

# Glastonbury Together in prayer

A news sheet for members of Glastonbury churches during the crisis caused by Covid 19



## Recognising the Lord

The stories that follow the resurrection tell of how the disciples did not immediately recognise Jesus, perhaps not surprising as they did not expect to see Him. But where do you recognise Jesus? In Genesis we are told that mankind was made in the image of God so should we not see something of Jesus in everyone? Sometimes it would be hard to see the image of God in those people who do not seem, to us, to follow God's law. At a time of crisis, however, we see the best come out in many more people who are trying to help in one way or another. What can you do to share the Lord's love at this time when you cannot go out and meet people? Of course you can pray with the whole Christian community but you can do more in our modern age than you could have achieved in past times. We may be physically separate but there are many modern ways to communicate so please keep in touch—especially with anyone you know who lives alone and for whom the need to social distance will be hardest—give them a call.

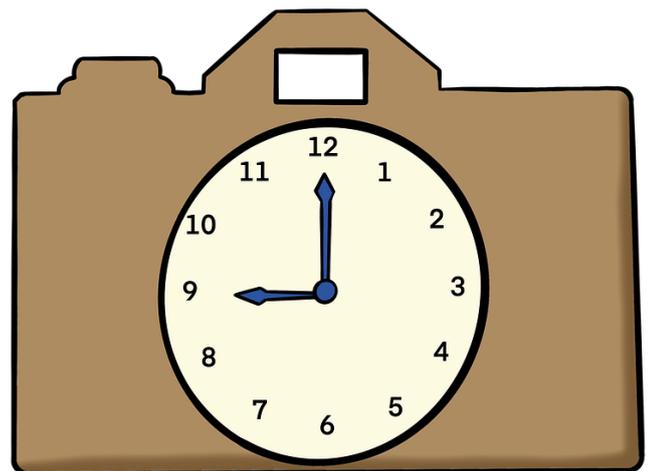
## Will it arrive?

At the time of writing the incidence of the Covid virus in Somerset is amongst the lowest in the country. There are some who believe that we will see the outbreak reach our area in the next few weeks, we should hope that they are wrong and that through prayer and observing the Government restrictions we can remain largely virus free.

Maintaining our observance of the restrictions remains important for us especially because of the current low incidence. If we relax our vigilance we could see a rapid spread amongst a population with no resistance. Do not become complacent and think it will not happen here as that could well be the trigger that brings the virus to your own doorstep.

## Silence a minute at a time

We are used to having a minute's silence for Remembrance of those we have lost at various times and now there is a call for such Remembrance of NHS staff who have been lost through the Covid crisis. This is referred to as a "Minute's Silence" but did you know that there is a movement for a "Silent Minute" that has a link directly to Glastonbury. The Silent Minute movement, which persists today as a small London based charity, calls for a minute's silence at 9pm every day. It was started during world war 2 as an "inner request from a higher spiritual source" to turn the tide of war and was supported by the King and Government at the time. The Silent Minute was an idea conceived and promulgated by Major Wellesley Tudor-Pole who was later to be instrumental in the restoration of the Chalice Well in Glastonbury. After the war the concept was largely forgotten but some people continued to observe the silence saying that there was always a war somewhere on our planet. Now we are fighting an invisible enemy in the form of the virus named covid 19. Perhaps the concept of uniting in Prayer and Meditation as a regular event is as relevant today as it was during the major conflict that spawned the movement.



# Ancient and Modern

## How different are things today?

In the early church whilst the faithful met in the Temple they also met in their own homes for the breaking of bread. Later during various periods of persecutions they also met in homes away from the gaze of those who would do them harm. Now we are forced to worship at home to protect us not from the harm of man but the harm that might come from interacting with man, to avoid spreading an invisible enemy between each other. There are differences today, however, because we have developed the means to communicate at a distance and to bring the presence of others into our own homes. Now we have the chance to sample many of the experiences of the past without losing our modern perspective. We can worship in our homes but share the homes of others through the modern media. Cameras extend our eyesight to places we cannot see unaided and microphones extend our hearing beyond our locality. By the sense of touch we are limited to those we live with but we can still join with the whole of God's Church through the power of prayer.

## A testing of our Faith

The different lectionaries use readings for the second and third Sundays of Easter taken from the 1st letter of St Peter. In the reading for the second Sunday of Easter (1 Peter 1:9) we are told of a great hope stored up for us in heaven and how our Faith will bring us through. Our faith will be tested, as gold is tested by fire, and through those trials will be worth more. We are certainly living in testing times, our faith will bring us through and make us stronger on the other side. Our faith in Jesus makes us glad and happy more than words can tell, that is why we rejoice in the Lord.

On the third Sunday of Easter we move further into Peter's words (1 Peter 1:17-21) and learn that we are judged by what we do. For this reason we must honour God whilst we live our lives on this earth. But we have been rescued by the precious blood of Christ, more precious than any silver or gold that does not last forever, that spotless and innocent lamb. Christ was chosen to come into the world even before the world began. He came to lead us to have faith in God who raised him from death. This is the reason why we have put our faith and hope in God.

## Support your Church - Support your ministers

In these difficult times please remember your Church community and give them your support in whatever ways you can. If you normally support your Church by giving cash to the collection at services please consider setting up a standing order or bank transfer at this time. Your Church will give you the details you need, If you already give by standing order can you increase the amount you give? With our support and our prayers we will all come out of the current crisis stronger than before. There are those in society who think, because we have big buildings, Churches are well off, nothing could be further from the truth and our financial and prayer support are needed as much as ever.

## Christ be our Light

At Easter we welcome Christ into our lives as the light of the world and we celebrate that Easter joy with light by using candles. We also have hymns that are mainly used at Easter one of which is "Christ be our Light" by Bernadette Farrell. Whilst the hymn starts by seeking the light of Christ as we do every Easter it also brings out some of the issues we see around us but which are brought into greater focus this year in particular by our current circumstances.

The second verse talks of a world with troubles and of people in despair but with the word of God having the power to save us and an entreaty to make us God's living voice.

We then hear of the hungry and thirsty, homeless and cold. Groups that have been highlighted by the crisis. To solve these issues the hymn first asks that we are made "Your bread broken for others, shared until all are fed". We then ask to be made "Your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone".

The last verse ties everything together as we are reminded of the many gifts we have and asks "let us be servants to one another making Your kingdom come".

As the hymn asks, we can work together to help others, solving the issues raised by the virus. In this way Christ can be a light shining in our hearts, a light to shine out through the darkness to help us to find a new way.

## Churches together in Glastonbury AGM

The Annual General meeting of Churches Together in Glastonbury was due to be held at the end of April but cannot take place due to the current situation. In 2018 we elected our officers for a three year term so elections are not due until next year. If possible an Autumn forum will still be held with the usual reports on the work in our town. The officers remain Sue Thurgood, Moderator — Michael Cobb Secretary — Kim Woolmer Treasurer.