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





www.saintmargaretsleigh.org

Church Services

Worship at St Margaret's Church

Sunday: 8:00-8:30 Public Said Mass

10:-10:50 Public Mass with music

Live Streamed & available on web

site Sermon written copy & voice

recording online

17:30 - 18:10 Public Mass with music

for Family Groups

Tuesday 19:30 Non Public Said Mass

Wednesday: 19:30 Non Public Said Mass

Thursday: 09:30 Public Said Mass

14:00-16:00 Church open for personal prayer

Friday: 09:00 Non-Public Said Mass Saturday: 09:00 Non-Public Said Mass

This is the normal pattern of services.

However, for up to date arrangements for all services and festivals please see the website as <u>mid-week services can vary</u>. The website is updated regularly.

www.saintmargaretsleigh.org

From Fr David

Although this Lent, Holy Week and Easter was under the conditions of limited opening of the church for public worship unlike last year's lockdown and use of the vicarage garden, it was still a very different and challenging experience. We must be grateful to the very few people who help keep our parish life going. Bishop Gulli the new bishop of Chelmsford has written about how deeply tired some are; it is an accurate analysis but we will see whether solutions posed help or hinder the issues that confront us. I suspect it will be a while yet before the strictures of this time of pandemic are behind us and the scarring will no doubt be long term on our life and community.

However, we are in the Easter season: new life and hope is at the heart of our faith. So what does it mean to be witnesses of the resurrection as all the baptised are called to be. The following address is based on Easter 4 Good Shepherd Sunday. It poses a challenge to us all but a challenge that can be met by thankful hearts as we seek to engage with the real world as God in Christ does.

Following the shepherd not the sheep.

The image of Jesus as Shepherd is a very familiar one. Sadly it is an image that is often painted and conveyed with such sugary sentimentality that it loses its bite and meaning. It isn't just that being a shepherd is a hard arduous and often dirty job and not all cuddling new born lambs and whistling to adoring sheep dogs. It's that it is an image that contrasts God with political and religious leadership in the Old Testament and generally they do not compare favourably. God as the Good Shepherd in Christ is not the good shepherd from a safe distanced virtual bubble – he gets his hands dirty is born of flesh and blood. The psalms speak of God as the trustworthy shepherd of Israel who as the good shepherd loves his people. The many leaders political and religious are described as bad shepherds because of their tyranny, negligence and being concerned for self rather than others.

St.John beautifully uses the metaphor of the Good Shepherd in relation to Jesus. In John it is the equivalent of the Servant King written about by other gospel writers - he is king but comes to serve and suffer for His people not to lord it over them like worldy rulers political religious or otherwise – business barons are not excluded.

The gospel of John is the most image laden of our gospels – words cannot contain the word made flesh. He is light, life, the door, the vine, the bread of heaven, and much more. However St. John knows the limitation of human understanding and metaphor and the dangers of getting stuck with one we can domesticate and use to serve our own ends.

Unsurprisingly from the beloved disciple John who speak of the love God has lavished on us in Christ, love motivates and frames everything. At this point in our local and national life three important things may be drawn from the image of the Good Shepherd in this Easter Season. It is sacrificial, evangelistic (outward looking) and a pattern not for being sheep but shepherds.

Sacrificial. The pattern of Jesus as shepherd is to lay down his life for the sheep, they are not the means to an end or a living. This is the pattern we followed through holy week from Palm Sunday and adulation of the crowds to the passion and death of Christ on Good Friday. It is the pattern of the risen Lord who still shows his love and his wounds. *Greater love hath no man than* he lay down his life for his friends – you are my friends Jesus says when you follow my commandments – to love as I have loved you. Shepherds generally don't make friends with their sheep so you see both the limitation of the metaphor and the movement of Christ to be both the means and pattern of our reconciliation with God. We are made in the image of God not sheep – this is what is to be restored.

Evangelistic. Jesus speaks of those who do not belong to

the fold – the gentile world beyond Israel – in our terms: beyond the church and beyond our community. These others are as much part of his mission and the offering of his love as the flock of Israel. Most of the Acts of the Apostles is the story of this outward looking evangelistic mission. it was the true vocation of Israel and is the true vocation of the Church. As the body of Christ grows the vocation of each and every person brought into the fold becomes part of that mission. Yes there is care and protection of the flock but it is not a faith fortress. Other language will be required – think of the parable of the yeast in the flour mix, living stones as will be developed by St.Peter, the image of the body of Christ developed by Paul, or God's children who will become like God as developed by John himself.

Shepherds not sheep. It follows that we are not called to be sheep. All of us in different ways are called to be shepherds one to another and yes sometimes like sheep we all need feeding redirecting and helping. The danger of the metaphor is that many can be infantilised in their spirituality and lives bleating on for a shepherd someone else to do everything for them. What is often meant by the bleating is: someone else will do it, pay for it, sort it out – ill just eat my grass and wait and maybe complain if

that someone else doesn't do it, doesn't pay for it or doesn't sort it out. It is a pattern sadly seen so often in the church and in society at large and no doubt will rear its head in our coming elections. It is an unattractive lop-sided pattern focussed on blame, rights and just feeling sorry for oneself rather than sacrificial love and empathy, an outward looking evangelistic mind set, and taking personal responsibility. We are not called to be sheep but called to grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ. Yes there are times we need to rest and perhaps be more passive fed and watered not least when sick, infirm or anxious – but to be witnesses of the resurrection is to be open to new life even when sick infirm or anxious. The lives of the saints are not the lives of people who have everything sorted but who are open to the power of God in Christ to change even such points of need and challenge in their lives.

So as we are bold to pray this Easter time that God may help us pattern our lives after the Good Shepherd and not rest content as bleating sheep. It will require us to engage with the real world like God in Christ, leave our bubbles, to be sacrificial in living and giving, outward looking in our faith and pastorally attentive one to another. It is a demanding life until we understand what we have received from the Good Shepherd - in the words of St.John the love that God has

lavished on us, and it then seems obvious and none other than the way of life in all its fullness.

Fr.David April 26th 2021

An Update on the HMS Leigh Project

Because of the pandemic this has been extended in an exciting way for the town.



Though we have just filmed a re-enactment of the VE service from Westminster 1945 for use this year and we hope in September to have a flotilla centred on the pier later in the year including the Waverley. Due to pandemic restrictions "HMS Leigh — Guardian of the Thames" is unable to hold the real life event on Southend Pier on May 6th-9th 2021. However, thanks to the approval of our funders, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and help

from project partners Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, the HMS Leigh project has been able to secure an exciting extension to the project so that we can bring a live event to the whole community in September 2021. Planned for the weekend of 24th September 2021, we are calling our event HMS Leigh – *The Bravest Pier in the world*.

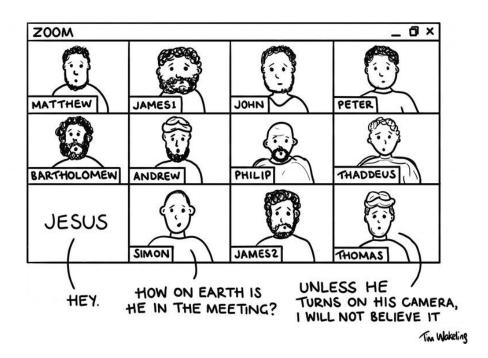
We hope this will be a fitting recognition of the amazing story of how the 1.3mile Southend Pier was transformed into a Naval Shore Base that gathered and dispatched men, munitions, fuel, food and everything that kept a besieged London and the war effort of the armed forces fed, watered and supplied for the 6 long years of WW2. Before September thanks to the huge gift of stories, photographs and archive we are inviting everyone to come visit - *The Bravest Pier in the World* - online. Join us in May to walk the boards in an online festival of WW2 Southend. Take part in an interactive film to meet many of those who turned Southend Pier from holiday resort to shore base that protected London and the rest of the UK by keeping the shipping moving throughout WW2.

The story of HMS Leigh is the story of the people and events around Southend Pier from 1939 to 1945. This was a time of everyday heroes and heroines who worked tirelessly to protect the community they were proud to be a part of and the families they loved. HMS Leigh was the departure point for 10,000 convoys during WW2 and played truly remarkable role in the defence of Britain. With actors and

actresses portraying some of the brilliant characters from WW2 Southend, the HMS Leigh Team have been working to gather the stories and make short films of some of the momentous events in which HMS Leigh was integral.

Please do sign up for our newsletter or visit our Facebook page or Instagram where details of all the ways that people can be involved can be found. Otherwise, to find out more about the HMS Leigh project — please do explore the website, it will be updated regularly.

Web site: hmsleigh.org.uk



Congratulations!

To Emma and Fraser MacLeod on the safe arrival of Alexander on Monday 1st March. All are doing well. We look forward to meeting him in due course.



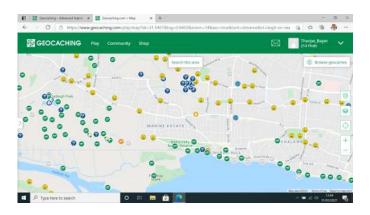
The St Margaret's Geocache Paul Southward

On Tuesday 30th March the St Margaret's geocache went live. But first of all what is geocaching and why has St Margaret's got a cache?

Geocaching is an outdoor activity in which participants look for containers using co-ordinates and other clues. The containers are called "Geocaches" or simply "Cache" and can vary in size from tiny micro magnets to those the size of a small box. Every cache contains a logbook on which you sign your name to say you've found it and then - crucially - you record the find using your mobile phone or other electronic device. The fun is in looking for something and the devious and creative ways people have hidden things. Some caches are hidden in plain view whilst others are disguised under logs, in camouflage bags, in posts or under park benches. There are over 1,900 geocaches just in Essex with hundreds of people looking for them. If you go to the Geocaching.com website you will find the St Margaret's geocache is labelled as "Church Micro 13887 Leigh-on-Sea St Margaret's" which means there are over 13,000 churches with their own geocache.

I started geocaching over Christmas as something to do during lockdown and have really enjoyed it. I have found over 200 geocaches so far and look for them wherever I go. It is a great hobby as it takes you to unusual places and each geocache has an explanation which means you can learn historical things about the area. It's also educational. Whilst geocaching on Canvey in February I came across a couple who were geocaching with their two young children. As the father said, they learn about geography, they learn about co-ordinates and maps, they learn to look for clues and most of all they are getting exercise in the open air.

You are probably wondering where the St Margaret's geocache is hidden, but sorry I can't tell you, you'll have to go to the **Geocaching.com** website to find out. Good luck!



Some of the Geocaches around Leigh.

Bumblebees Preschool

Bumblebees at St Margaret's Preschool is heading towards its first year of opening this September and we have certainly come a

long way. We have had amazing feedback from parents and we are being recommended within the community. Although we are not yet full and open full days everyday I am in no doubt that this September will be the year for us at Bumblebees.



St Margaret's church, the community and parents have shown us great support in our first year and we are very grateful to all who have helped us in this first difficult year.

The sun is starting to shine and the children are loving our amazing garden area. We look forward to a happy

healthy Summer term at Bumblebees St Margaret's.

We have vacancies for all sessions 9-12 and 9-3 everyday.

To register call: 07581 150 978

or email: bumblebeespreschool19@gmail.com

Bill Griffiths continued...

Bill Griffiths a young man from Blackburn, lost both his sight and his hands while dismantling a booby trap in Java in 1942.

After nearly four agonising years as a prisoner of the Japanese he returns home. Life seems meaningless until he is persuaded to go to St Dunstan's. At their rehabilitation centre he not only learns to live again but is also trained in the intricacies of the road haulage business.

Eight years ago an attractive shapely brunette called Alice, decided to spend the rest of her life as Bill Griffiths' wife and brought with her a whole new way of living. "He was such good fun to be with and life seemed so dull without him" she says. Today they are far happier than many couples who lead relatively problem-free lives.

"Billy was always out for a laugh – full of devilment. In fact, he hasn't changed much" smiles Alice as she casts her mind back to those pre-war days when she taught Bill to dance at the local hops. "But he always treated me rather like a sister. I suppose I was the girl-next-door type really".

"Then the war came, and I didn't see him again for about ten years".

"I wanted to visit him but had somehow got the idea he 'd have plenty of visitors and probably wouldn't remember me anyway". When Alice did pluck up the courage to ring Bill

she found he certainly hadn't forgotten her.

The haulage business was heading for decline when Alice came back into Bill's life for the second time. He was beginning to lose confidence in himself again. With Alice's gentle prodding he began picking up the treads of daily life. She taught him he wasn't just a nuisance and that people really did care about him.

When the haulage firm finally had to be sold, she realised Bill needed another interest. He had a reasonable voice, so why not have it trained, she suggested. As a semi-professional singer herself she could give him a few tips. After some persuasion he went along to Alice's music teacher, who not only trained his voice, but prepared him for music festivals as well.

It all sounds very simple until you realise Bill couldn't read a note of music Nor could he learn by Braille as he had no hands. But he and Alice weren't put off. She would read the words of a song into a tape recorded for Bill to memorise. Then he would learn the tune by the same method. Gradually his confidence grew, but it still took a great deal of determination and will-power for them both when he entered his first music festival.

Bill knew that when he was up on that stage he would be

completely alone. He didn't dare move an inch in case he ended up singing with his back to the audience. It also took courage for Alice to guide him onto the stage and simply leave him standing there alone. "I knew it was one big battle he had to fight by himself", she says, fighting that battle was the beginning of something for Billy".

But he didn't forget his words or turn his back on the audience. He came off the stage a success. He now felt confident enough to take on the whole world. Bill and Alice were often asked to sing duets together. Gradually their diary became crowded with singing engagements. They travelled to all parts of Britain singing in church halls, prisons, and official dinners.

It came a a shock to Alice when Bill simply said to her one day "Well how about us getting married?" This was after they had been singing together for nearly ten years. But Bill had been thinking about marriage to Alice for some time. "I remember seeing her when we sere very young. She was very feminine and had what we call in theses parts, a bit of a shape" he chuckled. She had a lovely nature. I could always trust her to keep her word." Alice said yes, but she wanted six months to make arrangements. Bill said make it six weeks. Impossible said Alice. Six weeks later she walked out of their local Congregational Church as Mrs Griffiths. They spent their

honeymoon in London where St Dunstan's threw a surprise champagne party for them.

The Griffiths, despite the disadvantages, have made their marriage work, and successfully. Of course they had their difficulties in the beginning – difficulties which would have proved too much for many. As with everything it is the little things which irritate. After Alice had cleaned the lounge, Bill would complain the settee hadn't been put back in exactly the same place as before. Alice would look round the room and not see a thing out of place. It was only when she went into the kitchen and walked round with her eyes closed that she realised how important even an inch is for a blind person. Bill in his turn had to learn that he couldn't expect Alice to drive the car and give him a running commentary on the scenery at the same time – not if he wanted the car to remain on the road, that is!

In the early days Bill used to ask Alice for half-a-dozen things at once. One day when this was getting too much for her, she just sat down and they talked it out. "Well," he explained "I feel I have to ask you for everything while you are not up to your elbows washing or covered in flour" Most of their problems were solved in the same way, by talking them over.

The Griffiths' day usually begins with the seven o'clock news - the radio is still Bill's second love. Alice washes and dresses her husband, but with careful manoeuvring he manages to clean his own teeth and shave himself. Then he's ready for work. Bill's not one to let correspondence pile up, so he sits down at his specially adapted typewriter and bashes out replies. In between getting the breakfast Alice checks his letters. After breakfast she reads the newspaper to him from cover to cover, including the cartoons. Then while Bill learns a new song or two, Alice does the housework and cooking. She doesn't have to worry if there's a knock at the door or the phone rings- for her that's the husband's department. He even telephones the hairdresser to make appointments for her. "Billy always knows what my hair is like" says Alice. He feels it with his cheek. The only time he came unstuck was when I was wearing a light straw hat. I think he thought they had used a new kind of stiff lacquer.

Though he can't see how smart his wife looks, Bill likes to know other people find her attractive. And perhaps because he can't see her, he takes more of an interest in his wife's appearance than many husbands do. He doesn't take her or his home for granted. He always likes to know which dress she is wearing and how the garden is doing.

When they moved to their modern bungalow which overlooks Blackburn golf course, three years ago, it was Bill who decided what went into the garden. He may not be able to see the colours but there is nothing he likes better than a stroll round his flower beds, smelling the sweet perfume of the roses.

Walking is another of his pleasures, but it's a bit nerve wracking for Alice. "We love to chat to people, but I do wish they would stop and talk to us properly" Alice says instead of trying to hold a shouting conversation while we are walking along. It's practically an impossibility, especially if you are looking out for uneven paving stones at the same time." When they see a blind person sitting at a table, some restaurants will send the food along already cut up. If that happens to Bill it's sent back. It's not that he's ungrateful, it's just that he has a vivid imagination. If he's ordered a steak, he likes to picture it thick and juicy — and it's just not the same if it's cut into tiny squares.

The fact that Alice has to do so much for him, from feeding him, to buying his clothes, has probably made Bill all the more determined to do everything possible to keep what independence he has. "Billy is still one for adventure" laughs Alice remembering the first time they drove from Blackburn to Ovingdean, Brighton. "It seemed

silly to struggle with suitcases and changing trains when we had a car in the garage, but I really dreaded driving through London" she explained. "Before I knew what had happened Billy had written off to the A.A. for a route. He memorised the directions from the tape. I was scared stiff when we set off, but it was just like having an A.A. man sitting next to me. We didn't get lost once or have to ask the way."

No wonder she often forgets her husband is totally blind.

"Sometimes I'll look out of the window and say 'Billy, just look at that weather'. Or I'll hand him a sheet of music to read," she laughs.

Not long after they were married, two events occurred to complete Bill's happiness. Alice's son, by a previous marriage, Bobby, had his name changed to Griffiths to show how much he admired his stepfather. Now Bill has a grandson bearing his name. That action meant more to him than any of the trophies he won.

Then Lieutenant-Commander Robin Buckley, GM Chief Public Relations Officer, for St Dunstan's, offered Bill a post on the staff as lecturer for the whole of northern England. 2Bill turned out to be a discovery as valuable as any nickel mine" says the Commander.

That is no exaggeration. For Bill Griffiths was to astound a great many people in proving that just because you haven't any hands and can't see doesn't mean you are finished.

To be continued

A professor gave a balloon to every student, who had to inflate it, write their name on it and throw it in the hallway. The professor then mixed all the balloons. The students were given 5 minutes to find their own balloon. Despite a hectic search, no one found their balloon. At that point, the professors told the students to take the first balloon that they found and hand it to the person whose name was written on it. Within 5 minutes everyone had their own balloon.

The professors said to the students: "These balloons are like happiness. We will never find it if everyone is looking for their own. But if we care about other people's happiness.... we'll find ours too."

Be there for others and you will be surprised by the positive outcome .



Update from Noah Cockett

I have been asked to write an update about the spring term of my time at theological college. What can I say that you won't have heard before? Like everyone else, this term, I have been locked down. Cuddesdon College has not met together for learning or worship since the end of the first term.

For the spring term, I have been working in my room, only really seeing people for meals. My lectures have been via the internet. Contact with my fellow ordinands has been mostly just those living on the same landing. A lot of students chose to study at home, since studying on campus yielded fewer benefits for them. I chose to board the whole time. Luckily, I have my bicycle here and can go, often with a friend, to cycle for fitness and to find my way around Oxford's surrounding villages.

During lockdown, a group of us who have been resident, have reclaimed an allotment. What was once a mass of weeds and brambles, is now ready for spring planting. I'm no gardener, but it's been a good way to be outdoors and doing something useful. I think the resident families will make good use of the vegetables as they grow.

The grounds at Cuddesdon are lovely, with all sorts of different trees, and they are a great place to walk and watch the seasons changing.

Worship has been online, and I can tell you, Zoom worship is really hard. I have enjoyed being home and at St. Margaret's over Easter. Zoom teaching is equally hard and I look forward to learning face to face again before too long.

Oddly, the community that has remained has bonded. One of the only times we can all be together each week is on Tuesdays and Saturdays which are working days on the allotment. We've built a forest church area now, and are waiting to see whether we can get our primitive altar blessed, we do have a Bishop on site. We're planting lots of fruit trees and are going to harvest our orchard in the summer. Last summer, we made cider and last winter we made sloe gin!

Even with all the strangeness and lockdown difficulties, I am so glad to be at Cuddesdon. I am getting to grips with the levels of reading and study that are required. The Cuddesdon community is muddling along, my grades are steadily going up and I have a lot to look forward to.



ST.MARGARET'S PRODUCTIONS PROUDLY PRESENTED JESUS' JOURNEY TO EASTER. Lorrina Cockett

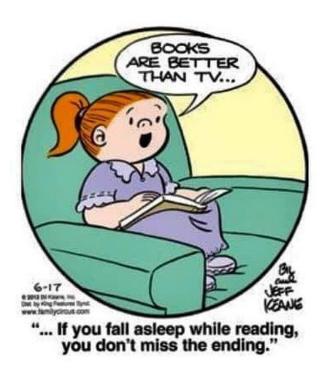
We gathered for a second time recently to create a new film, telling "Jesus' Journey to Easter" for children. We showed what Jesus did in Holy Week. It was a very cold Saturday, at the end of a very wet week, but we got everything filmed and recorded without getting wet!

Our team is a marvellous mix of more experienced (older) members and more junior (younger) players but we work so well together, combining our different talents, skills and ideas. Firstly, we plan on Zoom and find a date to film. Next we text round to see who is available to help and take part on the chosen day.

This time, we were still locked down, but we were lucky that lots of the actors were in family bubbles and their parents were happy to help on the day. We used outside areas as much as we could because it was safer and more spacious, and you will spot the vestry, the boiler room and upper hall in the film too. All indoor spaces were thoroughly cleaned when we had finished filming.

We hope that you will take a few minutes to look at the film which has been on the website since Palm Sunday. We ensured that all the rules relating to Covid were kept, and it was lovely to be able to get together and work on such a very special project. Very many thanks to Jack, our director and editor and Emma, our musical director. Elizabeth, Cookie and Courtney our narrators. The actors: Daniel, Thomas, Indya, Freya, Jacob, Freddie, Jacob, Sienna and Rosie. And finally, to Lynda, Jenny, Ann, Michelle, Michael and Lorrina the backstage crew.

Easter is our time of hope and we hope that you enjoy our film.



Congratulations!

To Christopher Dowsett who has announced his engagement to Kavita, a PHD student from Nottingham.

Love and prayers from us all.



The St Margaret's Benchmark

Paul Southward

Whilst looking for a place to hide the St Margaret's geocache I came across this Ordnance Survey (OS) benchmark in the wall of the church. Ordnance Survey benchmarks were put in as part of the retriangulation of Great Britain that took place 1936 – 1962. Until this time surveying had been carried out using survey stations which hadn't been recorded properly and as such were not always re-discoverable. To overcome this the OS built a network of triangulation pillars (trig points) benchmarks to survey the height of the land. They also other semi-permanent features such as church spires, flag poles, gasometers and the tops of schools and stately homes. This network of observation points was maintained until 1993 when the last benchmark was carved onto a milestone located outside The Fountain pub in Loughton. Since 1999 the OS has used a system of Global Positioning System (GPS) to survey the land. This GPS system is far more accurate and a lot easier to use but one wonders if the modern map surveyors of today had as much fun as their predecessors.



The St Margaret's benchmark can be found to the right of the main front door to the church just round the corner very low down. A quick look at the bench-marks.org.uk website tells me that the line the above arrow was surveyed to 44.498m above sea level. Or 44 metres, 49 8mm. Other and cm baseplates exist locally such as the one on Chalkwell Hall

in Chalkwell Park, there is one on The Woodmans pub in Thundersley and there is one on the The White Horse pub (now The Old Walnut Tree) in Southchurch. Some have been lost such as the one on Leigh Baptist Church which was re-built around ten years ago. Two trig points can be found in Eastwood and one exists on the western end on Canvey Island if you want to go and look for it. All of them are at heights surveyed from "ODN" - Ordnance Datum Newlyn - Newlyn being a village in Cornwall from which the OS defined sea level and from which every height in Britain is taken. Next time you go to the church, have a look round the corner to find St Margaret's place in mapping history.

Notes to Users of St.Margaret's Church, QR Code Halls, Rooms, Grounds and Vicarage

Public worship in Church.

The Vicar, Wardens, PCC and Congregation of St.Margaret's seek to give the highest degree of confidence for the Covid 19 Security for attendees of the "advertised public worship and open church" on Thursdays and Sundays complying with government law and guidelines

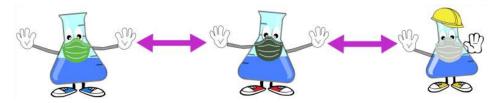
Other use of church property

Hirers and users of any of the church property outside the space of the church designated for public worship and outside of the designated times do so at their own risk. It is part of the contract of use that users of the Church, Church Hall, meeting rooms, grounds and vicarage outside of these events and times must self- caretaker; cleaning and sanitizing all areas and items they are to use and repeat this at the end of their event or visit. They are to keep a full register of their users according to current law. Times, organisations and people using these spaces outside of the Thursday and Sunday Public acts of worship may be obtained from the Vicar who is to be informed of all activity with 24 hours notice until further notice.

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
- 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



Who's Who at St Margaret's

Parish Priest:

The Rev'd Fr. David Wylie RN 07768 687 605

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Churchwardens:

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Mrs Lorrina Cockett 07952 431 690

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