

The Rector would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify him as soon as possible so that he or a member of the Church can call without delay.

Rector's Surgery: If you have an enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with Napo John, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (8462 1373), to come and see him during Surgery hours - Monday mornings (except Bank Holidays) 10.30 am – 12 noon and Tuesday evenings, 7 – 9 pm.

MAY 2020

A little over a month ago I wrote an article for our church magazine which is still on our church website. The focus was the hope of Easter, but nevertheless I did talk about the Coronavirus too. At the time the Coronavirus was spreading, but in so many ways it was still in its infancy in our land. There were certainly worries and concerns but the numbers of people who tested positive or who had lost life's battle against the virus were low. But in a little over a month all has changed: those who died of Coronavirus are in the thousands and over a hundred thousand so far have tested positive. The world around us has changed so much that at times, when I am out of the house, I stand still in disbelief to see what is happening around me. Who would have anticipated that a day would come when people could walk in the middle of a busy road in Hayes to keep social distance. (I observed it even today on Pickhurst Lane.) I didn't think even in March that one day I would be holding church services on 'Zoom' and YouTube. It never crossed my mind that a day would come in my ministry when I would not meet a grieving family face to face to arrange a goodbye service. A thought never crossed my mind that one day I would take a funeral service but would not be free to hug a hurting individual, in fact wouldn't even shake hands after the service. My heart goes out to all those dear people who have lost a loved one during these hard times. I have heard them speak to me on the phone about the agonising time they are going through. I continue to pray for them all and can assure them of the church's support. I live in hope that before too long, things will change for the better and we will be able to have a Memorial/Thanksgiving service for the precious people who are now in the life after this physical life.

There is so much fear, so much pain, so much uncertainty and very many questions that demand answers. 'When will things go back to the way they were before?' 'What will the world be like when we get back

to normal life?’ And very many similar questions. Has anyone got any answers? I would say only that God knows what kind of a world we will wake up to when the present crisis is over.

Yet in the middle of all the agony, fear and uncertainty I think many among us have observed some amazing things happen and have come across some awesome people. At the start of the lockdown in one of my Facebook messages I mentioned how very many people in our community are proving to be truly good neighbours. I thank God the same spirit exists even today in our community. I have observed young mothers leaving their little ones and doing shopping or fetching medicines for their neighbour. I saw it happen even today (20th April). Before the Coronavirus I used to hear a lot about how individuals in our society have become so obsessed with the ‘self’. But today I can’t thank God enough that there is so much goodness out there. May God give us the grace to continue to see Christ in each other now when times are hard and even when life will get back to normal. And who can forget Captain Tom Moore? What an inspiration Captain Moore has been to so many in our society.

How about the fear of the future that looks so uncertain? I believe life after the virus may be even tougher for some. How many jobs will be lost by the end of the year? How many businesses will have folded by the end of 2020? How about the housing market? A few days ago, I was gripped with this fear for some young families. I started to pray and I believe the Lord gave me a message from the Bible. Those verses were posted on Facebook. One verse, especially, I felt to be very encouraging: ‘For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you.’ (Isaiah 54:10).

We celebrated the day of Christ Jesus’ resurrection a couple of weeks ago. When Christ came back to life again over two thousand years ago, he met with his frightened disciples. We read in the gospel accounts that the first thing Jesus said to them was, ‘Peace be with you.’ In Christ, God has made a covenant of peace with us. Indeed, we do suffer today, but in Christ Jesus this too shall pass and we will live to see God’s goodness in our land. That is my faith, that is my hope in Christ by which I live! Stay safe, stay blessed.

Always yours in Christ

Napo

BROMLEY CHRISTIAN AID GROUP



Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic the house-to-house collection for Christian Aid Week this May has had to be cancelled. Our Lent Soup Lunches also had to be cancelled after two weeks.

Christian Aid have a Coronavirus Emergency Appeal. Right now, as this virus continues to spread globally, over 850,000 Rohingya refugees living in over-crowded camps in Cox's Bazar are at serious risk.

Across the world, they are responding with their local partners, including faith leaders to reach the most vulnerable communities with urgent health messages to keep people safe, drawing on their experience in combating the Ebola crisis.

They are helping to inform people about the dangers, provide hygiene and hand washing training and ensuring that health facilities in camps have spaces for people who have contracted the virus. But they need to do more

Please give a gift, whatever you can afford, to support this vital, life-saving work.

Due to the current circumstances, donations by post take some time to process. If you can please either donate online at caid.org.uk/covid19 or call on **08080 004 004**.

I hope you are keeping well at this time of lockdown.

David Rowedder
Bromley Christian Aid Group Organiser

THANKS

Several people have asked me to express their gratitude for the way the ministry team have adapted at very short notice to the many challenges of providing on-line services, and for the impressive quality of the videos, the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday and the Morning Praise service. It has been very helpful and encouraging to be able to access these services and to feel connected with each other while we are apart. Thanks are due to Napo, Becky and Brenda, and no doubt many others, for their hard work in using technology to enable us to keep worshipping together. We do appreciate it.

Clare Wickert

THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS

Although it seems most unlikely that we will be able to have our Annual Coffee Morning in May I thought you might like to have an update on what the Mission to Seafarers staff are able to do at the present time. Many of the container ships, which bring so much of our food and goods, have been left stranded with the crews isolated and spending much longer away from their families.

Seafarers' Centres have had to close, along with the transport services that the seafarers rely on. The Mission to Seafarers' overriding priority has been to ensure that the virus is not spread. However, where it is allowed, efforts have been made to continue to provide careful and distanced gangway visitation, together with the delivery of supplies including woolly hats. Towards the end of March the Rotterdam chaplain, suitably garbed etc., was able to visit five crude oil tankers at Vopak Europoort and three container ships at Rotterdam World Gateway but he did not know how long he would be allowed to continue. He reported: *'Those I visited were absolutely delighted ... They are anxious but lonely. Many have forgotten about them. All Seafarers' centres and churches have closed. No one wants them, yet we want the goods they transport. One Captain wrote to me this morning, saying: "thank you for coming on board in such difficult times." When I go on board, my purpose is to say thank you, you've not been forgotten, we love you and so does Jesus.'*

Other examples can be found on the Mission to Seafarers' website, such as the way in which sim cards and other essentials required on board were pulled up from the Mission's boat to the deck via a rope and basket. Support has also been offered for the crews left on cruise ships when passengers have been taken off and they are having long waits for their employers to arrange flights home for them. Similar examples can be found all over the world wherever the Mission to Seafarers operates.

One exciting development is the use of a new digital 'Chat to a Chaplain' helpline launched at the end of April. Help is also continuing through the Family Support programme to provide news and aid to families at home where contact hasn't been able to be made directly by seafarers on the ships.

It is all a reminder of how much we rely on the work of seafarers, something we hope we will be in a position to remember at a later date on a Sea Sunday.

Jean Wilson



I hope and pray that you and your families are well at this difficult time. Yes, these are strange times! The days are long and we have accepted that no visitors or activities outside our homes are now core parts of all our lives. I wrote to you all at the beginning of lockdown and have since spoken to many of you on the phone. It's at times like this that the 'Dunkirk spirit' kicks in! I am well and count myself very lucky and privileged to be comfortable in my home and garden, but it is not easy for anyone. How quickly and unexpectedly everything has changed. In just in a matter of weeks we have a new norm.

I am sure that you are using various methods to stay in touch with family, other members and friends. It is important that we do stay in touch and support one another. We were sorry to hear that Jean Thody was admitted to hospital with cellulitis but I am delighted to report that she is home again.

For those of you on Facebook, Midday Prayers are led by MSH staff every noon. The Mothers' Union website has resources for use during this time. <https://www.mothersunion.org/resources-support-us-challenging-time>

Especially for those not on line, the Province of Canterbury has launched the Daily Hope Prayer Line. I have been asked to make sure my members are aware of it. – See *p6*.

During these unprecedented times Mothers' Union is not immune to the financial impact of COVID-19. To ensure MU can continue to serve families, support communities and show God's love, just as we have done for almost 150 years, they have launched an Urgent Appeal. As members you will have received a letter asking for financial help for the Central Mothers' Union and I urge you to think positively about donating.

If any member would like to knit some ear savers for the NHS please see instructions listed on p7. I will send them to the relevant place for distribution.

At this time, we are called as members of the Mothers' Union to support each other, our churches and our communities by prayer and action. I pray that you all stay safe and well. Thank you to Rev. Napo, Becky, Brenda and team for all the hard work they have done to keep us all in contact by embracing technology and enabling us all to continue our worship and spiritual growth at St Mary's.

If any member is in any sort of need please contact Avril Ashford on 020-8468 7785. I will do what I can to help.

Avril Ashford



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

The new 'Daily Hopeline' has been launched Sunday 26/04/2020:
call free 0800 804 8044

Archbishop Justin Welby answers your call with a short message
followed by a choice of options:

Press 1 to listen to hymns we love with a series of short talks based on
the well-loved hymn.

Press 2 to listen to a different daily hymn.

Press 3 for the Prayers which are specific for the Coronavirus
pandemic.

Press 4 to hear options 5 to 7:

Press 5 to hear a Church of England weekly Service.

Press 6 to join in with traditional Morning and Evening Prayers.

Press 7 to hear the latest Government advice on the Coronavirus
pandemic.

Press 0 to hear the first menu.

**Please share this information widely, particularly to those without
the internet.**

EAR SAVERS FOR THE NHS

The elastic loops on the PPE masks are making ears very sore and this band takes the pressure off whilst holding the mask in position.



Double knit: use 2 strands together
If using Chunky knit: use 1 strand. Suggest
size 8 needles. (4mm)

Doesn't matter what colour or that the
buttons may not match.

Cast on 20 sts, knit 6 rows; cast off. you should have a strip of
knitting approx. 4" x 1" (give or take 1/2")

A button approx 20 cms in diameter is then stitched to either end
of this strip.

This could also be done in crochet.

The Ear Savers are used across the back of the head, the buttons are used to hook the elastic loops which normally fits around the ear to hold the PPE masks in position.

When completed please contact **Avril Ashford 0208 468 7785.**

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Members of St Mary's congregation were recently asked to reflect on the following questions. If readers have any thoughts about any of these matters, do email the editor (address on p.13) and we will include a selection of responses in next month's magazine.

1. The closure of churches has affected the way we all worship. How have you dealt with this change? Are there any ideas or resources that you would recommend?
2. How can we be good Christians/good neighbours in a time of lockdown?
3. What have you learnt about your faith from this experience?
4. What habits have you developed to help you deal with isolation/uncertainty?
5. Are there any blessings that have come out of this difficult time?
6. Are there any changes in your spiritual life that you would like to carry forward into the future beyond Covid19?

ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY MAY 2020

As you will be aware, no public gatherings including Public Worship or Events will be allowed to take place in any Church of England churches including St Mary the Virgin, Hayes until further notice.

Sunday May 3rd

8am Holy Communion Service via Zoom

A Message uploaded to Facebook and YouTube

6.30pm Holy Communion Service via Zoom

Sunday May 10th

8am Holy Communion Service via Zoom

10.30am Holy Communion "Pre-recorded as Live" Service on YouTube

A Message uploaded to Facebook and YouTube

Sunday May 17th

8am Holy Communion Service via Zoom

A Message uploaded to Facebook and YouTube

Sunday May 24th

8am Holy Communion Service via Zoom

10.30am Morning Praise "Pre-recorded as Live" Service on YouTube

A Message uploaded to Facebook and YouTube

Sunday May 31st

8am Holy Communion via Zoom

A Message uploaded to Facebook and YouTube

Follow the link below to the St Mary's YouTube channel where you will find our pre-recorded services.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo7KNHYfOiKm95VXyQdFg6g>

If you would like to join a Zoom service please email the church office at info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

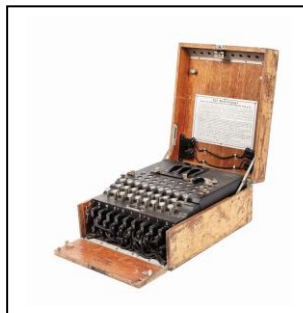
HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

“Staycation” became a popular description in earlier years for the choice of holidaying in the UK rather than farther afield where political or terrorist events might disrupt plans and enjoyment. Now in our lock-down environment we are compelled to “Stay at Home” – literally in our homes! How to cope with social distancing and self-isolation? While avoiding the spread of coronavirus, we all face the challenge of retaining our physical and mental health.

One way is to embrace the connective possibilities available through technology. In the Fellowship we are assuring our members that they are not forgotten while face-to-face meetings are not possible. Our Committee is available for friendly chats and their phone numbers are included on Membership Cards.

Although we can't quite stretch to video, in the way that our President Napo is reaching out in church service, prayer and bible study, we continue to publish our monthly Newsletter electronically, alongside an additional mid-month digest of information and activities to bring together the 70% of members who have established e-mail links with me. And the internet provides us with so many opportunities not only to entertain but also to stretch ourselves with plays from the National Theatre or educational talks. We have shared a number of these opportunities with our members. Although a poor substitute for the real talks or outings, our additional mid-month Newsletter includes a write up on the activities we have cancelled so far:-

- For the Bletchley Park outing we have included an explanation of the role it played in the war and the people who served there. Seeing the German Enigma machine would have been a priority.



- For our Motor Sport 1894 -1939 talk, a very broad topic, our Newsletter focussed on the role played by the Brooklands Motor Racing Circuit in that period with racers like Count Zborowski in Chitty Bang Bang 1.



It is regretted that, so far, we have had to cancel or postpone all our activities planned for April, May and June. That's the 12 weeks envisaged under Government restrictions for "vulnerable" people, which neatly describes all our members who are (well) over the age of 70 and some with particular health conditions.

In terms of physical health, we must be grateful that we live in an area with so much open space, for those of us who can, to enjoy. You can only admire the perseverance of Elisha Nochomovitz who managed to run a 26-mile marathon on his 23ft balcony during the lockdown in France.

The last event we were able to hold was President's Afternoon in March which we reported on here in our April article. Our speaker then, Jean Wilson, read the report and has provided the following clarifications by e-mail: "The original George was the final name of probably our first Inn in Hayes, 'The Adam & Eve' in existence in 17th century. The Red Cow was at Hayesford not Pickhurst and The Beacon was in the Farleigh Avenue and Bourne Vale area."

The rest of our season to August remains, inevitably, under review. We are already looking ahead to possible events later on and hope the situation will seem clearer by June when the next report should appear in these (electronic) pages. Meanwhile, keep safe and healthy.

Allan Evison, Hon. HMF Secretary
Contacts: t-020 8402 7416;
e-secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org

SAFEGUARDING FOCUS ON DOMESTIC ABUSE

Sadly, during this period of lockdown the risks to adults and children become greater, due to abuse being more easily hidden. The National Domestic Abuse helpline has seen a 25% increase in calls and online requests for help since lockdown, according to the charity Refuge.

It is vital that victims/survivors of domestic abuse know they are not alone and there is still help available in these challenging times, both online and via the telephone.

If you, or someone you know, requires help there are ways of reaching out for support (see below). It is worth remembering that the household isolation instruction as a result of coronavirus does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.

Safelives have a guide for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, which includes safety planning. This can be viewed at: safelives.org.uk/staying-safe-during-covid-19-guidance

Sources of Help: If you or someone else is in immediate danger please call 999 and ask for the police. Silent calls will work if you are not safe to speak – use the [Silent Solution](#) system and call 999 and then press 55 when prompted.

Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline: **0808 2000 247**

LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: **0800 999 428 help@galop.org.uk**

Men's Advice Line: **0808 801 0327 info@mensadviceline.org.uk**

Karma Nirvana, UK Helpline for 'honour'-based abuse and forced marriage: **0800 5999 247**

Victim Support National 24-hour Support line: **0808 1689 111**

Support if you are worried about hurting someone: If you are concerned about hurting someone please call the Respect Helpline for support and help to manage your behaviour: **0808 8024040**

If you would like further information/further links for reading please let me know.

Clare Scriven, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Email: clare@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

THINGS LEFT UNDONE

I was listening to a 'Point of View' on the radio on Sunday morning and the speaker was describing how her father had been diagnosed with cancer at a late stage. Until that diagnosis he had been writing his memoirs but had not managed to get beyond 1964 and suddenly found himself with only weeks to live. She rushed out to buy a tape recorder to try to help him finish the work. He still hadn't completed the memoirs before he died but had greatly benefited from the conversations he had had with her in the process of recording. She said 'Life always ends in the middle of a sentence,' meaning that so much is unfinished or unsaid. I thought about this and realised that this is so often true, if not always so.

When we die there is always much to finish which those who are left behind uncover as they try to sort out our affairs. For some it is unfinished projects in the garage or home, perhaps a dress never completed, a room half decorated or a novel half written. For others it may be a reconciliation in a broken friendship which was never achieved or a fractured relationship with a husband or wife or their children which was never mended.

In these terrible times of a pandemic, so many people are dying alone, only cared for by the wonderful NHS nurses, doctors and carers, many unable to be visited by their nearest and dearest who are isolated at home with double grief. Certainly here is life cut short 'in the middle of a sentence'.

The reason for writing this is not to depress you or to encourage you to finish doing every material project in your life such as decorating rooms or finishing a piece of dressmaking, because leaving these things unfinished does not matter in the larger scheme of life. The purpose of writing this is to remind MYSELF (and perhaps you too) that what matters to me, as a disciple of Christ, is to walk with Him every step of my life and to love Him with my whole heart to the end. This must, of course, involve attempting to mend fractured relationships and saying all the things I want or need to say before my time runs out.

If I can do this, Christ will be delighted for me to pursue my passion for things in his beautiful world, be it bird watching, decorating, travelling the world or writing a novel. But I hope that when I die the only things that I will leave behind 'in the middle of a sentence' will be these activities. I hope I will be found close to Him and meet the end of my journey with Him on earth without fear, not 'in the middle of a sentence' but knowing that He has loved me from the beginning of time and gave

his life for me so that I may enjoy his love forever, freed from my sin and clothed in His righteousness before God the Father.

David Langford

BROMLEY CHURCH FOODBANKS WORKING TOGETHER

Many of you will know that the Covid-19 crisis has put additional strain on foodbanks and the Bromley Borough Foodbank is no exception. In light of this, St Mary's has been working in conjunction with Deep Water Baptist Church, Hayes Primary and Hayes Secondary schools and St Mary's Pre-school, to set up a local initiative – 'Hayes Community Foodbank'. This came about through discussions with Hayes Primary before the lockdown began. Initially, members of the Senior Leadership Team were concerned about families whose children would usually receive a free hot meal at school each day. This was echoed by the Secondary school and we were asked if St Mary's could issue vouchers for the Bromley Borough Foodbank if necessary. St Mary's is an authorised referral agency; however, the Trussell Trust foodbanks have strict guidelines, e.g. no more than two visits in a six-month period, as they are looking at the long term and signposting, so people should not need to return. As the current crisis takes hold, the main reasons for people needing to seek help are varied. Main factors include job loss and wage cuts and also with children at home, there is a need for more food throughout the day; some would also usually receive a free hot meal at school. These issues should improve when restrictions are lifted and schools return. The scope for the Hayes Community Foodbank is therefore, slightly different from that of the Bromley Borough Foodbank. Our role is to fulfil all requests from Hayes residents and families whose children attend either Hayes school or St Mary's Pre-school, because the main bulk of funding came from the schools' PTAs and the Hayes Trust. Over the five weeks we have been operational, a small team of volunteers including Hayes Primary staff and parents, has delivered food every Monday and Tuesday. We have catered for 44 adults and 90 children; some families request food each week and some more occasionally but every week there are new people, as the impact of the lockdown becomes apparent. It is hoped that our local initiative will help to relieve pressure from the main Bromley Borough Trussell Trust foodbank, so they can focus on those who would ordinarily be more vulnerable.

Through this work, we have also been invited to join Transform Bromley Borough Food Partnership. This is made up of churches of all denominations who run foodbanks across the borough and Bromley Borough Foodbank. Eleven foodbanks in all are represented. This is a brand new enterprise whose aim is to make use of food from FareShare, a charity who rescue good quality surplus food from supermarkets that would otherwise have gone to waste. Over the past fortnight a hub has been set up to take 750 kg of fresh, chilled, frozen and ambient goods each week. Beginning this week, representatives from each foodbank will be invited weekly to collect an appropriate amount for their setting. It has been very exciting to have been part of this from the start, attending Zoom meetings with other foodbank and church leaders and to see God's hand clearly at work. In ordinary times, this would have taken months, not weeks, to get up and running. Praise God!

Donations of food are still very gratefully received at the Bromley Borough Foodbank and can be deposited at collection points in: **Waitrose – Green Street Green; Sainsburys – Orpington, Locksbottom, Petts Wood, West Wickham (Station Road) and Chislehurst;**

Tesco – Orpington, Bromley. You can also give money online through their website: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

Please also remember the foodbanks and recipients in your prayers.

Becky Willoughby

Items for the June magazine by 20th May please. Copy to the Editor – see below.

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We await instruction about when distribution of parish magazines can resume. If lockdown restrictions remain in force the June edition will be on the Church website.