

North Cornwall Cluster of Churches Newsletter July 2020



For the parishes of St Kew, St Endellion with St Peter's, Port Isaac
and St Minver with St Enodoc (Trebetherick) and St Michael (Porthilly)

www.northcornwallclusterofchurches.org.uk

Returning to Public Worship

Since the closure of our church buildings in March, we have been busy doing church in new and different ways: on the telephone, by post and in a range of ways online (email, Facebook, Zoom, YouTube). There have been many good things which have come out of this time, as well as many precious experiences that we have missed.

We are now at the point that our church buildings are able to be open for private prayer and funerals and at some point we will again be allowed to have weddings and public worship in our church buildings. These changes bring great joy to some and deep anxiety to others. There is a concern that we might lose many of the good things that we have seen God doing during the lockdown, and also a sense of hope that we will be able to begin meet together in person again.

Whatever our feelings, it is clear that when we do have public worship in person again, it will be very different. And as we move forwards, we will need to be guided by our prayer and bible reading, as well as by our conversations among the community of faith - which is church of Christ, whether we are able to meet in our much loved buildings or not.

It is likely that when we first return to public worship, we will have to begin with one service in the largest church, taking into account all of the government restrictions that are in place at the time. At the same time, we expect to continue to offer online worship and fellowship for as long as this is needed.

It will take time before we can then move to having services in the other larger churches, when we will be able to offer different styles of service, still with all sorts of restrictions in place. In the long term, we hope to be able to have services in all of our churches once again, but the pattern of services which we can offer is likely to be different, and we will need to be open to God's guidance as we discern what this should look like.

As we move forwards there are likely to be many frustrations and it will also be a steep learning curve and a lot of hard work for the team which has been continuously working throughout the year. We will need to be united in our love for God and for one another. We will need to be patient and kind and generous with one another. We will need to be people of prayer more than ever before.

But we can also be assured that we will be able to be people of hope, who trust in God's future even when it looks very different from the future we might have chosen. And as we give ourselves to God's purposes, we can know that God will be with us, every step of the way.

With my prayers, Revd Elizabeth



**WORSHIP
& PRAYER
FROM HOME
DOWNLOAD RESOURCES**

www.northcornwallclusterofchurches.org.uk

Online Worship Survey

Thank you so much to everyone who has taken part in our online worship survey! Here's what some of you have been saying:

"I feel connected to my church family."

"It's lovely having all the different people taking part."

"I really value the visual effects."

"I value so many getting involved – all ages... My worship has grown in this time."

"The services help me to stay in contact with God."

"It has been a real lifeline at times."

"It feels less remote than the TV service."

1 in 4 of those who answered aren't church members. Here are some comments from those who don't normally come to church:

"I value it very much...I always look forward to it."

"It gives me a sense of stability and time to think about God."

"The services are bringing the presence of Christ into an isolated community, especially at a time of fear and grief."

You've also given us some helpful ideas about how to improve, with more visuals and audio improvements. 55% of people so far say they would continue to access the online worship even when churches reopen to all.

It's not too late to add your thoughts!

Head to our website to let us know your experience of our online worship and help shape what it looks like in the future.

Rose Jones



What is Alpha?

The Alpha Course is a series of sessions that explore the Christian faith. The North Cornwall Cluster of Churches will be running an online Alpha starting Wednesday 22nd July 2020. Each session looks at different questions around faith that are thought provoking and designed to create conversation.

For those who already have a Christian faith it is an opportunity to learn and share with others. For those who are interested in learning more about the Christian faith it is an opportunity to ask questions and explore Christianity in a safe, non-judgemental way.

Alpha begins 7pm with a warm welcome and a DVD presentation to promote discussion, bring a cuppa or a glass! The sessions finish at 9pm. They will be held online using zoom. If you are unfamiliar with zoom instructions and help to access it will be given beforehand.

Alpha is for everyone and everyone is welcome.

Contact Rev'd Geraldine Ashton at gezzalou@aol.com if you are interested.

We're going online



Alpha Update



As we can no longer gather in person, we are taking our course online! Join us as we continue to explore the big questions of life together

Wednesdays 7pm till 9pm starting 22nd July

Contact Rev'd Geraldine for an invite at gezzalou@aol.com

Unity not Uniformity

Another change as we emerge from lockdown! The doors of some of our churches are open, maybe not wide open, but at least a bit for part of the day but only for 'private prayer', church services are on the horizon but will have to be in a different format for a while. We have become a different church community in the past 3 months, communication via telephone, or e mail, sermons and reflections on-line, services on YouTube, and a cluster on Facebook. Any change is unsettling especially when it is not of our own choosing, but it brings opportunities as well as threats, this change was forced upon us by the dreaded virus and our response has been interesting. To me, one of the positive outcomes of the past months is our coming together as a cluster, from our different styles of worship and church communities, we have had to come to a communal online service each Sunday. We have laid aside our 'differences' and worshipped as one.

Over the next few weeks/months we will be able to do things differently. It would be a great shame if that meant going our separate ways. In the early church unity was a problem. Paul wrote about it in his letters, especially to Corinth and Ephesus. He outlined the ways to combat divisions. 'I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.' Ephesians 4.

Unity does not mean uniformity. And humility is a word which has lost a lot of its meaning in modern times, it shares its root with humus, earth, it means being well earthed, grounded, to be rooted in our common faith in one Lord.

So, let's hang on to this passage in the weeks ahead as we may well be worshipping in our churches, maybe in a different way to the one we expect or are used to. Let us focus on what unites us and not that which divides us. Humility, gentleness, patience, love all in the power of the unity of the Spirit.

David Elliott

Private Prayer in Church Buildings

Our church buildings are now able to open for individual private prayer.

St Endellion, St Enodoc (Trebetherick) and St Michael (Porthilly) are all open during the day every day.

St Kew will be open Thursday-Sunday during the day.

St Minver will be open by appointment - please contact Revd Elizabeth.

St Peter's, Port Isaac, remains closed due to construction work.



When visiting, please take great care to cleanse your hands regularly and keep a 2 metre distance at all times. We ask you to follow all the guidance on display in the buildings and please do not visit any of our churches if you have cold or 'flu symptoms.



LET'S GET TOGETHER!

ST ENDELLION CHURCH FAMILY ZOOM
WED 1 & 15 JULY

ST MINVER CHURCH FAMILY ZOOM
MON 6 & 20 JULY

ST KEW CHURCH FAMILY ZOOM
WED 8 & 22 JULY

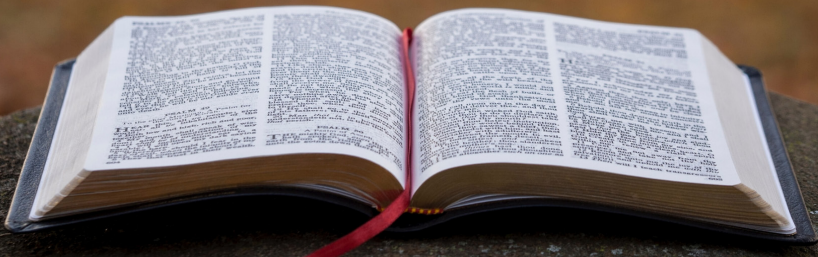
ST PETER'S CHURCH FAMILY ZOOM
MON 29 JUNE & 13 JULY

EVERYONE WELCOME. STARTS AT 7PM.

**FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT GERALDINE:
GEZZALOU@AOL.COM | 07957 609085**

ONLINE SERVICES

www.northcornwallclusterofchurches.org.uk



Holy Habits, then and now

We are now halfway through our programme of Holy habits but before we continue into the second half in September the summer months will be a time to reflect upon our story thus far. The lock down has severely disrupted our lives, taken away much of what we cherished and as measures are eased we are returning to anxiety, insecurity and unfamiliarity. If you are feeling that Holy Habits can go where the “sun don’t shine” that is perfectly understandable, I imagine most of us have felt that way at some point recently.

“Apocalypse” is a Greek word that means revelation, which is say, an unveiling or unfolding of things not previously known. The protests of the BLM movement can be quite alarming but its’ gift is the unveiling of the prevalence of racism in society and calls us to respond positively. Lock down too has been a great gift to us, not just in protecting ourselves and the most vulnerable from a deadly disease, but also by stripping life down to the bare essentials we have had the opportunity to discover what truly sustains us through life and to build a new life upon it. As we revisit the Holy Habits, where is the revelation and invitation to you?

Eating Together.

We began with “eating together” as our holy habit. I remember with fondness the shared meal we had to welcome our then new curates. Harvest time gave great opportunity to eat with others we wouldn’t normally eat with and people invited each other into their own homes for meals. Eating together is a way of creating and strengthening community. Done well, we become mindful of other people’s dietary requirements, democratising the table we eat as equals one and all.

Social distancing put an end to eating together even with our families from another household. Slowly households are able to form bubbles and may carefully eat together, but not everyone has been able to be included in such bubbles and the pain of separation continues. Not being able to eat with others reveals to us just how important it is. No one can say at this point when as a cluster we can share a social meal together again but I’m really looking forward to.

While we can’t eat together, lock down saw a flurry of initiatives to create and sustain community. Children put rainbows on their windows, we clapped for the NHS. Pubs distributed meals to our older members, community support groups we created to shop for those who couldn’t get out and within our cluster people are regularly contacted by phone, social media, Zoom groups and our You Tube channel all have helped to maintain a coherent sense of community and even enabled new people to become part of our community.

Eating together as a holy habit continues to challenge us to ensure that we are a part of a community and that we always include others in our community with as much joy and as democratically as if we were eating with them this day even though we have social distancing safeguards to adhere to.

Gladness and generosity.

Gladness and generosity became our Holy Habit on the run up to Christmas. Advent is such a busy time what with so much to prepare for and with the extra services and congregations swelling in numbers but underneath it all is the gladness and generosity of a small baby boy. We too were invited to share in the gladness of the shepherds and the generosity of the Wiseman.

Finding Gladness and generosity are not just for the happy times though. It is something that can run deep in us and be found in our memorial services and I think is fare to say was found by everyone who attended the Blue Christmas service.



We have already seen a gift of Lock down has been a generosity to help those who are most affected by it. For many busy people the lock down has brought much needed rest and gladness with it. For most of us, if not all of us, our gladness levels will have taken a big hit at some point or other over the past few months. For some of us our gladness has taken a while to recover and some of us may still be waiting for it to rise again. We need to be generous towards

ourselves and towards others for low moods; it is going to be a part of the landscape for some time to come and is a normal reaction when things are no longer normal.

Finding our gladness and our generosity as a Holy Habit calls for us to something more than just waiting for those things we once enjoyed returning to us. As a habit it requires us to search deeply for God within us and within the unusual or the unfamiliar. The Examen prayer can help us with this as it teaches us to be mindful of when in the day we've felt close to God, and when in the day we've felt far from God and conclude by giving thanks for both the times of feeling close to and of feeling far from God.

Gladness and generosity will continue to be a great challenge to us all through the coming months which is why we should give it special attention in our prayers and in our giving.

In August we will review the Holy habits of Worship, serving and prayer.

Marcus Jones

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Next issue

The deadline for text and or pictures* for the July issue is:

15th July 2020

* Please note that permission is required for people in photographs and written parental consent for children.



North Cornwall Cluster of Churches
www.northcornwallclusterofchurches.org.uk

Need support?

If you need a listening ear, spiritual guidance, or someone to pray with you, get in touch with Revd Elizabeth

07758 407661 

elizabeth-wild@live.co.uk 

Worship online

Join us for weekly online worship services.

You can find these on our website and YouTube channel

Connect with us

Join our Facebook group to get to know us and enjoy community. This is our online space where we share news, ask for prayer, and spend time together

Giving

Your support enables the ministry of our churches to continue. Without it, we could not continue to reach out to our community or keep these ancient buildings open and alive with worship and welcome. If you'd like to donate, follow this QR code or head to www.northcornwallclusterofchurches.org/giving

