

Church of St Margaret of Antioch
Lime Avenue, Leigh on Sea SS9 3PA

Bulletin

Summer 2020
Lockdown Special



www.saintmargaretsleigh.org

Church Services

Public Worship at St Margaret's Church

Sunday 08:00- Mass (30 minutes)
 10:00 - Mass (50 minutes)
 10:00 Live streamed Mass (50 minutes)
 Available on web site until midnight Sunday
 17:30 Family Groups (40 minutes)
Thursday 09:30 Mass (25 minutes)

To attend a service, at the moment it is necessary to book a place, as congregations are limited to 30. Please ring Carol Dowsett - 07415271458 to give name and number in your party intending to attend.

**Protocols for attending can be found
at the end of Bulletin.**

Details and services are correct at time of publishing.
As circumstances change notices will be posted on the web site, which is up dated regularly.

www.saintmargaretsleigh.org

St.Margaret's Quarterly No.4

For friends, parishioners and congregants.



Dear Friends,

Seven whole days not one in seven and making drudgery divine.

The Welsh born poet and English priest George Herbert lived a short life 400 years ago dying at the age of 40 but left us with some of our greatest poetry and insight into parish life and practical holy living. They provide some of the best hymn lyrics even if some of the tunes are rather dreary (in my opinion) and don't do justice to such glorious poetry. They offer resilient wisdom whether life be long or short, joyous or hard. Here are but two that will be familiar to you.

*King of glory, King of peace,
I will love thee;
and that love
may never cease,
I will move thee.
Thou hast granted
my request,
thou hast heard me;
thou didst note
my working breast,
thou hast spared me.*

*Wherefore with my utmost art
I will sing thee,
and the cream of all my heart
I will bring thee.
Though my sins against me
cried,
thou didst clear me;
and alone, when they replied,
thou didst hear me.*

*Seven whole days,
not one in seven,
I will praise thee;
in my heart,
though not in heaven,
I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort
to enroll thee:
e'en eternity's too short
to extol thee.*

*Teach me, my God and King,
in all things thee to see,
and what I do in anything
to do it as for thee.*

*A man that looks on glass,
on it may stay his eye;
or if he pleaseth,
through it pass,
and then the heaven espy.*

*All may of thee partake;
nothing can be so mean,
which with this tincture,
"for thy sake,"
will not grow bright and clean.*

*A servant with this clause
makes drudgery divine:
who sweeps a room,
as for thy laws,
makes that and the action
fine.*

*This is the famous stone
that turneth all to gold;
for that which God
doth touch and own
cannot for less be told.*

I offer them to you as they have been resonating and playing in my mind throughout the last few months. I last wrote to you at the end of April. It seems a long time ago; the last three months have been some of the busiest and most stressful of my life to be honest and can relate to most of the varied contributions in my personal and public life. Stress is true for many and comes in different forms and is honestly touched upon by Paul Southward in his piece – busyness for some and for others the stress of little to do and little sense of purpose beyond the next meal or jigsaw. Our mental and spiritual health resides in that balance of life; of purpose, acceptance and taking control where we can. All is found is Herbert's poetic reflections on parish life. It can all go very wrong and get quite dark and at its worst I reflect on the recent suicide of one of my few remaining school friends. As some of you write, literal and metaphoric griefs have been part of our daily burden – as with military campaigns we just get on with it until we stop.

Well I guess it hasn't stopped yet and I don't claim to have got the balance right. However, in the mix of these last three months there have been some positives and good remembrances. In the end in spite of the huge disappointment of all our work going virtual VE75 was one. Our service centred on the vicarage and church garden was watched by 40000 but for me it's real joy was the "joining of the dots" I have spoken of elsewhere – involving parish schools, uniformed groups, military navy and Royal Marines, parishioners, congregants, rabbi, and mayor. Different chaplaincies and associations all coming together as one. I'm grateful to Beth Hooper and the Blade Education trust

holding my feet to the fire!.

I'm fortunate that because of my role I have not been isolated and in lockdown like some but the way of doing things has of course been very different. It's a strange existence being classified as a key worker but off the radar. I refrained from punching the man in the Broadway who "wittily" remarked I would have nothing to do with the church shut. I still feel rather close and in the middle of it to make sense of everything to be honest. I don't eat out and have little time or humour for shopping so haven't missed those things. 5% VAT and 50% vouchers will make little difference to me or indeed many in our society. I gaze upon the internet moguls and barons of our time that have feasted like hyenas on the carcass of our communities and find myself embracing Amos: "woe to you rich and fat you have had your reward!"

I've missed the child interaction – except in the street, odd garden and of course the naughty ones for whom lock down meant lock out. I did manage to confiscate an electric scooter for a short whizz up the road – great fun but at £400 not on my list. I didn't miss the traffic and noise I now do miss the noisy birds with whom I fought the air waves at the outdoor altar. I won't miss all the planning and reading and re planning and re reading of endless updates telling me of a new way to suck an egg and skin a cat – (vegetarians please note I'm speaking metaphorically). I have missed many set events like leading the Royal Marine Graspan Parade in the mall, our mayor making, weddings and Baptisms our Patronal Festival party. I won't miss all the rearranging of much of what has been cancelled – it's rarely a question of a line through the diary but contingency planning for the future.

I miss real meetings and even the travel !!! Zooming and Google virtual meetings with deanery, diocese, navy, schools and much else can be quite exhausting. I am proud of many of you who have taken up new skills, made new friendships with neighbours, coped with illness and death, got to know each other better through our buddy system and dealt with work or lack of it. I'm grateful for 3-4 who have buddied and bubbled me with the odd call, delivery of chocolate or goodies and asking if I need something. Ours is a schools parish and I'm quite aware how stressful that has been – our writers say more but it's taken a much of my time too. Some is enjoyable such as Ascension assembly from the church roof and some less so. I'm proud of our residential homes of Legra and Abbeyfields of Joyce and Fleur our managers keeping our loved ones safe. I'm proud of those of you who have had to deal with horrendous ordeals whilst others worry about lack of marmite. I'm proud of our hospital chaplain David Childs who has been an unstinting star and friend to the sick of the parish and area. Some things can become too much and others seem too banal. The words of Herbert call us to see God in all things and not some and all days not just a few. Nothing is too much, nothing is too banal and every day matters.

The inspecting and tending of roofs, floors, drains, gutters, weeds, flowers, sacristy, linen, money and finance, delivery of food, books, booklets and magazines, much watering and picking of fruit and herbs in due season, life's beginning and ending, the forging of love and parting of ways. The courses on child protection, vulnerable adults, security, risk assessments, ethics, diversity and inclusion, personnel issues, education, communion classes, thanksgiving services, visits to folk in

gardens, walking of streets, inviting of the Imam and Mayor to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. The swapping of rare food items (more highly sought than a bitcoin) - yeast, marmite, flour and barley water for my home stocks of marmalade, apple butter and Dijon mustard - such a shame most of the home made centenary wine has gone J. It's all real and it all matters and it makes holy seven whole days not one in seven.

I write in the middle of things the campaign has not stopped – I personally feel the greatest challenges are yet to come. I do not wish to be gloomy but feel this point in time is more “Dunkirk” than “VE day” but I still write with hope and thanksgiving. I thank God for those who have helped make things real whether their actions are judged profound or banal in worldly terms. We are at heart a Eucharistic community a community of thanksgiving. I thank the little group of folk who have made things real. It would be inappropriate to name names and exactly what you have done but I am grateful. When we live stream something more imaginative than a fridge magnet, ring a bell, deliver a leaflet, make a call, offer a lift or prayer, we are inviting people to share in something real. It is a real cycle of prayer, of worship and of practical help in making the dismissal so: *Go in peace to love and serve the Lord*. Right motive behind the detail makes even the “drudgery divine” to use the words of George Herbert. There may be many more days of divine drudgery before we come to our “VE Day” but if we can give thanks for the day and in some way delight in it, we will see and extol God's eternity. For me each of our writers in their own way are doing just that.

Thank you. Fr.D.

Covid 19

"In these uncertain times we know you might feel unsure,

*But flowers still grow, birds still sing and waves still sweep
the shore.*

And with the rising and setting of the sun,

Nature reminds us that brighter days will come."

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On the following pages are thoughts and accounts  
of time during 'lockdown'  
from members of our congregation.

Thank you to all who have contributed.

# Running a Ferry

## Mark Philips

**As** some of you may know I operate the Burnham Ferry – a small boat which conveys passengers from Wallasea island across the River Crouch to Burnham-on-Crouch. I normally trade through the summer, between the beginning of April until the end of September.



This year I was undecided between opening as usual on 1<sup>st</sup> April, or not opening due to coronavirus. My dilemma – if I opened as usual I wondered whether I would be waiting for non-existent passengers, however, on the flip-side I was concerned about letting down regular users of the service who

know my season, if I did not open. I struggled to make a decision for a couple of weeks at the end of March.

A couple of days before the beginning of April though the decision was taken out of my hands. The relevant government department sent me an email stating that although I was a public service vehicle, I was not considered an essential business and so I was not allowed to trade.

Thankfully I had not succumbed to this terrible virus, and within a couple of days my daughter advised me of a conversation she had overheard whilst shopping at her local supermarket. As a result I dropped my CV into the Aldi store near Chalkwell Park to apply as a temporary shelf filler. I was fortunate to be successful in my application and for a couple

of shifts per week I have been 'humping' boxes of fruit and veg, stacking general groceries onto the shelves, and standing at door supervising the flow of customers entering the store.

As of the 15<sup>th</sup> June, when all non-essential shops were again allowed to open, I also re-opened at the ferry. I am now trading more or less as usual, although all my passengers who are over 11 years of age have to wear a face covering and social distancing is adhered to as much as possible.



# Staying Safe

## John & Pru May

**The** main thing was changing from a hectic lifestyle to one of inactivity within four walls. You soon realise this is not good and to keep occupied you must get stuck into all the outstanding jobs no matter what they are to fill the time. or you will stagnate. We are not enthusiastic gardeners but now what a change and much time is spent in there .

What has been nice is how the camaraderie spirit has sprung up with neighbours and how our family has been drawn much closer together.

The hardest thing to get our heads around was being reliant on



other people for essentials but we have been really lucky. No1 son Stephen, who is local, and our neighbours have always been there and still are.

We have learnt a lot about how to use modern technology but still find it very frustrating on many occasions.

The weather has been obliging which has taken off the pressure of being confined to the house assuming you are lucky enough like us to have a garden.

Stay safe. Now things are easing it will give the scope to do more but it will mean regaining lost confidence.

# Covid-19

## Lucia Curthoys

**I realised** something wasn't quite right when I threw away my third cup of tea. I do love my first cuppa of the day. I thought the milk was off but it soon became clear it wasn't the milk it was me! I couldn't taste the tea.

In fact, my sense of taste and smell had gone completely. You could have fried onions and it would have gone unnoticed! I went off my food and couldn't have swallowed it anyway. Aching muscles and blinding headaches followed. I was feverish and dreaded going to bed because of the nightmare. Always the same one. There were huge blocks of concrete the size of Stonehenge, some grey, some black. Slowly they began to move in closer and closer around this tiny human being and when she turned round I saw it was me.

Surgeries were under immense pressure so I waited for several days hoping the 'flu' would ease up. But when breathing became increasingly painful with an awful cough I knew I needed help.

The GP asked me to describe my symptoms. "You haven't got flu" she told me. "You have Coronavirus 19. There is no vaccine so all we can do is try to help the lungs with a course of antibiotics and steroids."

I was more surprised than scared. Where on earth had I picked this up. It was the end of March so we were already 'keeping the distance'. Though, no masks then nor even sanitisers in many shops.

Fr David phoned and asked how I was. I replied, I think I am

going to die. He replied. “Lucia, you are not going to die.” It was said with such certainty that I thought he must know something I didn’t!

The news was horrendous now with Covid-19 deaths soaring. Despite Fr David’s reassurance my mind turned to my funeral service. Then it occurred to me that by now there would be no hymns and no one to send me off! This was, of course, happening all over the country.

I didn’t feel sorry for myself. How could I when so many were far worse off and there was so much grief around. Though, I did think seriously about my own death. I think if you are on your own you probably do. I came to the conclusion that I had had much to be grateful for.

Last year I attended sessions at Southend Hospital for those who suffered with respiratory problems and some of their advice began to surface into my sluggish brain:

- Don’t stay in bed unless you really have to. Move around to keep the vital organs going.
- Keep your brain active.
- Laughter really is the best medicine.

By now I was ‘shielded’. The worst day was trying to get an urgent prescription picked up and obtaining a carrot and a potato! After a diet of soups, Bovril and soft food for some weeks now, I was ready for solids. I’d discovered a casserole lurking in the back of the freezer, I just needed a carrot and a potato! I knew about the ‘emergency’ food boxes in the church hall, but didn’t think I could justify my quest for a carrot and potato as an ‘emergency’!

The prescription was delivered by a Coronavirus Action Group from Southend. Eventually after a long, exhausting and frustrating search a supermarket slot suddenly appeared. I never see a bag of carrots without feeling grateful!

How did I fill my time? I don't remember much about that first month. I couldn't concentrate on anything. So, remembering I had to keep my brain active as well as my body, I began the job of going through boxes old features I'd written. Time for them to go. I came across the story about Marcelle, a member of the French Resistance during WW2 and also Gena Turgel who had endured so much in concentration camps and lived to tell her story. For a while I was 'lost' in their lives and oblivious to my own problem. They stayed!

It was compulsive work, but very tiring. A wise friend said, do just enough to give you a sense of achievement but not enough to exhaust you.

Gradually I had the energy to ring round 'buddies' and others on their own. It was joyous to hear familiar voices and to share much needed humour. Laughter was a good feeling.

I also felt humbled by great kindness. There were little bags hanging on the door handle outside. Sometimes containing little 'bites' to 'tempt my appetite'. At other times fairy cakes and rock cakes. I discovered if you put a rock cake in the microwave for a few seconds it emerges fresh and smelling wonderful! There were cards and messages too.

Unlike flu Coronavirus leaves its mark. In different ways with different people. Often a tiredness that never quite disappears. I had a blip a couple of weeks after my antibiotics had finished. My lungs hadn't picked up. Breathing was still very much a problem

and the cough was reluctant to leave.

The GP said there was nothing else they could do. Leave it a couple of weeks and if no change or worse, pick up the phone immediately. Hospital moved onto the horizon.

Fortunately for me the weather changed and gloriously warm sun did the trick. I could breathe!

Six weeks or so further on I thought it was time to tackle my jungle of a neglected garden. After less than five minutes my heart was thumping and racing alarmingly. That did scare me. I sat down on the garden bench. It seemed to take ages to settle down. 'Baby steps' people kept telling me. It took a scare for me to take notice.

Yet, some good has come out of Coronavirus 19 – the affirmation of friendship, love and never taking things that matter for granted. And trying not to worry over things that really do not matter.

So what got me through this Covid time? Prayer always. The texts and calls from friends and far away family. Those so kind people who topped up my supermarket shopping and left those cakes and cards. The Live Streaming of our church which kept me – and many others – connected to our beloved St Margaret's. And Bovril!





## **A little account of this peculiar time!**

### **Julia Fenton**

I fortunately have still had work but not to full capacity, so it has given me a bit of time that is normally very illusive! I also haven't been bombarded with hall bookings and Guiding is obviously not happening. Luckily I belong to Broadway Belles WI and I volunteered to cut scrubs for the NHS. I rewrote Jerusalem to Covid words (see below) and what we had been up to, collected food for our local food bank after our Thursday clap, delivered shopping to several who couldn't go out and walked a dog twice a week for a friend who was stuck in. I have thoroughly enjoyed my change of life and given me a new sense of achievement.

### **Covid Anthem**

Sung to the tune 'Jerusalem'

And did those Broadway Belles in Covid times  
Roll up their sleeves to make PPE  
And did the love of those women's hearts  
Reach out across the WhatsApp Group?

And did we share our recipes  
Of things we found in backs of cupboards  
And did we race to help each other  
To shop and drop to those in need.

We have our Gin and Cocktails too  
Whilst thanking heroes of the hour  
There's Captain Tom and others too  
Whilst we are Scissor Sisters and Sewfragettes!

We will not cease from sewing strife  
Nor shall our scissors sleep in our hands  
Until we've sewn all the scrubs  
In England's Rainbow Coloured Land

## **Struggling to Staying Sweet during Lockdown**

### **Michelle Philips.**

**Life** has been a bit of a rollercoaster for me during the Pandemic. I was taken poorly before Lockdown on March 13th. I felt totally exhausted, had a continuous cough (but had had one for months) and took to my bed. I lost 2 1/2 stone in weight and just felt so unwell. I then developed chest pains, and the feeling that a heavy weight had been placed on my chest, struggled to breath. Mark called 111 and an ambulance was sent, I was taken to hospital and placed in the Covid Unit. This experience was quite frightening, everyone was dressed in jump suits with full facial coverings, gloves etc. I had chest X-rays, bloods. Hospital couldn't find anything wrong (I was never Covid tested as no temperature) and discharged me.

I still continued to feel very poorly, the GP then placed me on a Cancer pathway, within two weeks I had an MRI, CT, Endoscopy and numerous bloods, still they couldn't find anything wrong. I

have subsequently been admitted twice more (each time placed in the Covid Unit) with various things that are all connected to the initial problem. The hospital believe I have had Covid and I am currently waiting for the antibody test to confirm it. I am still on antibiotics and steroids, still tire very easily and suffer heaviness in the chest but am feeling ok. I consider myself very lucky, and throughout the time chose to remain indoors at all times to protect myself and others.



Also as many of you know we own a sweetshop in a Lincolnshire called 'Love Sweets.' Our shop had to close in March and so had not been trading during the Lockdown. However, we have been fortunate enough that our online Facebook business 'Loveleigh Sweets' has been very busy. During the Pandemic (and feeling poorly) many handmade chocolate creations have been made and delivered by Mark - (my own personal Deliveroo ) lots of sweet treats , pick and mix and gifts to various people.

Our business in Lincolnshire reopened at the end of June with many changes in place, and only time will tell if our small, independent business will survive as it thrives on the tourist trade from the caravan parks and visitors to the seaside community.

I have also enjoyed being part of the buddy system instigated by Father David. I have delighted in making cards, baking and making small gifts for our buddies each week for Mark to deliver.

I've enjoyed getting to know people in church that I hadn't spoken to before with weekly phone calls and through happy

post. It has been lovely to develop new friendships and strengthen existing ones.

As I said at the start of this Lockdown has been a rollercoaster and probably the hardest part for me was not physically seeing the children and grandchildren. I'm sure this is also the case for many others.

We are so fortunate to have modern technology which has enabled us to see and speak to them, and on that note a huge thank you to David Stowe, Bob and Barbara Southward and Father David for making attending the virtual church possible each week.

Take care, love and blessings to all

## **LOCKDOWN**

### **Sheila Tuttas - Alzay Germany**

**This** has been a strange, new experience for us all and what a start to 2020. With the whole world threatened by the Corona virus, the planet is united and divided as never before. Almost everything about the virus, the way it behaves, the pattern of the pandemic and the reaction of governments and individuals is so confusing and unpredictable that it is hard to understand what is going on.

Most people feel that "Lockdown" was necessary and carefully explained and successfully organized by most governments. People had confidence in the politicians and felt they were all working together. Some rules and restrictions were hard but vital to reduce the numbers of infected patients in the hospitals and by having set rules everyone knew what to do and how to act.

I'm not saying there weren't any problems or difficulties, there

were many problems to overcome but I think this time gave people the time to slow down and reflect and appreciate the small things in life that so often get forgotten, the clear blue skies, the beautiful flowers and vegetation and also the respect and helpfulness shown to the less fortunate people and the old and sick. It gave people time to revalue how important relationships are. All the tireless volunteers and nurses and drivers etc. should also be mentioned.

As “Lockdown “ measures are being eased I think people have been reacting cautiously and with care and have taken a while to adjust – our daily routines were disturbed. We have got to find our selves again and hopefully by working together we can all build a new future together.

## **SCHOOL-BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT!**

### **Lorrina Cockett**

**That’s** what the headteacher at the school where I work said at our first Zoom meeting about reopening after the closure because of Corona virus.

I think most people know that I’m a primary school teacher; it’s work that I have done since I was 22, and it has never disappointed me. I have worked with talented colleagues and wonderful children in different settings during my career, but life at school now is very strange.

The school never completely closed because the children of key workers attended through the first weeks of lockdown. At that time, my part was to call our families to ensure that they were OK and to maintain contact. We aimed to phone each family once

a fortnight. The children loved the fact that Mrs. Cockett had called them! There was work set on the school website for every child, every day.

But when school leaders were asked to make plans to reopen schools, many things that we had all taken for granted had to be rethought. Meetings and communication now had to happen via Zoom (a system on the internet where groups of people can talk). So we found out how the children would be welcomed back to school and how we would do it safely. First of all, the senior leaders planned for Year 6 children (11 year olds) and foundation children (5 year olds) would return. So my first “bubble” of children was a small group of the youngest children in school. The first day was tricky because we were all learning new routines. No one wanted to make a mistake. There was much hand washing! Children had to be supervised everywhere; walking along corridors with social distancing to the toilets where alternate cubicles and basins were used. The outdoor spaces were organised so that different groups could use different areas, at staggered times of the day. Starting and finishing times were staggered too. But children are resilient and we soon settled into a new way of doing school. So 12 groups, in 12 rooms, were established. The size of the groups varied between 6 and 15 children.

My group was small and I worked with an experienced teaching assistant too. So it was decided to “quarantine” me. The TA took over and I stayed away from school for a week before returning to a new “bubble” of children. Meanwhile, Year 1 returned. This meant the 3 year group chosen by the government as priorities had all been given the opportunity to return to school. But the leaders of my school wanted to do more!

Walls have been built in one of our halls to make more learning spaces which are needed because groups are smaller than classes. I returned to one of these new rooms for another mixed group of Years 2,3 and 4; 14 in total. That's what I've been doing most recently. I've been working with a partner teacher, sharing the week. The mixed age range has been a challenge but the children have been inspiring. Not all parents have chosen to send their children back to school and I thank all those who have put their trust in us.

Each afternoon, as I wash equipment and water bottles, I see groups of Year 5 children coming in from 3.45- 5.30pm. We have invited all children on the special needs register back to school and some are in my group. We now have about 6 groups of key worker children. Groups of children move around school with social distancing and every effort is made to keep everyone safe. Continuously.

So, the summer holiday is almost here. There are meetings now for September. Things will not be back to "normal" but it will be as fine as we can make it. I feel proud of what the team at my school has achieved together. These are times of adversity, there are so many safety routines to maintain, but it has certainly been worth it!

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Life as a Teacher During Covid-19 (Part II)

Phoebe Hull

Since my last article it seems like both nothing and everything has changed. I am still delivering distance learning lessons, sending students resources for every timetabled lesson they have, sometime these are narrated power points, other times worksheets and quizzes.



Year 10 and 12 students have now returned to school and there are many more key worker students now attending school too. Consequently, there is a large demand for staff to go back to school to teach or supervise key worker students. I am not physically teaching students so am required to set work for classes belonging to the members of staff who are. However, I have supervised key worker students once.

Adapting to the new circumstances has been a very difficult process but I remain committed to providing the best possible education for my students despite the unprecedented situation we find ourselves in. My colleagues and I are continuously finding better ways of teaching and new resources which means I am constantly changing the way I work. The workload has been extremely high as students, unaware of reasonable working hours, email both day and night. Thankfully, as we enter into the last two weeks of term, my workload is beginning to ease up and is

much more manageable.

However, although the workload has been high, the hardest thing for me has been not being able to support students academically or emotionally in person. As a form tutor, I am the first point of call for 30 young people all going through this difficult time. Irrelevant of how hard I was finding lockdown myself, I had to put on a brave face and be there to support my students through this time, which for some of them has been unbelievably difficult.

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## **New Skills**

### **Barbara Southward**

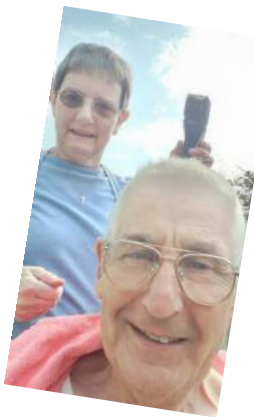
Just before lock down began I started to feel unwell. I had pain in my lower chest and thought I had pulled a muscle doing exercises. After several phone consultations with the doctor, a blood test and an emergency x-ray I was diagnosed with pneumonia. I never knew it was so painful. After two courses of antibiotics and many days unable to do more than listen to Classic fm and read I began to feel better. I followed pneumonia with pleurisy and I am slowly getting over this.

At the same time, my mother's Retirement Home had closed their doors to visitors, but in late April I received a phone call telling me that she was ill and deteriorating fast. I was invited to visit and sit with her, which I did, twice in protective covering. Fr David furnished me with the prayers that needed to be said for the dying and on May 3rd she slipped quietly away. Her funeral was held at the Crematorium beautifully taken by Fr David and streamed to friends and relatives around the world.

We have kept in touch with buddies, friends and relatives by telephone, Skype and Zoom. My brother and sister-in-law were

stuck in Sydney, Australia, for an extra month as their flight home was cancelled. Eventually they made it back only to find their house had been struck by lightning while they were away and they were without telephone, TV and internet.

As I have recovered I have begun to do more. The garden has been allowed to 'do its own thing' this year and there are foxgloves and other flowers appearing along with lots of nettles. The advantage being that we have lots of butterflies - mostly cabbage whites. I have made masks for all the family and kept our butchers supplies with homemade cakes.



My latest skill has been as barber to both Bob and Paul. I cut Bob's hair first, on the wrong setting, and practically scalped him, so he hasn't needed another haircut for three months. I trimmed Paul's ready for his Zoom with the Territorial Army and it passed muster, so that was ok.

Mostly I have been giving support to Bob as he and David tackled the problems of streaming the weekly service to church members. Hours of work continue to be put in by both to enable this to happen and we look forward to the time when we shall be able to join our fellow worshipper in church.

## **Coping with Lockdown**

### **Paul Southward**

I once saw a stress counsellor. Over the eight sessions I learnt a lot about stress but the one thing I have never forgotten is that

a third of people who suffer from stress have too much work, a third have too little and a third have experienced a traumatic event such as losing a relative, being in prison, involved a car crash....or living through a pandemic.

Twelve years ago I was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome which means I am on the autistic spectrum and I suffer stress very easily if I don't keep myself busy. But when lockdown came I lost every coping strategy I have ever had. I couldn't go bell-ringing in the evening, I couldn't sing with my choir and cricket and rugby were all cancelled. Added to that I live on my own in a two bedroom flat and I suffered lots of stress headaches. The solution was to be busy but when you are allowed only one form of exercise a day and one visit to the shops a day I didn't know what to do. My parents were vulnerable and so I bought food for them, their 93 year old neighbour and my sister in Chelmsford, all of whom were shielding for various reasons.

I soon realised that rather than buying all their shopping in one go, I would buy a bit for each every day, that way I had three trips out to buy food, plus my own and I still had my exercise to take.

I work for Transport for London in transport planning and one Monday morning I logged on at home and found an e-mail asking for volunteers to work on the new transport operation they had set up at the Excel for the Nightingale Hospital. By 2pm I was doing my first shift and over the next three weeks I worked every other day at the Nightingale and loved every minute of it. It gave me something to do, people to talk to, things to complain about. We joked and laughed a lot and had silly conversations. Then I was furloughed and was not

allowed to volunteer anymore and so I said goodbye to the Nightingale and hello to boredom.

I have never known it before when I have lain on my bed in the morning with nothing to do. Nothing to get up for, nowhere to go, no-one to talk to and all day to do it in. But slowly I found other things to do and I learnt to cook, started my homebrew again and did some very long walks to try and use up the time of day. I also enrolled in an Open University course about the weather and the science behind it, which has involved taking weather observations and watching clouds and classifying them by type. When lockdown was eased at the beginning of May I walked from my flat near Southchurch Park to Benfleet and got the train back.

Then next day I walked from Benfleet to Laindon, then from Laindon to Upminster, Upminster to Barking and then Barking to Fenchurch Street. When I got to Fenchurch Street I walked to Liverpool Street and then started walking back home to Southend Victoria, catching buses and trains to get to and from the start points.

You can't walk everyday though and you need a rest, but what to do on the days you don't walk? Not a lot as it happens. My Facebook friends adopted "airport drinking rules" where they were having pints of beer at 11am, but having suffered from stress I didn't allow myself to drink before 7.30pm. I also did some work for Father David doing some weeding and cutting back round the back of the Church and Hall as well as updating some databases he had. At the beginning of July I was un-furloughed but still working from home. There isn't much work about and I am struggling most days with stress. But things are slowly coming back and as I type this we are a few days away from bell ringing for the first time in months.

Lockdown hasn't been an enjoyable experience for me, it has caused me a lot of anxiety and I want to get back to seeing and meeting people again.

# Studying during Lockdown

## Eloise Judd

**The** last few months have been difficult for everyone as life was put on hold, closed up, and shut away. Without regular visits to see friends and family our motivation can drop as we can no longer share our successes, failures, and life's trivialities with those we love. However, I think we can all take pride in our strength and perseverance as we gradually emerge on the other side.

My Masters dissertation research period overlapped significantly with the time we have been in lockdown. This meant that fieldwork plans abroad were replaced with online research from my living room, face-to-face interviews were replaced with Skype calls, first-hand observations were replaced with YouTube videos and documentaries, and library visits were replaced with online e-books. To complete my final dissertation research from my laptop within the same four walls for five months has been an unexpected challenge to say the least.

However, I feel fortunate that technology has enabled me to complete my degree even in such unprecedented circumstances and I will graduate as planned in January. I have, of course, missed being able to discuss my research with my professors and friends, but I look forward to being reunited at graduation and to celebrate the challenges we have all overcome to be there. My degree course is centred around geopolitics and I believe the pandemic has really highlighted how interconnected the world truly is. The virus is indiscriminatory and all humans are vulnerable. In the quiet weeks of lockdown, many will have recognised this and reflected on the interconnectedness of many of our global struggles. This has added further impetus towards my career ambitions in international conflict resolution and peacekeeping, and to helping those most vulnerable.

## Bumblebees Pre School



**Covid** 19 has impacted all of us. Some of us tragically and in life changing ways, some of us its rocked our sense of 'normality'. For Bumblebees at St Margaret's, thankfully it has just been an inconvenience. We have been so fortunate. However, even though our opening at St Margaret's has been slightly delayed, our ownership of two other local pre-schools will give you some insight into the gargantuan operation that has gone on behind the scenes throughout the land to help keep young children and our staff safe. As we look forward to opening up 'properly' in September, we remember that for some of our families, Covid 19 has been devastating, but for all our young children it has been unsettling, frightening and confusing. We look forward to being part of the solution, offering children a safe space to explore their feelings and care for each other.



# Working through Lockdown

## Lynda Bartholemew

“As some of you might know, I am the manager of the Ladybird Nursery at Southend hospital. Most of our parents are frontline staff; without the nursery many of them would not be able to work. No pressure then!

I remember at the beginning of lockdown taking a deep breath, and praying that I would stay healthy enough to be able to lead my team, so that the nursery could remain open.

I am proud to say that we have managed to stay open, and for us that means from 6.45am to 6pm Monday to Friday. Through it all I have had shielding staff, pregnant staff, staff self isolating for various reasons and, of course anxious staff and parents who were worried about their families, and the uncertainty of not knowing what will happen next.

Unfortunately social distancing is not an option when you work in a nursery. Young children do not understand the concept and why should they. We have made sure that they have been well cared for, had their hands held and had a cuddle when they needed one. After all that is an important part of our job in a nursery

The children have got used to having their shoes sprayed with antibacterial spray and sanitising their hands, and having to wave goodbye to their parent at the door. They have learned about the importance of washing their hands while we all sing silly songs for 20 seconds!



Our children have got used to being in small groups to keep ourselves safe. We have spent most of our time outside - the lovely weather certainly helped! They have got used to seeing our little army of cleaning staff wondering around the nursery all day cleaning EVERYTHING.

They have got used to seeing new children join the nursery as the other nurseries around us closed their doors. My staff have welcomed them with open arms, wiped their tears when they wanted their mummy and made sure they had a great day.

Meanwhile, well we have seen the pictures in the news of the role their parents are playing...

Oh and let's not forget the 'joy' of the daily Zoom meeting!

Life has changed to a new normal, changing out of my uniform at work, coming home and changing again and everything going into the washing machine, then showering and washing my hair. Making sure I keep my family safe before I make a cup of tea.

Like many of us I've gained an appreciation of the wonders of nature, not hearing road traffic and hearing the birds singing instead.

As many of you know I cycle to work, and I will never forget the feeling of free wheeling down the A13 at 6am just because I could, knowing that there were no other cars on the road.

In a world that has changed beyond anything we could have envisaged, and yes we are not out of the woods yet, for me personally this has been one of the most rewarding times of my life. I am truly proud of my nursery and to work for the NHS."



## **LIVE STREAMING - AN UPDATE JULY 2020**

### **Bob Southward**

**During** the three months since the last Bulletin, we've continued to stream services each Sunday and on other Holy days with varying degrees of success. We've had two main issues to address:

- the lack of a strong Broadband connection. This was resolved by switching to 4G telephone technology using the Vodafone network. All worked fine except for the Sunday when the Vodafone network decided to go down in the Leigh area! Although we recorded the service and made it available shortly after the end of the service, the experience was not the same as a live broadcast
- frequent loss of sound volume and clarity. We eventually traced the problem to some clever software in the iPhone which, when detecting a sudden increase in volume, decided to treat everything else as "background" noise and muffled it accordingly. For example, when broadcasting from the Vicarage garden, a plane went overhead and thereafter Fr David's voice was muffled. We switched off this too-clever-piece of software.

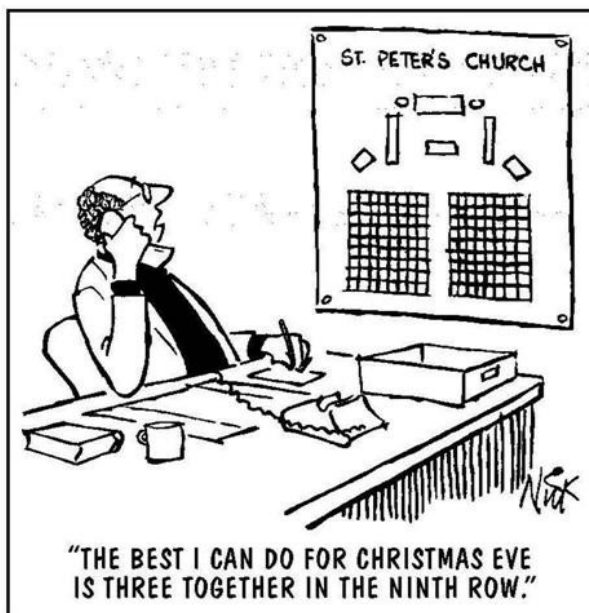
In common with most other churches in the UK, our viewing figures continue to far exceed our normal congregation, and indeed our total Electoral Roll. When we were allowed to resume personal worship in St Margaret's, it was decided to continue with live streaming the Sunday 10:00am Mass for those of our fellow congregants who are unable to attend in person.

We have received an email from one such person expressing her gratitude for the continued streaming - she expressed her frustration at not being able to attend physically by comparing it to "looking through a window at a party and not being

allowed in". The broadcast helps her to deal with these frustrations. It is these comments that make our efforts most worthwhile.

I must give thanks to my fellow "broadcaster" David Stowe who has continued to expend much effort in ensuring that the "church" end of the system continues to work perfectly and who made the decision to switch to the 4G technology. Thanks also to Peter Maddox who has volunteered to be David's back-up which allows David to take a much needed break.

Finally a conundrum which I would like your help to resolve. When we broadcast the first service where a congregation was present (Sunday 5th July), I expected the number of viewings to drop by about 50%. But NO - the number of viewings increased by just under 50%. Why?



## **Strange Times**

### **Janet Starkey**

Life for us all now is very strange and each one of us is having to adapt to a different way of living, but perhaps it has also made people think about others more and keep in touch with friends and neighbours. The Thursday evening “clap for the NHS workers and carers” was a good idea and helped to bring people together, even if the occasional fireworks were rather out of place and must have been annoying for those who have nervous animals.

It was lovely to see some of the streets decorated with bunting for VE day and a shame that all the 75th VE celebrations couldn't go ahead as planned but I enjoyed watching the on-line streaming of HMS Leigh and I was impressed with all the work that had gone into making it. A good deal of effort was undoubtedly taken to record proceedings in several different venues at a time when lock-down measures were quite strict. Father David made an excellent job of creating a patriotic background for the special VE service in the vicarage garden by decorating it with flags and even a boat! The old films of Southend were very interesting too. Thank you to all those responsible for organising the live streaming of, not only the VE celebrations, but also all the other services.

We are fortunate enough to live in a house which overlooks the sea and the Cinder Path so there is always something to see. I have never seen so many paddle boards before and I think people have bought them this year instead of spending their money on a foreign holiday. One or two people take their dogs on the boards with them and on one occasion I was amused to see a woman with two dogs on hers! More people too seem to be swimming in the sea this year, probably

because the swimming baths are closed at present and also, I suppose, because people have more leisure time. How lucky we all are to live in this area and to have the pleasure of the sea close by even if we don't want to swim in it.

I am thankful too that I have a garden and get a great deal of pleasure from seeing different plants flowering again from previous years, some of which I forget I've planted. I bought some very healthy begonia plants at last year's May Fair which have been out in the garden in a pot all winter and are now blooming once more. I have a small pink and white daisy plant called "Erigeron Karvinskianus" which seeds itself in various plant pots. If anyone would like one of these I would be very happy to dig one up.

Life seems to be becoming more normal once more and it was good to see a few more familiar faces at the St Margaret's Day Mass. Thank you Fr David for organising things so well. We are lucky that St Margaret's Church is open for services again (not all local churches are apparently). It makes one feel more confident knowing that so much thought has gone into putting correct safety measures in place.

I think the lockdown has given me time to appreciate small things more and I am also very grateful for all the offers of help we have received from kind friends and family.



# **My Lockdown**

## **Julia Philips**

I cannot believe where the last fifteen weeks have gone. I had to self-isolate because of age but it was hard to think about as I lived alone, how was I going to cope, my life had changed so much since I lost my husband. I went to church regularly and attended various clubs and groups so I was occupied but with all these suspended until further notice how was I going to use my time.

My house has a sideway leading to the garden and a patio beside the conservatory so all my children could come and visit keeping social distance. The garden table was put back out on the patio, it had been inside for the winter. At weekends they would come, one a day, and spend about an hour with me sometimes we would walk around the garden and I would hear about their work during lockdown – just as difficult – my daughters worked from home, now one is back at the hospital but my son was furloughed and is just starting to get back very slowly to working again. It helped me to feel less lonely although they could not come into the house. Working at home was hard for the girls they began to go without lunch so good old Mum came in useful for a break with 'Facetime' lunches good for us both (where we connect with each other via the internet) and chat while we eat, 30minutes went very quickly.

My life saver was the telephone, being able to speak to friends and colleagues especially keeping in touch with people I used to meet and have coffee with at church after the services and friends at the clubs and groups I belonged to, one group sends out newsletters about Leigh in the past which I found very

interesting. I have read many books including three about a family living in Cambodia during the years of oppression when their parents and two siblings were murdered. I was also fortunate to have an internet connection which enabled me to watch the live streaming of the Sunday service – thank you Fr.David, Bob Southward and David Stowe – it was very good and I felt part of the service. I was also able to pay bills and settle debts with my children, without cash, besides keeping in touch using emails.

Perhaps I have been fortunate living in a house with a side yard and having a garden to get out into, I have now started to tidy the garden a little. I feel sorry for those families living in high rise flats without a garden and unable to go out, still with the easing of the lockdown let's hope things get better and people respect the restraints that are imposed. I am certainly getting out a little now but am careful wearing a mask when necessary.

SOMETIMES I JUST WISH  
I HAD THE WISDOM OF  
A 90 YEAR OLD, THE BODY  
OF A 20 YEAR OLD AND  
THE ENERGY OF 3 YEAR OLD!



# **Plague**

## **Angela Bridge**

It is no new experience to live at the time of a pandemic. I can remember my mother's stories of cholera in Leigh Old Town when her grandmother lost both husband and a child to the disease, She told me that her grandmother never forgave herself because, not realizing that her little daughter was dying, she refused her a drink of cold lemon cordial, the only thing the baby wanted.

My mother lived through the Spanish Flu pandemic that hit Leigh at the end of the First World War. She remembered lying in her parent's bedroom in Grange Road with a high temperature and an overwhelming smell of skate slime coming in the window. Food was very scarce in Leigh and the fishermen who worked in the Old Town shared their catch of skate (or roker as it was locally known) to feed Leigh families, as little else was available. In those days roker was hung for two or three days to allow the slime to come out of the fish and this attracted the flies. My mother's family all survived but there were many deaths locally.

I can still just remember Miss Senior, my kindergarten teacher at St Michael's school who died of poliomyelitis in the 1950s and of the widespread belief that this disease was caught in public swimming baths, leading to the avoidance of this facility by my family for many years! It would be interesting to hear the retrospective impressions of those who experienced earlier pandemics such as the great plague of London and to find out how much experience and myth had been in common throughout each "visitation".

In a way I gained a sense of comfort from having learnt of previous generations' endurance – a kind of "this too will pass"

philosophy that prevented our extended family becoming over anxious during the height of the epidemic.

When lock down first began I made a list of good intentions. I would read my current \*holy book\* each day; I would spring clean the house and bring my accounts up to date and update my address book. I would telephone all the people I should have contacted in the past year and I would catalogue what I had stored where in the house so that if the virus hit, everything would be smooth sailing for my family. I rooted in my \*holiday\* drawer and found my bottles of disinfectant left over from air travel and trips to India and I considered converting my jelly strainers into face masks, but rejected the idea on the grounds that the deep red stains on the white muslin might be too alarming for delicate sensibilities. I worked hard at producing the perfect gluten free loaf, I kneaded the dough and recorded the details of my early failures that were even rejected by the dog who took them out into the garden and buried them. I mixed flours and liquids with the enthusiasm of an alchemist and my husband grew thinner with each unsuccessful attempt. Eventually I gracefully admitted defeat and gave Mr Warburton and Mr Tesco my money in exchange for their bread. I did, however, refine the art of gooseberry jam making and although my soup might not rival that of Mr Heinz, it did not actually make us unwell. I still maintain there is a great deal of good to be had from potato skins.

I joined the secret society of *those at home with their loved ones* and grew adept in ways of escaping, as did the rest of the family. \*Just coming\*, \*be down in a minute\* could be heard from bedrooms when food was announced and the dog became increasingly rotund as she became more expert in secretly and silently filching scraps from the plates of those who were



unappreciative of my enthusiastic WWII cooking.

In the spirit of lockdown friendship and at the dictates of the Vicar, I buddied with my neighbour of 85 whom I have known about fifty years to speak to. but no more than to pass the time of day. We gradually bonded over the occasional amoretto, or sherry, at the appropriate time of the day and she generously contributed the contents of her lock down box to the Church each week. We laughed at the amount of baked beans supplied to lonely pensioners in Essex and vied with each other for the least disgusting recipe for the consumption of chicken meatballs in gravy. I have no doubt this will be a lasting friendship.

Now to be more serious I can say how much I missed not only my Church family, but also my Church home in St Margaret's. There were times when I drove round the block or walked the dog across the road just to be near the building. I felt as if a part of my life was empty and the feeling of physical separation from the Church family was immense. I have learnt things about myself that, perhaps I would rather not have known, but also I have gained a realization of how central to my life is our Church, our Faith and the love of God demonstrated in Leigh by His people in recent months.



# THE DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

Clare Fraser

**2020** HAS DEFINITELY BEEN A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER! *It's hard to believe that a whole year had passed since my Dad died on April 5th 2019*

Trying to look for the proverbial silver lining, at the beginning of the pandemic I remember saying to my brother that if our Dad had died at the same time this year how heartbreaking it would have been not to have been able to be with him in his final hours at his care home as we all were, and holding his hand as he gently passed from life, having received the last rites shortly before, and later to have had a full requiem mass at St. Margaret's Church followed by a wake in the church hall. Little did I know what was in store for us just a few weeks later with our dear Mum.

When Mum had a couple of falls in March, her health started to deteriorate and we reluctantly (knowing how rife Coronavirus was at that time) rang NHS 111 who then arranged an ambulance for her, and of course when the decision was made to take her to hospital we very sadly could not accompany her due to Covid, but were assured by the paramedics that we could ring anytime. Even then we had no idea that this (with the exception of one FaceTime call) was to be the last time we would see our Mum.

The hospital were really wonderful in giving us updates with understanding and kindness and produced a lovely laminated get well message and family photograph that we had sent them by email, but it gradually became evident that Mum was fading and had entered her last days on earth. A few days later on 28th April

beloved Mum had passed away. Not to have been with her as we were with our Dad was unbearable and has been hard to come to terms with and still is, if I'm honest, as the comparison between their deaths couldn't be more stark. Having been my Mum's carer, not to have been there at the end seems cruel, but I know so many people went through the same traumatic time - even though Mum didn't actually die from Covid19, she and we suffered from the effects and consequences of the lockdown restrictions and safety measures that meant we couldn't be with her, but at least we were glad to know via the doctors and Fr. David that the hospital chaplain spent time with her towards the end.

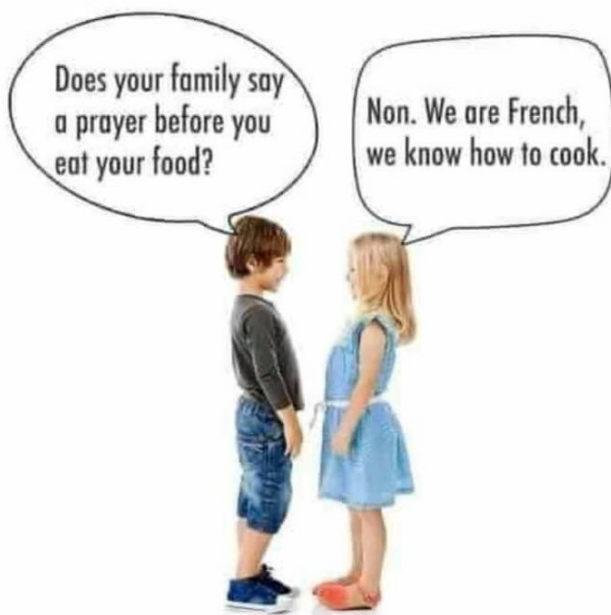
Then of course it came to arranging the funeral, and having seen on the news, we knew full well that it would not be the funeral we would have wanted for Mum under normal circumstances. Firstly registering the death all had to be done on a telephone appointment, but again the hospital bereavement suite were so good explaining the different procedures to us and Stibbards funeral directors too were excellent and explained how Covid affected the type of funeral we could have: no funeral cars, no church service - it had to be either at the crematorium chapel or graveside with a maximum of 10 mourners, in the chapel the chairs would be spaced out for social distancing (very difficult when grieving family would normally comfort each other) . We met with Fr David to make the arrangements (in his garden to adhere once again to social distancing and for everyone's safety.)

We felt that within the constraints we had a lovely funeral service which included most of the elements we would have had if things had been different - Fr. David even brought his statue of Our Lady to the chapel - Mum would have loved that! In our short allotted time we combined bible readings, a eulogy read by

my brother, followed by words from Fr. David, prayers, a lovely poem entitled 'A Wife, a Mother, a Grandma Too' read by my daughter Katharine and three hymns. Due to the restricted numbers and the fact that my niece is working abroad and therefore unable to fly back, the funeral was available for them to watch via webcast and we know that other family members and friends who would have attended also watched it this way. How very strange it seems to relay a funeral service like this, but this virus has changed so much about the way we live.....and die.

Writing this article I have re-lived some very difficult and sad times especially coming so soon after losing our dear Dad to dementia, but I know I can be very thankful for having had my parents in my life for so long and with so many great memories to treasure.

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Painting Therapy

Bernard Fink



It was a difficult few months this Spring and I had not been able to see my dear wife Ruth in the Care home for four months. Being isolated and unable to come to church, indeed anywhere, I found it very hard to find some comfort and peace. However, several parishioners called to check on my well-being and I am so grateful for those calls, including several from Father David. He was already aware that I love to paint and suggested that possibly I might want to paint a picture of St. Margaret's. I left this thought for some time at the back of my mind but the loneliness and stress of not seeing Ruth eventually pushed me to get back to painting and with some encouragement from Father David I found the inspiration to paint this picture of our lovely church. Please keep safe and with the Lord's help we will all be seeing each other again soon under better circumstances.

Thoughts on Leaving West Leigh Junior School

Courtney Davey-Bulmore

West Leigh Junior School is not just a building it is a place of happiness and a place to let my emotions fly. Many people at West Leigh are here to help and no will never be an answer. Lots of people have attended West Leigh and left becoming strong, trustworthy and responsible adults. I am glad to have had the opportunity to experience West Leigh and work on all of my qualities to improve them.

Thinking back to when I first stepped into this building, I remember being extremely scared and quiet but my second impression to everyone was that I talked a lot and was extremely loud! - but over the years this school has helped me to pull myself together and now I feel that I have become more trustworthy and responsible. I feel that I am a trusted 11 year old girl with many strengths. I am extremely proud to be a student at West Leigh and so is all of my family.

During my time at West Leigh I have achieved a lot. My most valued piece of writing is my best day of my life writing. I am so proud of that so is everyone else in my life.

I am immensely proud of the outcome that I have had at West Leigh. It has had a huge impact on my life and i think I have achieved so much over the years.

I am extremely grateful for everything that I have gained and achieved: unforgettable memories, lifelong friendships and the irreplaceable wealth of knowledge that will stay with me as I journey onwards.

Fr Robin Eastoe Retires

Having reached the age of 66 in December and having been in Exeter since 2008, it seemed good to announce in January that I was to retire. Little did we know then that the last few months of my ministry would be under lock-down!

So recently I have been streaming services every day, recording sermons on Youtube and providing a daily reflection which usually has been a bible study. But on Sunday 5th July it comes to an end, and I



retire after a 9.30am service (fairly early since it then means the recording can be provided by midday for those not able to get to church.)

Helen and I decided we would want to be near one of our children as we get old! Laura is in Walthamstow and we don't really want to retire to London; Timothy is in Singapore which is out of the question, but Alice, together with husband Sam and daughter Ivy, will remain in Exeter where they live about two miles away. So we are staying in Devon and in fact staying in Exeter.

We will be living at 17, Summerway, Exeter EX4 8DA.

The lockdown has much delayed our plans to move, but I expect to be able to move in early August. One advantage of moving locally is that Helen can continue to work until she gets her pension - she is about 22 months younger than me.

Best wishes to all my friends in Leigh
Robin

Fr Neil Dalley

On May 28th Fr Neil Dalley - former curate at St Clement's Leigh - was licensed as Vicar Of **St Alban's, Westcliff** on Sea Via a Zoom Service.

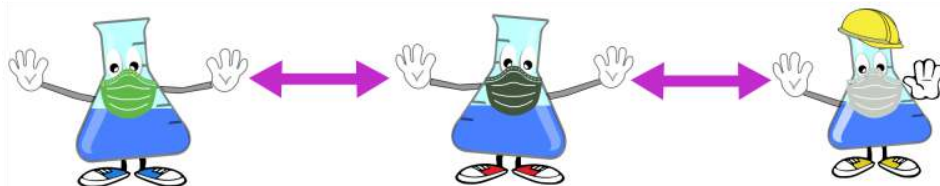
Fr Neil has been a good friend to St Margaret's and has taken services for us at various times. We all wish him well in his new position



Protocols for “Open Church”

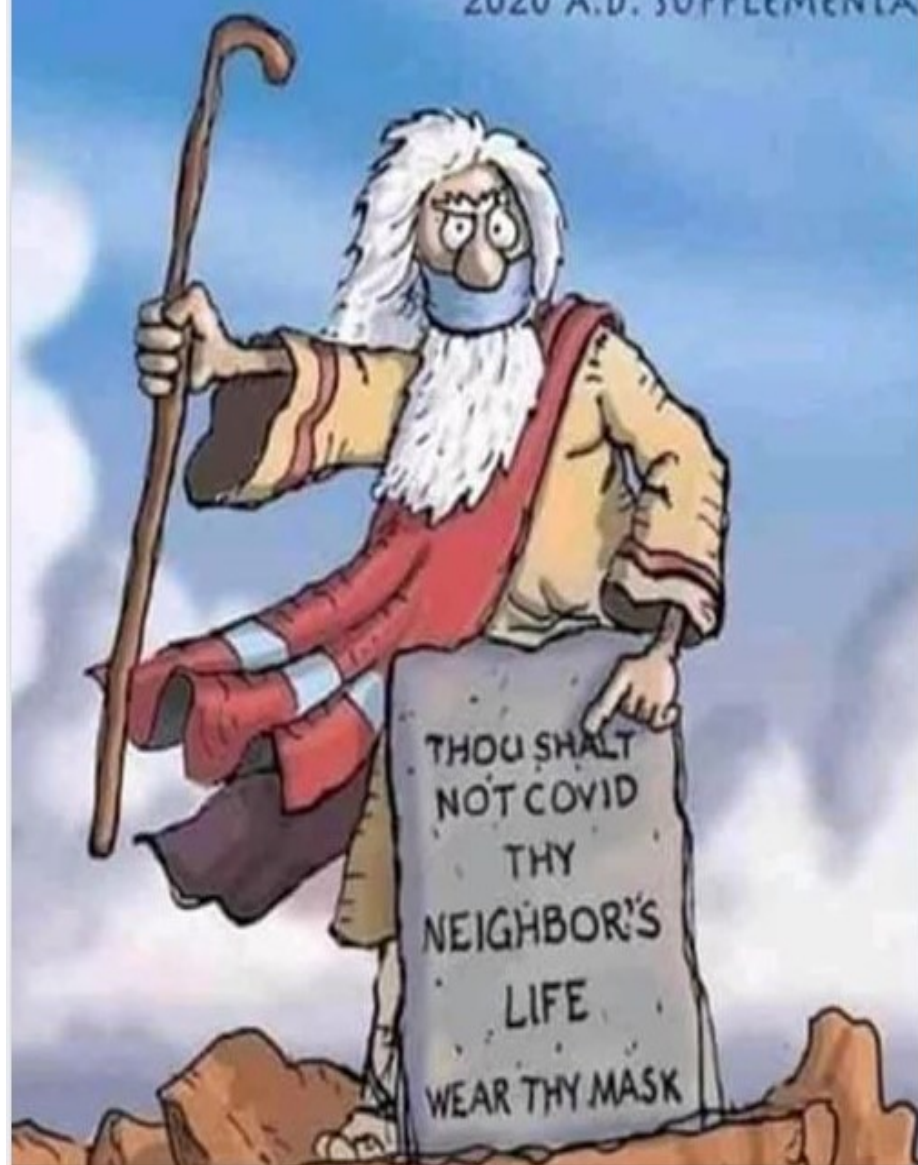
1. Adhere to best Government practice and guidance on physical distancing and personal hygiene.
2. Sanitiser and disinfectant buckets are sited at the entrance and exit - however bring your own where possible
3. Use West end doors as entrance and South aisle door as exit
4. Refrain from touching items unnecessarily
5. If you touch and use a ‘takeaway leaflet’ please **take it away**
6. Light candles from lit candle.
7. Use your own pen or pencil if you wish to write a prayer.
8. Offerings may be left in the boxes at doors and candle stand. (or in the baskets at services)
9. **Use only the red chairs** in the church if you wish to sit.

Social distance, please



THE 11TH COMMANDMENT

2020 A.D. SUPPLEMENTA



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