

The Parish of Christchurch



The Priory Church of the Holy Trinity, Christchurch
St George, Jumpers • St John at Purewell

Associate Priest: The Reverend Richard Partridge, The Paddocks, Holly Lane, Walkford, Dorset, BH23 5QQ
T 07903 252230 E richardpartridge310@btinternet.com

Sunday 12th July 2020

Dear Friends

During the last four months it has been a great joy to see so many of you at Zoom Services, Zoom Coffee mornings and in most cases, at Zoom meetings as well. But Zoom has its limitations and my real and lasting joy has come from seeing so many of you face to face once again in the Priory, or whilst visiting or shopping in Christchurch. As the lockdown restrictions continue to ease, the opportunities to share quality time with each other will return, and we are all surely look forward to that. But in the pastoral letter this week I want to make a single point and one that is aimed specifically at those who are not ready to return yet and that is this, **there is absolutely no hurry.**

As a result of the restrictions placed upon us all during the last four months, most of us will have changed. Perhaps you are feeling anxious about travelling and being inside an enclosed space with other people. You might still be in the shielding category, or following advice from medical professionals or family members, you may have decided to remain at home for the time being. Some of you will have had very limited contact with other people during this time and seen other people face to face even less, and this may have affected your confidence. There will be some who have started to lose their faith and are questioning whether a return to Church is the right thing for you. Whatever your circumstance and whatever your reservations I simply say again, there is no hurry. When the time is right for you, we will be here and ready to welcome you back. That having been said, if you are feeling vulnerable, alone, isolated and afraid, please do make contact with either Charles, Jonathan or myself and we would be very happy to speak with you on the phone or we can arrange to visit you in your garden or outside in a public place.

When you do return you will notice many changes within the Priory itself and when we are in a position to open our other Churches, you will see similar changes there as well. The safety and protection has been our number one concern and priority during our recent planning meetings. Hopefully we have arrived in a place where the risk management processes have resulted in the safest possible environment to hold public Worship in. It will be vital that each and every one of us follow the new procedures put in place, even if we can't immediately see the reason behind them.

So to follow up on Canon Charles' very comprehensive and helpful letter last week, let me now tell you where we currently are.

Said Evening Prayer is now being held each day of the week at 5pm in the Great Quire.

We have held our first Wednesday Eucharist at 11.00am. This for the time being is a said Service and will be held in the Lady Chapel unless more than 20 people attend. In those circumstances we will move the Service to the Nave.

Morning Prayer will remain online on Zoom for the coming weeks.

The first Sunday Service following lockdown will be on Sunday 19th July at 10.00am. **Please note the new time for this Service** until a full return to all Sunday Services is possible. The Vicar will Preside at that Service. There will be no choir or Servers, no bells being rung to welcome us, but we will be able to Worship together and receive the Sacrament, and we will have organ music even though we will not be able to sing hymns. If you intend to come to that Service, please do arrive in good time. For those of you who are not ready to return to Church at this time, every effort is being made to record this act of Worship and then for it to be available on the parish website later that same day.

In addition to our life of prayer and Worship together, the Priory shop and café are both open now between 11am and 4pm. The Priory is open for visitors to look around and also for private prayer between 10am and 4pm. Life is beginning to return to something that resembles normality.

We are extremely grateful to our many volunteers who have made it possible for the Church to re-open in the current setting. We are now looking to create a new team of volunteer cleaners to assist our hard working vergers, Paul and Greg. Regularly cleaning the Priory, and especially so after Services, is a vital part of our Covid 19 Risk Assessment. Do speak to Paul or Greg if you would be willing to help in this vital task. Protective equipment will of course be available to you.

Our much appreciated Freewill Offering Officer Ian Nelemans has asked me to add the following. *"The letter sent to donors through Standing Order and Yellow Envelopes contains the incorrect tax year. It states the tax year to which the donations apply is 2028-2019. This should read 2019-20. If you require a corrected version of the statement for your tax return, please contact Ian Nelemans at iannelemans@yahoo.co.uk or via the Priory Office and he will send you a replacement statement."*

It was with much sadness that we learned of the death of Ken Parkinson. Jenny has asked us to include the following words from her in this letter. *"Dear Friends, I would like to thank you all for your prayers, cards and kind messages on the unexpected death of my wonderful husband Ken Parkinson. As many of you know he had been living with cancer for many years, but with every new outbreak he would cheerfully say 'I'll be tip-top' and he was. May God bless you.*

Jenny"

If you have not had the opportunity to respond to Canon Charles' request to consider making a "One off payment" to help cover the shortfall in our parish finances as a result of the lockdown, now would be the ideal time to do so, and I wholeheartedly support Charles' request. All donations, no matter how small or large would be very much valued and appreciated and will be used for the ongoing provision of the ministry and mission within our parish. If you decide to give by bank transfer, please pay whatever you have decided to give to the PCC of Christchurch General Account: sort code 52-21-34, account number 52427900; and in the space for the reference, please type ONE OFF ASK. If you are able to apply Gift Aid to your donation, please also send Ian Penny an email at prioryhouse@christchurchpriory.org . If you would prefer to give by cheque, please make it payable to PCC of Christchurch General Account: send your donation to: the Administrator, Priory House, Quay Road, Christchurch, BH23 1BX, again indicating whether Gift Aid may be applied.

Finally a date for your diary. Many of you will know that Father Jonathan has prepared seven candidates from our parish for Confirmation. The initial date proposed to hold this Service had to be cancelled as a result of the pandemic. Jonathan has advised us that the Confirmation, to be conducted by the Bishop of Southampton, Bishop Debbie, will now take place during the 10.00 Eucharist on Sunday 2nd August. I am sure Jonathan will write more about this next week.

With my love, prayers and very best wishes to you all.

Richard.

Reverend Richard Partridge