

June 2020 Edition 54

Towards an initial re-opening of the building

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.
Proverbs 3:5*

Since lockdown was announced on 23rd March our lives have changed significantly and as you will know, the church building has been closed since that date. Gradually, though, we are seeing the signs of restrictions being lifted, with adequate precautions in order to keep us all safe.

As you know, I entered the building for the first time since lockdown some weeks back, and have been able to record services and sermons inside since that date. I am delighted to say that, from Tuesday 23rd June, the church building will be open for individual prayer on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings, 10am – 12 noon, and on Sundays from 11am – 1pm.

I know that some of you will be keen to be inside the building once again, and we are doing everything we can to ensure your safety. A risk assessment is in place, and if

you do come into the building, you will notice that there are some access restrictions to enable us to keep the building clean. The PCC has agreed that there should be someone in the building at all times. If you are able to volunteer to steward the building, please contact Theresa.

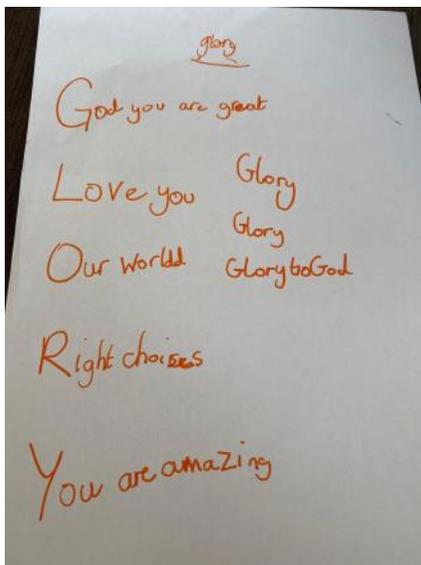
I expect that we have all discovered new things about our relationship with God over the past weeks. I know that we have never believed that God is only to be found in a church building, but that has surely come home to us recently, when we have been finding new ways and places to pray and worship. For many the wonderful weather throughout the springtime has meant that the natural world has been a rich source of connection with God.

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Sunday Club during Lockdown

Every Sunday morning since lockdown began in March, Sunday Club has been meeting on the video conferencing platform, Zoom. Although we cannot be in the same place, we are able to see one another, and you would be surprised by how much you can do together even when you're all in your own homes.

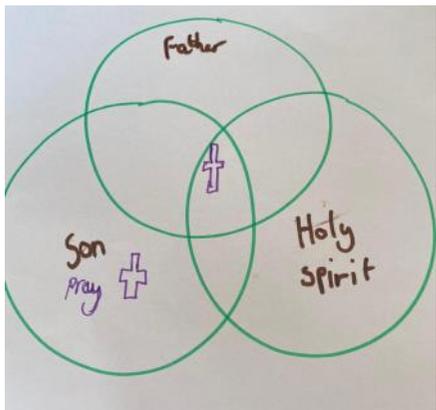
To give you some examples, we have done a scavenger hunt, finding objects around the house beginning with particular letters, and then working out what the letters spelt out. (It was "glory" – what would you find in your house beginning with G-L-O-R-Y?)



We have also made plaited bracelets to remind us of the Trinity, as well as cutting through an apple to explore the idea of the skin, flesh and pips as being three parts of the apple, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the three parts of God.

We even talked about the nature of those three parts: the Father who protects like the skin of the apple; the Son who is God made flesh (like the flesh of the apple), living alongside us and nourishing us with His word; and the Holy Spirit helping us to grow from within, like the pip of the apple.

For Pentecost, we had a party to celebrate the birthday of the church and made cakes in a cup (which we can all recommend).



On Trinity Sunday we had a special visit from the Bishop of Dorking, +Jo. She joined us to celebrate because it was one year since

Jacob, Charlotte, Sophie and Rebecca had been admitted to Holy Communion.

I'm sure you will agree that the children are a wonderful part of our worshipping community. As I said to them, we often learn more from their explanations of what they have learnt in Sunday Club than from the sermon, and they are always helpful volunteers.

Bishop Jo encouraged the children to keep showing God's love in all that they say and do. She was also full of admiration for Carolyn and Jacqui who run Sunday Club on a regular basis, and encourage and support the children in their faith.



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When lockdown began, I made a commitment to send out a weekly sermon, either in writing or by email. Since then the sermons have been recorded so that those of you on the internet can listen, and I have also recorded a number of services of Holy Communion as well as meditations.

More recently our worship has included services using the video conferencing platform Zoom, which has enabled us to be together at the same time, albeit not in the same place.

At the time of writing we do not know when the public worship will be permitted, but it is unlikely that significant numbers of people will be able to gather in the same place

for some time yet, which means that the online and written offerings are likely to continue for some time yet.

Each one of us will have different feelings as the lockdown restrictions are gradually relaxed. While I am sure many of us long for the day we can all worship together once more, there is little doubt that we would not want that to happen before it was safe to do so.

Many of us will have found new ways to nurture our spirituality and relationship with God. I hope that our hunger for God remains undiminished as we journey onward.

Rev Theresa Ricketts



July Services and Events

At the time of writing the only event that is likely next month is a, probably virtual, PCC meeting on the 3rd Wednesday, i.e. 15th.