



### WE DON'T HAVE TO RETURN TO THE SAME OLD, SAME OLD

Dear All,

Welcome back, as we restart Grapevine.

Little did I think when we did the last edition that it would be the last for several months. The weeks since 23<sup>rd</sup> March have been different for each of us. No two of us will have experienced these months in exactly the same way.

Key workers have been in the eye of the storm; others have felt they are of little or no worth.

Some have lost loved ones, others are untouched.

Some have been full on with children while many have been on their own.

As I read somewhere, 'We are all in the same storm but we're not all in the same boat.'

The same is true now as we emerge in no little confusion from lockdown.

Some are nervous, fearing to come out; some are not allowed out yet and are still in Lockdown. Many are delighted and are out at the shops and rushing into life again.

It is a complicated picture as we feel our ways forward as we all have such different starting places from which to emerge.

My fear is that we rush headlong on and forget some of what was reflected on in Lockdown.

I'm asking myself how we can hold on to vision and start conversations that might lead to a different and better future.

For instance, there was that spring as we saw nature in new ways: the birdsong, the leaves unfurling new green.

We realised the benefit of less pollution – the sky was bluer and people could breathe more easily. How can we live more in harmony with our planet? Not just for the few weeks of Lockdown but into the future? St John's is looking at becoming an 'eco church'. Could we become 'eco villages'?

We saw many kindnesses as neighbours cared for each other.

How can we learn to value each and every person more and not make decisions purely on economic cost?

How can we go on disregarding the inequalities on our planet of race, colour and creed, of wealth and poverty?

Can we remember that we are in it together across the globe?

The rapid spread of Coronavirus has shown us how interconnected we are, how dependent on each other.

Can we stop making decisions on the basis of what is good for 'me and mine' but rather on the basis of what is good for all?

These are big issues.

For me as a Christian, I believe God created the planet and gave it to us for all to care for and enjoy. He created each one of us and values each one of us – so he wants us to care for each other.

Many don't start from where I do but feel the same.

How can we join in conversation that does lead to holding to the vision and working towards it?

We can't call a meeting right now but guess we could talk on Zoom?

Is this something that would interest you? If so, email me on [vivien.elphick@btinternet.com](mailto:vivien.elphick@btinternet.com). It would be a real shame after all that has happened if we return to 'same old, same old'.

**God bless you all, Vivien**

## ACTIVITY IN ST JOHN'S CHURCHYARD DURING LOCKDOWN.

Peter and Florence Leonardt have been busy bringing colour to the tubs around the building and generally tidying up. They have also planted insect friendly indigenous flowering plants and wild flowers which should look good when established. A small step towards becoming an 'eco church'. Thanks to Peter and Florence and to those who answered their appeal for annual plants.



**CHURCH SERVICES:** St John's church may have been closed, and may still be closed as you read this, but that doesn't mean nothing has been happening.

It's important to note that 'the church' is not the building. I once had a notice in one of my Norfolk churches which said 'The church is what would be left if this building burned down'. Even while our church buildings have been closed, the church has still been alive and active. It's been wonderful to know that so many have regularly phoned people, and helped with shopping and other practical support. We have organised 'online worship', sent hard copy material to those not 'on line' and prayed for those we know have been suffering during this pandemic. This is the heart of what the church is all about.

So we are still together but apart and happening in homes, with daily prayer and special services on Sunday. As well as Rector's Ramblings every Sunday (<https://www.stjohnschurchdonisthorpe.org.uk/church-at-home/rectors-ramblings/>) which links to the audio services. There is a lot more on the website so have a trawl if you haven't already and you can find us also on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Woodfieldteam/>

## LIVE 'ZOOM' SERVICES FOR JULY:

**July 12<sup>th</sup> at 5pm and July 26<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.** All are welcome – just email Joanne on [jdver269@btinternet.com](mailto:jdver269@btinternet.com) for the link. These services can be a little chaotic as we get used to muting and unmuting and different Broadband speeds. But they do bring all together.

## FOODBANK

As you may imagine, the demand for food from Food Banks has increased dramatically as people have been thrown out of work and there are benefit delays. Can you help by donating food, or money?

At present they particularly need long life milk and juice, tinned veg, tinned potatoes or instant mash. But everything is gratefully received, but there are no facilities for fresh produce. Snacks and treats are also welcome with so many children being at home.

In **Donisthorpe**, the village shop is kindly accepting gifts of food. In **Measham**, donations can be made at the local Co-op at any time or at Measham Baptist Church between 9am and 10am on Fridays.

In **Ashby**, donations can be made at the big Tesco.

If you would be able to make a money donation, then you can pay direct to bank into the foodbank account at Lloyds

Sort code 30 92 15

Account 16991360

Or cheques payable to 'Ashby foodbank' and to be sent to: Ashby Congregational Church, Kilwardby Street, Ashby de la Zouch LE65 2FQ.



If you need to access the Food Bank, then visit <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/ashby/> That site gives details of points in Ashby and Measham

**CHILDREN'S WORK.** Our children's work hasn't been able to happen in the 'real' world but lots going on:

• Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/woodfieldchurcheschildrenswork/> All sorts of ideas of things to do with the children plus specials for Sundays.

- The youth group has continued to meet albeit on Zoom
- As has our preschool stay and play group Little Fishes. Little Fishes even celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> birthday on Zoom.

## USE OF ST JOHN'S FOR PRIVATE PRAYER AND FUNERALS.

It's impossible at time of writing to be totally up to date as to what will be possible in July as regards the church building. There is no start date yet for being open for public worship.

As from July 15<sup>th</sup>, church buildings may be opened for private prayer and for funerals. Around that simple statement is a whole load of detail that we have to comply with in order to open: risk assessments, signage, sanitizing etc.

We are working on it as hard as we can.

As with all the well publicised guidance, those who are infected with Covid 19, are self- isolating or in extremely vulnerable groups should not come.

We aim to:

- Open for private prayer Tuesdays through to Thursdays. Watch out for the 'church open' sign or check website.
- Open for funerals but as with funerals at the crematorium or at the graveside, the limit on numbers at present will be 10. Singing cannot be allowed. This will mean services do not have to be totally at the graveside which is difficult in English weather. Again check the website nearer the time, to make certain of the start date.

We may need volunteers in due course to help with some aspects of the work involved around being open. Do contact Vivien Elphick if you'd be interested in helping (01530 270354)

## TRANSFORMATION OF ST. JOHNS

Despite lockdown progress continues to be made.

- Before lockdown, test holes were dug to enable the new floor to be designed. Structural engineers inspected to see 'what was what' but then progressed slowed because lockdown closed their offices – so the design is still in preparation.
  - We visited the organ manufacturer but a second visit to another showroom had to be cancelled because of lockdown.
  - Viewings of tables and other proposed furnishings are on hold for same reason.
  - We have pretty well agreed the colour scheme and design for the inner glass doors and the new reredos
  - The final scheme is very nearly ready to present to the ecclesiastical planners. \if they agree our proposals, we can go ahead and put our case to the Chancellor of the Diocese (a Judge), who makes the final decisions as to whether we will be allowed to reorder the church. However, Diocesan staff have been on furlough, so there is some slowing there.
  - Shortly we will be applying for planning permission to NWLD Council for permission to undertake work that changes the exterior of the building with the installation of a vent pipe for the new boiler and the development of a new refuge area for wheelchairs at the rear door which becomes a fire exit.
  - Lockdown has provided us time to work through documentation such as Statements of Need, Statements of Significance, and Case for Change. Hours have been spent by a dedicated team on these necessary aspects of the project.
- Overall – we are getting there. Progress is being made.

## ADVISE FROM LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE - NHS #TESTANDTRACE

The NHS #TESTANDTRACE system has gone live to help reduce the spread of #Covid19. Here's some information on how the system works and what to be aware of. NHS Test and Trace will only call you from 0300 0135000, or send you texts from NHS directing you to <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk> *\*WE WOULD ADVISE TYPING THIS IN TO YOUR BROWSER RATHER THAN CLICKING ON A LINK IN A TEXT MESSAGE\** You could, if you wish, visit this website and save it in your browser so that if you do get a message, you can go to

your saved page safe in the knowledge that you are on the safe and correct page.

UK GOV have a webpage all about how the Test and Trace system works and it also contains a section detailing what tracers WON'T do or ASK to help you avoid being caught out by potential fraudsters <https://gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works> (if you prefer, rather than clicking this link search for GOV UK Test and Trace)

**Contact tracers will:**

- call you from 0300 013 5000
- send you text messages from 'NHS'
- ask you to sign into the NHS test and trace contact-tracing website
- ask for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity, and postcode to offer support while self-isolating
- ask about the coronavirus symptoms you have been experiencing
- ask you to provide the name, telephone number and/or email address of anyone you have had close contact with in the 2 days prior to your symptoms starting
- ask if anyone you have been in contact with is under 18 or lives outside of England
- **Contact tracers will NEVER :**
- **ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to us (for example, those starting 09 or 087)**
- **ask you to make any form of payment or purchase a product of any kind**
- **ask for any details about your bank account**
- **ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts**
- **ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone**
- **disclose any of your personal or medical information to your contacts**
- **provide medical advice on the treatment of any potential coronavirus symptoms**
- **ask you to download any software to your PC or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet to anyone else**
- **ask you to access any website that does not belong to the government or NHS**
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### LOCUST PLAGUE IN EAST AFRICA

Just as we were beginning to realize that Coronavirus was here, we were aware of how others were struggling in our world. In particular we were aware of something that was hardly reported in this country: the locust plague affecting East Africa. So we started to collect to bring relief for that area and were able to send £250 from across the Woodfield Team to Action for Hunger at the end of March. The charity wrote:

"I just wanted to say a huge thank you to all the parishioners from the Woodfield team of churches who contributed a total of £250 towards our Locust Appeal. We are very appreciative of your fundraising efforts. With everything going on in the UK currently, it can be difficult to engage with overseas humanitarian work, however, we must not forget there are a number of disasters still having a terrible impact on the lives of the most impoverished communities all over the world.

Thank you again for your kindness and for choosing to support our cause. Please stay safe and well.

Best wishes, Lauren"

However the situation is growing worse for them. Here in England we think we have problems....East Africa is on the brink of a third wave of locust attacks. East Africa has already been devastated by a series of desert locust infestations in the past few months. Between January and April up to 1.3 million hectares of land and 200,000 hectares of crops were destroyed in Ethiopia.

It is feared the favourable dry season and drought conditions will provide the optimum breeding ground for the insects in time for the next harvest. After multiplying into their millions, the locusts then emerge during the rainy monsoon season to wreak havoc.

The East Africa regional organisation found up to 350,000 tons of cereals had been destroyed by locusts between January and April. The United Nations (UN) estimates a swarm of locusts can contain anything between 40-80 million insects. A swarm in those numbers is capable of digesting the same amount of food in a day as three million people.

Efforts to spray pesticide have been hampered by Coronavirus restrictions on the movement of planes, material and people to do that work. How can we help these people who have so little? Prayer and generosity?