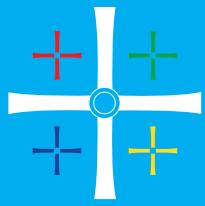


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THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

JULY 2020



JULY

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10am Sat

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Zoom—see page 6 or email
cathrynbaker@gmail.com

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zoom.us/j/82828352446
Zoom Meeting ID: 828 2835 2446

**1st—22nd July “What is the Spirit
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from local church leaders
29th July Hour of Prayer
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Thursday mornings until 16th July

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**LightHouse—stories, songs, fun and
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We can also announce that we are opening two of our churches for personal prayer as follows :
From 1st July Caistor church will normally be open from 10-6 on Wednesdays and 12-6 on Sundays, and Stoke Church from 11am-12.30 on Saturdays. There is a lot more than this going on, and things keep changing at the moment for us as well as everyone else, so please keep checking our website, Facebook, and Youtube.

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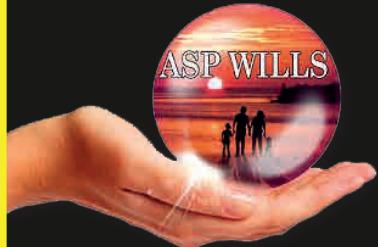
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As I write we are in the midst of making plans to open some of the church buildings for people to pray from the beginning of July. There are pages and pages of advice from the Church of England, the government, and all the questions we all have locally about what to do to give people the opportunity to drop in and pray and maybe chat with someone about where God is in all of this. And all the time the news is changing and the advice is changing. It makes everything such a complicated business.

Over the last few months while I have found so much of what is going on really complicated, I have tried to remember three things that I noticed from one of our Easter readings, and which I have been mentioning at most of our online services since. (Do check out elsewhere in this magazine how you can join us on Zoom or Facebook, or give me a ring if you would like to dial in on the phone.)

Uncertain about the reality of the Resurrection (ring any bells for any of you?) Jesus's friends gather in fear of what might happen to them. The religious authorities had arrested Jesus and crucified him; maybe would they come for his friends as well. Twice it says they locked the doors, presumably both times out of fear, though this is only mentioned clearly once.

Fast forward a few weeks, and the disciples again gather in an upper room, anticipating the fulfilment of Jesus's promise: the gift of the Holy Spirit. At that point it describes how they are "constantly in prayer." It has interested me that the disciples seemed to remember to pray here, where before they only resorted to being afraid. In some ways their circumstances hadn't changed, but their mindset had and this was part of the beginning of the Pentecost story. They remembered to pray.

Secondly, there is a need to recognise that Jesus is with us. Twice the disciples lock themselves in a room. Twice Jesus appears to the disciples. To you and me, of course, the idea of someone appearing in a room when they are locked out of it is the stuff of miracles, or at least magic tricks, but for Jesus who was locked in death but broke out of it, locked in a tomb but escaped from it, this is pretty standard stuff! It really does emphasise Jesus's overwhelming desire to be with his disciples, and that they would recognise that he is with them.

Then comes a twist in the story. It was surely unsettling for the disciples to realise that now that they had Jesus back, he was seeming to talk about going away again. But Jesus has a plan, and instructs them in John's gospel to "receive the Holy Spirit." And everything that they do from that point on is empowered by the Spirit of Jesus, who assures the disciples that he is with them always.

So I have been remembering to pray, both myself and in meeting more often with others from our churches, finding a place to bring my anxiety about the future (by which I mean anything that is going to happen from a point about 30 seconds after I stop praying) and to put my trust in God. I have been recognising that Jesus is with me; if he can rise from the dead, if he can break free from the tomb, if he can get through locked doors, then nothing need be a barrier to him getting to me. Everything that might separate me from him, including the things that I have done, has been put aside at the cross.

And I have been receiving from the Holy Spirit. This morning as we prayed we remembered how at the very end of the bible it says, "Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life." It's not any more complicated than telling God you are thirsty.

Three simple principles that bring us to a place of grace, and faith, and rest. I really recommend them to you.

Rob

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FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERAL

DOROTHY SPRUCE

Monday 29th June

AT ST FAITH'S CREMATORIUM

EILEEN CUSHING

Tuesday 30th June

AT ST FAITH'S CREMATORIUM

We continue to pray for all those who have lost loved ones recently, or are remembering someone particularly at this time of year.

We are always happy to record the names of anyone from the villages whose funeral has been held recently, even if it wasn't taken by a member of our ministry team.

NEXT EDITION

Items for the next month's magazine please send by email to Henry and Eostre Caswell by email to ventafree4all@outlook.com

By 10th of this month please.

The 10th of the month will be the deadline for all copy for the next magazine for the time being.

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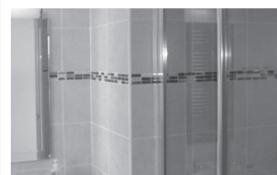
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TEARFUND'S response to the Coronavirus and what we can do.

Coronavirus has changed the world – it's changed all of us. But what it hasn't changed is our faith in God and our calling to live as Jesus commands us. We continue to love our neighbours, pray and take action, both in our local communities and across the world. We go to where the need is greatest, as Jesus would do.

In some of the poorest countries life is already difficult. Many people are already struggling to get food and clean water, earn a daily wage and are at risk from sexual and gender-based violence. The impact of coronavirus and the lockdowns used to limit its spread are compounding the huge challenges people already face.

If we act quickly we can help reduce the spread of coronavirus and minimise the potential it has to destroy lives and livelihoods in the poorest countries.

How is Tearfund responding to the coronavirus pandemic?

For more than fifty years we've been responding to disasters, and we've learned lessons which are helping us respond now. Tearfund is responding to the coronavirus through our network of local church partners around the world. Together we are:

- Constructing taps and water tanks, and distributing essential hygiene kits.
- Delivering emergency aid to the most vulnerable people and their communities, so people who are unable to work to earn money for food don't go hungry.
- Helping to promote the right messages to prevent the spread of the virus (particularly around good hygiene and sanitation).
- Helping our partners to correct any lies and misinformation about the disease which can undermine efforts to control coronavirus and make people more vulnerable.
- Adapting our existing projects, such as feeding centres and emergency cash assistance programmes, using our existing networks and expertise to provide rapid assistance to those in greatest need.
- Encouraging people to pray for an end to the outbreak. We pray with faith to our God 'who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.' (Ephesians 3:20)

We are also in close contact with other humanitarian organisations to ensure we are drawing on the experience of the wider community.

What is happening to the work Tearfund was doing before coronavirus?

We work in some of the world's most challenging countries, such as Yemen and South Sudan, and are well versed in adapting our operations to serve and protect those most in need. We remain committed to going where the need is greatest, working with the local church and serving the most vulnerable people and their communities.

We are also reviewing how and where the pandemic will have the greatest impact in the countries where we work, tracking the science and listening to what local governments and partners are advising us. With this information, we are developing water, sanitation and hygiene programmes and livelihood activities to support the communities that we anticipate to be most affected.

What about the safety of Tearfund staff and partner organisations across the world?

The safety, health and well-being of staff, volunteers and the people we serve is Tearfund's main priority. We are monitoring the pandemic closely, and following the advice of the UK government, World Health Organization, Public Health England, and national governments in countries where we work.

We have issued guidance to our staff on how to manage the risks of living, working and travelling during the pandemic, whilst continuing with our programmes.

How can I best support Tearfund's work today?

Since the start of the outbreak we've faced some difficult decisions, including postponing or cancelling events and opportunities to share stories of Tearfund's work publicly. We are concerned about what happens if we receive fewer donations, and what effect this would have on people living in poverty.

We are doing all we can to make sure we can continue to follow Jesus where the need is greatest, bringing practical help and powerful hope to the most vulnerable people, *just as we have been doing for over fifty years*. This is only possible thanks to the prayers and gifts of people like you.

Your gifts will go towards vital prevention measures in the vulnerable communities we support, including essential hygiene and sanitation work, delivering emergency aid and food supplies as well helping our partners spread crucial prevention messaging.

Please give today to support our work during the coronavirus pandemic.

And alongside this we also have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reboot society and the economy in a fairer, more sustainable way. The church has a key role to play in living differently and calling for change. Find out more at www.tearfund.org/reboot



The Lord's Prayer: Maori

This version of the Lord's Prayer, which is included in the New Zealand Book of Prayer, was recently used at our Zoom morning prayer meeting. We hope you enjoy reading and praying it.

Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven.
The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe;
The way of your justice be followed by
the peoples of the world;
Your heavenly will be done by all
created beings;
Your commonwealth of peace
and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today,
feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another,
forgive us.
In times of temptation and test,
strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power
that is love, now and forever.
Amen

Native American Lord's Prayer

A different version of the Lord's Prayer from our usual one. Sometimes reading a different version helps us to think more about the words and what they mean to us.

O Great Spirit.
You are our Shepherd Chief in the most high place.
Whose home is everywhere, even beyond the stars and moon.
Whatever You want done, let it also be done everywhere.
Give us Your gift of bread day by day.
Forgive us our wrongs as we forgive those who wrong us.
Take us away from wrong doings.
Free us from all evil.
For everything belongs to You.
Let your power and glory shine forever.
Amen

It's been a while

It's been a while since I was in the office
It's been a while since I was in the cathedral
It's been a while since I saw Bishop Graham
It's been a while since I was ordained

It's been a while since I've seen Jo
It's been a while since I went to Ditchingham
It's been a while since I saw Darren
It's been a while since I saw Judith

It's been a long journey.
I've been to lots of different places.
I've met lots of different people.
Yet you have been with me always.



Our lives have all been affected recently and for some of you it's been a while since you've been to particular places or seen people who influence your life. On 12 May 2020 I reached a milestone, that's taken more than 7 years to reach. I had a Zoom meeting on 12th May, with Bishop Alan of Thetford.

I felt God calling me to become a priest many years ago. However, the call had to be discussed and considered by others – that's where Darren and Judith came in, from the wider Diocese. Before eventually in 2014 I started 3 years of ordination training with Jo at Ditchingham. In 2017 I was ordained in Norwich Cathedral as a Deacon (by Bishop Graham) and thus began my curacy – or probation if you like. On 12th May 2020 my curacy was signed off, in some ways it feels like I've passed probation, even though I've been "doing" the job for three years, it was a milestone. For the rest of my cohort of curates this signing off means they can apply to have their own parish. But not me.

Right from the beginning of this journey I felt God was calling me to carry on working part-time at UEA and to be in these villages and God hasn't told me yet that I should take another road. So as I know God has been with me thus far, I rely on him keeping me here but maybe just introducing me to different people in this place. Currently I am not in the office but my colleagues there have been on the journey with me and I look forward to being with them once again but it may be a little while.

If it's been a while since we met, I'd like to see you in our church Zoom meetings or hear from you about your long journeys and whether you have experienced God with you and sustaining you on those journeys.

Lyn lyn@venta-group.org

C.S.Lewis, a Christian writer, who wrote "The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe" wrote this in 1942 during the last war.

It's a conversation between good and evil and is so amazingly relevant for today.

Satan:- "I will cause anxiety, fear and panic. I will shut down businesses, schools, places of worship and sports' events. I will cause economic turmoil.

Jesus:- "I will bring together neighbours, restore the family unit. I will bring dinner back to the kitchen table. I will help people slow down their lives and appreciate what really matters.

I will teach my children to trust me and not their money and material resources.

News from Viv's Home Nursery Plant Sales

We haven't been able to have our usual plant sale and coffee morning this year or thereby to share our garden with you, so it's an especially big thank you to all those of you who have visited the plant stall outside No 51.

So far we have sent £270.00 to the church treasurer for the Church Buildings' fund.



The photos show the wide selection of plants still for sale so do come along and have a look by the gate and in the front garden, with the usual Covid care precautions please.

We are delighted to have also been able to send a portion of the sales plus some donations to the Royal Free, the hospital in London where our son Mark works in the Intensive Care Unit. The £200.00 will go towards providing accommodation for families with a loved ones in Intensive Care.



Mark was to have taken part in a 100 mile sponsored cycle ride around London in August, but it is not yet clear if this can go ahead. The project pre-dates the Corona Virus outbreak, of course, since when visiting families and friends has been so much more difficult.

Stoke Holy Cross Tuesday Group

It's been such an odd year so far – but in the unprecedented circumstances, we have had the most beautiful Spring weather that any of us can remember. We had time to tidy our gardens, watch the birds as they brought twigs, grass and all manner of bits and pieces to make their nests, seen their fledglings take their first flight, and marvelled at the sheer prodigality of Spring. But there have been regrets too, not being able to see loved ones, not being able to go down to the sea, or have a meal with friends. As lockdown begins to ease, the Chairman and Committee of the Tuesday Group send their best wishes to their members, and everyone in Stoke, with all of us looking forward to the time when it will be possible to greet a friend with a hug....

We have grieved at the things we have missed – our supper which was due to take place in April, and May's meeting, when we were going to have a speaker from 'Hearing Dogs for the Deaf', the Group's charity for 2020. It was when I saw this latter item written in my diary, that the appalling thought occurred to me that we were not in a position to collect any funds to support the charity, and to remember with gratitude the astonishing £1000 that we presented to the East Anglian Air Ambulance last year. No suppers, lunches, barbecue or coffee morning. All charities are suffering terribly in the current situation, and I found myself wondering what I could do to help, in however small a way. You see, I love dogs, and to have faced lockdown without our two cheerful canines to walk the fields alongside me, one either side, like a fighter escort, would have been bleak indeed. Finally I decided that they must now help me, because this charity is special.

I am fortunate that from my home in Brooke I can take them straight out over the fields and footpaths, down to the river, the young Chet, which rises in the pits at Poringland. We meet a few people, some of them dog-walkers, we chat and the dogs share the contents of the yellow packets which mysteriously appear from my pocket....If we sponsored ourselves, I reasoned, five pence for every walker we met, five pence for a dog, an extra five pence if they had a paddle down by the river, and so on, we would hopefully gain a little fund that could, in due time, be paid into the Group's bank in support of Hearing Dogs. Doing a few complex maths, I worked out that I'd probably get around the same sum as the suppers etc. would have cost, and it would have been fun. It's a start. If anyone reading this wants to do a similar thing, that would be good. (It's up to you how you do it. It doesn't have to be a dog. Cat catches mouse. 10p....) I forgot to mention that if we see a collie, that's ten pence anyway. Because they're special. We've been collecting for four days, and Jakke, Vyrnwy(*) and I have £1 45p. *Collie of Welsh lineage: she's named after a Welsh lake. Pronounced Verny in Anglicised speech.

So there it is. For those who remember the Boy John letters in the EDP, the post-script must come from Aunt Agatha. PS. Aunt Agatha she say, 'Thass bin a funny oul year so far. We shall just hev to keep a dewin'. Fare yew well, together.



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C	C	E	R	N	R	I	P	A	I	E	R	I	E	M
G	D	A	O	I	O	O	R	O	A	N	T	N	G	O
L	V	C	R	N	S	P	W	C	P	Y	G	G	W	D
O	E	R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S	N	E	S	S
R	X	S	S	E	N	E	V	I	G	R	O	F	W	I
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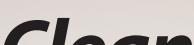
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