united with Michael in the village they both loved.

It is hoped that a memorial service will be held next year when the whole family and Diana's friends can fittingly celebrate her life.

Paul Kingdom, Rector



Letter from the Rector

As I write this letter I have been rector of these parishes for just over two months and yet I have not taken a single service in any of our churches. In fact, until just over a week ago, I haven't even been able to enter any of the buildings for most of that time.

That doesn't mean we have stopped praying and worshipping, far from it, but to date my sole experience of worship with our four church communities has been sat in my study with a computer screen in front of me full of small rectangles containing welcoming and smiling faces. That in itself has been a joyful way to praise God but not how I planned my first months in my new parishes.

However, guidance has now been received that, hopefully, means we will be able to re-open our church doors again in early/mid-June and allow anyone to come in for private reflection and prayer. By early July, limited forms of church services, with careful social distancing and, probably, no singing, will also be permitted. It is the start of a slow path back to normality or what we seem to be calling the 'new normality'.

In the early 6th century BCE, many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea were forced into an exile in far off Babylon following defeat by the King of Babylon. They could no longer worship in the Temple which was at the heart of their spiritual life. Their lament is heard in Psalm 137. Even if you are not familiar with that part of the Bible you may recall the 1978 hit by Boney M: 'By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembered Zion ... how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?' Although being forced to leave your home

and go to a foreign land doesn't really compare in both upheaval and severity to our current situation, nevertheless for many this has seemed like a period of 'exile' in a 'strange land' –in our everyday lives and also from the place that is so special in our spiritual lives.

For many of us the sight of the church door locked shut has been distressing. Even non-churchgoers have echoed this sentiment to me. The locked door seems to symbolise an emptiness – almost like God has deserted us in our time of most need. Of course, that is not the case, far from it, God doesn't need a building to dwell in, He is everywhere, alongside us, especially in our troubles.

In 539 BCE, Cyrus, the King of Persia, conquered Babylon and issued a decree to free the exiled people to return home and to restore their Temple. The decree, in the form of a clay cylinder, still exists and is preserved in the British Museum. The new guidance just received from the Government feels a bit like that ancient decree from the benevolent ruler Cyrus.

I hope many will take the opportunity to visit their parish church, to spend some time in the quietness to reflect on the events of these past months, to give thanks for the sacrifices and selfless dedication of many, to remember lives lost and those who mourn and to ask for God's blessing on us all for the continuing strength and resilience we need as we gradually return from our 'exile'. As the priest Ezra wrote to the Israelites as they returned from exile to an uncertain future: 'yet our God has not forsaken us but has extended to us his steadfast love...'. (Ezra 9.9).

The Revd. Paul Kingdom

Worship & Prayer for June

Our Church Buildings will hopefully re-open this month.....

As I mentioned in my 'Letter', our church buildings will hopefully re-open for private prayer sometime this month. Keep your eye on the church notice boards and our websites. Unfortunately we cannot yet gather in the buildings for public worship.....

But virtual worship continues.....

Whilst we cannot be together in our church buildings, we can still worship together using the wonders of modern technology. Sunday Worship at 10am is being held every week streamed live on Zoom. Join us (orders of service can be emailed or posted – see contact details below):

By internet: The internet link and details are new and will apply for every Sunday in June: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81275250857?pwd=RVdYLotPMTJoWWk4bHdRMTdNRfVGdzO9> Or go to <https://zoom.us/> click on join a meeting and use Meeting ID: 812 7525 0857 and

Password: 658809

By phone: You can join in the worship by phone by dialling any one of the following numbers: 0203 481 5237; 0203 481 5240; 0131 460 1196 or 0203 051 2874

Enter the Meeting ID, followed by #, and the Password, followed by #, when prompted. Ignore the request for participant number – just press # again.

Please note these are UK landline numbers and you will be charged your phone provider's normal rates for calling in the UK. If in doubt please check your contract.

Not able to join by internet or phone: you can still join in the worship at home on Sundays at 10am. Contact me (01392 860560 revpaulkingdom@gmail.com) or our administrator Maggie Smith (07380 247766 maggiesmith.silverleigh@gmail.com) and orders of service and other material for worshipping at home will be posted to you.

Orders of Service etc. are available on the websites or by email or post (see contact details above).

Holy Communion – the worship on June 7th (Trinity Sunday) and 21st will be services of Holy Communion. Whilst it is not possible to receive the bread and wine it is still possible receive Spiritual Communion. This is a means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of Holy Communion, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. Contact me for further details. A prayer for use at this time can be sent to you or seen on the website.

Morning Prayer is uploaded daily (at approx. 8am) to YouTube. Either search for 'Paul Kingdom' or use the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI5Ulh3MZTAcTNzpV9h08bA>

Other worship – BCP (1662) Holy Communion will be held at 9am on June 14th and 28th –. Said Evensong according to the Book of Common Prayer (1662) will be held on the Sundays June 7th and 21st at 6pm. The joining instructions are as for the Sunday morning worship.

Please feel free to phone (01392 860560), email or message me or let me have a number of someone. It is the only way at the moment I can get to know people.