

Funerals. None.

An update on Christian Aid from Malcolm and Sally Jones. Many thanks to all who have contributed to our local Christian Aid collection this year. We have reached £280 of our £500 total, which was set at 25% of our normal house to house collection level. The world's poorest countries have the weakest health systems, and many of the most vulnerable people are now being exposed to the deadly Covid-19 virus. They'll struggle to get the healthcare they need, and with the added cost of not earning a living under lockdown or quarantine. Christian Aid partners are already embedded in these communities, working to limit the impact of Covid-19. If you would like to donate, please go to:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/OlneyChristianAidGroup

An update on Teresia Ahn

Many of us have been following the progress of Teresia and praying for her as she battles with the Covid-19 virus. After coming off the ventilator last week and having a brief video call with her family we can now let you know that she is out of intensive care. This is wonderful news, and according to the doctors, 'miraculous' progress. Please continue to pray for Teresia and her family as she continues in her recovery. And finally, Jeff wrote "I don't BELIEVE this woman. She's been close to death, on two lifesaving machines, in an induced coma for two weeks, what burning question has she got to ask me ? '...Did you get my car serviced?'" and now she is out of bed and walking.

For the younger members of the church. If you're trying to fill your days with home schooling and keeping the children busy then make sure you visit the church website (<http://olney.church>) and follow the links to the Coronavirus details page. Here you'll find a selection of links for Make and Pray activities, Bible themed colouring sheets, puzzles to keep little ones busy and a list of 100 general fun activities to try whilst in lockdown. Even better, many of them can be shared over video calls or the telephone so grandparents can share in the fun too. Why not give them a try and let us know what you think? Katie (office@olney.church)

Hymns from Richard

As we celebrated Ascension Day last Thursday here are two joyful hymns for us to enjoy. Visit the links below to hear the music, and sing-along too.

All Heaven Declares

All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord.
Who can compare with the beauty of the risen Lord?
For ever He will be the Lamb upon the throne.
I will gladly bow the knee and worship Him alone.

I will proclaim the glory of the risen Lord
Who once was slain to reconcile man to God.
For ever You will be the Lamb upon the throne.
I will gladly bow the knee and worship You alone.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmFVg-TaoqQ>

Lord, I lift Your name on high

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COQ6cni_TG8



Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Olney

Sunday 24th May 2020

Today 7th Sunday of Easter



Welcome and notices

Reading: Acts 1: 6-14

Gospel: John 17: 1-11

Wed 27th: Acts 20: 28-end
John 17: 11-19

Collect: Risen, ascended Lord, as we rejoice at your triumph, fill your Church on earth with power and compassion, that all who are estranged by sin may find forgiveness and know your peace, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen**

Intercessions: With thanks to Fenella for this prayer

Lord God, we thank you for our loved ones; for the families you have given us of all generations. We ask you to bless each and every one of them. Please would you help us during lockdown, to feel close to those we cannot see in person and cannot hold and also to really enjoy those we have more time with than we ever anticipated. Bless our marriages, especially when we are feeling stressed and tired. And be with those of us who are lonely and desperately missing friends and family. We pray for those who have lost, or who are worried about, family members. Please comfort them. Bless our children; we ask you to protect them physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually and help those of us who are parents to help them make sense of this season. We invite you, Lord, to work through us and in us, for your purposes and your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

We pray for the sick. Toby O'Grady, Kevin, Michael Seabrook, Ted, Cyril, Rene Tourle, Pat Major, Emily, Helen, Gail, Martin, Keith, Teresia, Hannah and those who are self-isolating.

We pray for the souls of the recently departed and their families. Dorothy Alder.

We remember and give thanks for those whose Yearsmind is now.

Eucharistic Prayer: A

Prayer: Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Listening Ear. Please email prayer@olney.church for prayers. Some material included is © The Archbishops' Council 2002



Contact details. Church Office 01234 241721 or by email at office@olney.church. The church website has links to the weekly prayer sessions, and to various support. These can be reached via <http://olney.church> or support@olney.church.

For help with shopping and small errands please contact the Olney Covid-19 group on 07309 464422.

Rector's letter

Congratulations to Andrew and Lisa Geary on becoming Mayor and Mayoress of Milton Keynes on the 20th. It will be a very special year for them and a quite unusual Mayoral year too. Do join with me in praying for them with all the extra demands that their new roles will place upon them. Let's pray for them and their family throughout the year. Speaking of prayer, it has been wonderful to get together to pray with others from the Church (via computers) on Saturday mornings. Do come and give praying with others a try if you haven't already done so. The Wednesday Morning Prayer is also going very well and all are welcome to be part of that group too (Saturday 10.30am and Wednesday 9.30am, both by computer/phone.)

On Wednesday our Psalm for the day was Psalm 148. It answers the question of who is loved by God and who can praise Him now on earth. The answer is kings, queens, princes, princesses, all the rulers of the earth, young men and women, old and young and all peoples. On Thursday our Gospel reminded us that Jesus rose from the dead, forgiveness of sins is God's will for everyone and that God sends His Holy Spirit to enable believers to tell these truths to others who do not yet know them. May God help us to praise Him this week and help others to know they are loved and dear to God too. Stay safe & God Bless. *Andrew +*

Reasons to be grateful. At a recent on line service, they sang a poignant favourite of our church, 10000 Reasons <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtwlT8JjddM>. I found myself singing at the top of my voice with Matt Redman... "Bless the Lord oh my soul, Oh my soul .Worship His Holy name. Sing like never before, Oh my soul. I'll worship Your Holy name. The sun comes up, It's a new day dawning, It's time to sing Your song again. Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me; Let me be singing When the evening comes..." I found it uplifting as well as reflective. Give it a try... This week I have been communicating with the parents, grandparents and young people of our Church Family on a theme of reasons to be grateful. Rebecca, Sarah, Ella and Will have been keeping a chat group going for the YAGs. Rebecca and Sarah, who are both working mothers with toddlers, are enjoying quality time with their husbands and youngsters at home, with no pressure to travel. Time at home has been a joy. Sarah, whose new baby is due imminently, says "in this challenging time it is so easy to think of all the things we are missing, our family, our friends, holidays, school, clubs etc. However, in Numbers 6:22-27, the Lord teaches Moses how to bless people. I have spent some quiet time thinking of just how many blessings I have, even in this tricky time. An amazing NHS service, with Midwives and Doctors happy to help in any and every way they can; technology which allows me to stay in touch with so many friends and family; food and other delivery services which selflessly protect me from putting myself at risk; lovely neighbours and a special community feeling in the village, where people will go above and beyond to help others; but most importantly, the time with my gorgeous daughter and loving husband a family together and being able to make special memories, particularly as Chloe grows up so quickly. Perhaps we should take this time to stop and think, before we moan about all of the things we can't do, what an amazing world we do live in and how there are so

many things that God has blessed us with."

Rebecca has found that she now has some time to attend services at different virtual churches across the wider church. Both Rebecca and Fenella, who are in the Alpha group, have discovered that during lockdown, they can attend "HTB at home" each Sunday. Fenella says "Those who came to our Alpha course will recognise the vicar of Holy Trinity, Brompton, Nicky Gumble, as he leads the service from his home with wife Pippa. There are intercessory prayers, sermons, interviews, worship songs and a time to let God touch us through his Holy Spirit. Previously I would not have believed it possible to receive in this way through the medium of the internet. But thankfully God is so much bigger than these circumstances and, through Jesus Christ his son, is available to us whether we are in our kitchens, our gardens or our churches. Services from cathedrals, abbeys and churches all over the world are now being streamed every Sunday, so whatever your preferred style of worship, may I encourage you to Google and click on one this weekend." I think we have all found the joy in the online services from across the diocese and now with our own website (<http://olney.church>) and online services (<http://olney.church/zoom>) now firmly established we are well served... Our church administrator Katie has been enjoying home schooling, as it allows her to re-live her previous career as a teacher, although her seven year old is not yet appreciative of A-level Chemistry and Maths! She is also due a baby soon and whilst social distancing rules will make it difficult for family to meet the impending arrival, she is grateful for the technology that allows them to keep in touch and the caring NHS. Caroline has been grateful for the unexpected opportunity to spend time with her sons, two of whom were away at university. Caroline says "Having my family safely together for an extended period is a wonderful blessing. It is rare nowadays to all be together and especially for a long time. We are very lucky to enjoy this time and be well right now and are praying for those who are unable to be with family and those facing ill health. We are extremely lucky to have a lovely garden which I spend much time in. Seeing the garden bursting into life this spring, during a spell of sunshine, has been most uplifting. This is particularly poignant when many can't get outside or enjoy open spaces. The boys are grateful to be able to enjoy exercising out on their bikes; for relaxation and for the technology to communicate with others and stay in touch. Richard and Nicole have one of their children back home too. Nicole writes "We are thankful that although our families are mostly living far away from us, with Daniel in Leeds and Alex in Ireland, we have been blessed to have Corrie at home, making a good recovery from glandular fever. We are thankful that we can meet with the whole family via Zoom, and although we should have had time with our granddaughter in person, we have been able to see her progress online, watching her crawl, get her first teeth and see her try and kiss us on the screen!" As a grandmother myself, I too appreciate the joy of online communication, discussing course work with my middle granddaughter, watching my youngest granddaughter's antics and the elation of hearing my 11 year old grandson Finley (who is very challenged by autism) reading for the very first time on Facebook Messenger. Giving thanks. God Bless, *Susan Bailey*