



St Mary's Church - Sampford Spiney

Sampford Spiney Parochial Church Council
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AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2020

I started my last letter with the observation that we appeared to be emerging from lockdown.....although I have to admit to an uneasy feeling at the time that I might have been tempting fate.

I am sorry to report that two of our stalwart supporters have passed away since my last letter – Jean Sommerfelt and Geoffrey Harland – and we will all miss them hugely.

Your Support

May I begin by thanking you all for the practical financial support you have offered across the lockdown period. We were stunned by the generosity shown, and we are most grateful to all of you who contributed.

Church Services

I am happy to report that delivery of Sunday services seems to be going well. We are also managing to open the church for private prayer on most Wednesdays, but will be closing the church at 5pm rather than 6pm now that the evenings are drawing in.

May I thank all of you who made the church look so wonderful for our Harvest Festival. The donations of produce were much appreciated by the Tavistock Food Bank and the collection went to Shekinah who help refugees who have settled in this part of the world.

We have adjusted some of the Mission Community wide services to take account of the limited numbers we can have in church at any one time – more details below.

As far as specifics are concerned:

- The Rector is now delivering a **Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Holy Communion on every Wednesday @ 11am @ St Paul's Yelverton.**

- There will be an **All Souls service on 29 October at 6pm at St Paul's Yelverton** which will offer people an opportunity to remember those they love, but see no longer, whether the loss is recent or long ago.
- On the 5th Sunday in November there will be a **joint service of BCP Holy Communion @ St Leonard's Sheepstor on 29 November @ 11am**. On 5th Sundays the six congregations in the Mission Community usually meet in a single church, but Covid regulations will prevent this from happening. To bring us within the regulations we have been paired with Sheepstor in the same way as Horrabridge/Walkhampton and Yelverton/Meavy.
- For similar reasons we will be holding our own **Remembrance Day service @10.45am on 8 November** – this will allow more people to attend a Remembrance Day service across the Mission Community. **If you wish to attend and are not a regular member of our worshipping community, please get in touch with me so we can be sure that we do not exceed our permitted numbers of c30.** This will be a lay led service and will conclude with the laying of a wreath on the grave of Frank Mares DFM, a wartime Royal Air Force pilot who is buried at St Mary's. We will be reading out the names of the Sampford Spiney men who died in the two world wars but if you have a relative who was killed on operations during their service please tell me and we will include them in the list of the fallen. **Your Parochial Church Council (PCC) would like to emphasise that this arrangement will be the exception, and we will return to our prior tradition of joining in with Horrabridge for Remembrance Day as soon as Covid restrictions are lifted.**
- On **Christmas Day we will have our traditional Holy Communion @ 9.15am.**
- We will **not be holding a Christmas Extravaganza** this year, and we think it **very unlikely that we will be able to hold our Lay Led Carol Service** while the ban on singing continues.

Other Matters

Many of you will have heard that **Peter and Mary Badge are moving to Exeter**. I do not need to remind you of how much they have supported our church over many years and we plan to recognise their departure appropriately once a firm date has been established – please keep an eye on my bulletin emails for further details.

It is possible that there will be a **curate under training** within the Mission Community in the not too distant future. The Rector has offered himself to the Diocese as a Training Incumbent.

Thanks to your generosity **church finances** are holding up well – we have c£1940 available to cover our Running Costs and £16817 in the Fabric Account which has been boosted by a bumper Gift Aid claim in this financial year.

The application for **planning permission for the car park** is with Dartmoor National Park.

We are still **looking at ways to improve the lighting in the church.**

Covid Matters

A few general points:

- We have decided **not to hold a parish raffle** this year as we could not see how it would work safely in a time of Covid.
- Let us renew our efforts to limit the spread of Covid by ensuring we **wear facemasks and are socially distant in church.** Please do not loiter and chat after Sunday services – despite increasingly inclement weather, any social interaction must take place outside the building.
- Let us all **look out for each other in these difficult times.** Plasterdown Grouped Parish Council has a list of organisations offering support on its website (<https://www.plasterdownparishcouncil.co.uk/church>) and it is attached to this newsletter as well.
- If you know **anyone in employment on a low income who is unable to work from home when they have been asked to self-isolate by the Test and Trace system, please remind them that they may be eligible to claim the grant worth £500** – details can be found at www.westdevon.gov.uk/test-and-trace-payments.

Conclusion

Despite these strange times we have managed, with your support, to keep the show on the road and will continue to do so.

Regards

Enclosure: In Touch at Home Tavistock