

# St Nicholas, Chislehurst

## Weekly News



11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Please remember the environment before you print this Newsletter. If you do print, it is best printed as a booklet.

The order of service will be emailed out and put on the website so that it can be printed at home or viewed in church on tablets or smart phones. For those without internet access a small number of orders of service will be printed out and left at the entrance, and then taken home by worshippers.

**Rev'd Harriet Johnson is leading us this week**

### CHURCH DIARY

<b>Sun 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>0930</b> – Parish Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer) in church and livestreamed: Rev. Harriet Johnson <b>1500 – 1700</b> Open for Private Prayer
<b>Mon 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>2000</b> – PCC Meeting via Zoom
<b>Wed 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>1200 – 1400</b> Open for Private Prayer
<b>Sat 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>1300</b> – Wedding Lucy Matthews and Stirling Bookallil
<b>Sun 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>0930</b> Parish Eucharist (Common Worship) in church and livestreamed: Rev'd June Hurn. <b>Sermon</b> – Lynton Karmock-Golds

**OUR BROADCASTS** These will all be on our Facebook video page:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/stnicholaschislehurst/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/stnicholaschislehurst/videos/?ref=page_internal)

Our Sunday morning service will have to be pre-booked. Worshippers can book their tickets by calling the church office between 0900 and 1300 Monday to Friday on **07547 798266**. You will then be given a seat number. Please understand that we may not be able to accommodate people who have not booked a place. If you get a voicemail message, when calling the above number, please leave your name and contact phone number and Selina will call you back to confirm your seat allocation.

**Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) should not attend the church due to the risk that they pose to others.**

**If you test positive for Covid-19 within 7 days of attending church, please let us know immediately.**

**WORSHIP AT ST NICHOLAS:** Face Coverings are now required at St Nicholas, as with all places of worship, unless you are "Mask Exempt". Please come prepared, but masks will be available in church if you have forgotten yours.



**In these difficult times those at extra risk and the 'clinically extremely vulnerable' should be aware of the risks of attending public worship.**



This will take place tomorrow, **12<sup>th</sup> September**. 50% of what our participants raise is returned to St Nicholas and the remaining 50% plus any gift aid, goes into a fund administered by the Friends of Kent

*Churches. All of this fund is distributed in grants to Kent churches. St Nicholas has previously benefited from these grants.*

**This is a great opportunity to raise funds for the work constantly needed to repair the fabric of the church.**

If you are a walker, cyclist or a horse rider and would like to take part please **contact me as soon as possible**. If you can't take part, please consider sponsoring me. (Last year Mark Currans and I raised over £1000). You can do so by going to:- [virginmoneygiving.com/PeterAPPLEBY3](http://virginmoneygiving.com/PeterAPPLEBY3)

For those of you who cannot or prefer not to use the internet, I shall be placing sponsorship forms in the South porch for you to complete with your own pens. Please remember to confirm your agreement to Gift-Aiding & to print your address, including the POST CODE, clearly.

Thank you in advance - **Peter Appleby. 0208 4679368; 07802 357539;**  
[pierreappleby@go-plus.net](mailto:pierreappleby@go-plus.net)



**CHURCHES TOGETHER** the Annual General Meeting of Churches Together in Chislehurst & Bickley will be held at 8pm on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September at Christ Church, Lubbock Rd, Chislehurst BR7 5JJ. The meeting is open to all but space limited. Those wishing to attend will need to contact [ctcbsec@gmail.com](mailto:ctcbsec@gmail.com) to book a place.

## **THE POVERTY AND HOPE APPEAL 2020**

The Bishop of Rochester launched the Poverty and Hope Appeal in July. He wrote *“Here in our Diocese our annual Poverty and Hope Appeal is one way that we seek to see God’s justice done in our world. I am always inspired by the generosity of people across our communities”*.

In this time of global pandemic, when it is tempting to focus exclusively on the needs of our local communities, we are anxious not to forget marginalised people and communities living in poverty across the globe. Their needs remain and, in many cases, have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Our projects work with the local Church, so our support is a huge encouragement to our brothers and sisters in Christ as they reach out to help their local communities.

This year the Appeal is continuing to support, in prayer and financially, projects in Burundi, Syria, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and, as always, Commonwork Trust in the UK.

- In Syria young people are being provided with education, psychological support and job training in construction and nursing.
- In Burundi the project is providing horticultural training, good seed, and access to land to support widows, young people and marginalised ethnic groups.
- Our project in Zimbabwe, including our Companion Diocese of Harare, helps the church work with people living with HIV and AIDS to reduce stigma and transform lives.



photo: Christian Aid

- In Sri Lanka, the Appeal supports Nevedita Jeevabalan’s work managing the child protection unit of LEADS, a community development organisation. She describes her mission as *“to show God’s love to children who have been through trauma and abuse.”*
- Here in Rochester Diocese Commonwork offers justice and global citizenship education to school children and also helps vulnerable young people fulfil their potential. If you are involved with a school do get in touch with Commonwork and see all that they can offer.

The Poverty and Hope Appeal is run by volunteers and over 95% of the money we raise goes to the projects. Each is overseen by one of our partner organisations, Christian Aid, USPG, CMS and Commonwork. They ensure the money is well spent and regularly report to the Poverty and Hope Committee, which is led by Bishop James.

You can find more information about all the projects on the Diocese website at [bit.ly/PovertyHope](https://bit.ly/PovertyHope) or you can contact [povertyandhope@gmail.com](mailto:povertyandhope@gmail.com). You can donate through your Church or, for details about how to give directly by card, bank transfer or cheque, please see the website or email [povertyandhope@gmail.com](mailto:povertyandhope@gmail.com).

This annual appeal is one way in which our diocese walks with our neighbours in different parts of the world. Another is through our Companion Diocese links with Estonia, Harare (Zimbabwe) and Kondo and Mpwapwa in Tanzania. Many parishes, schools and communities enjoy friendships with our Christian sisters and brothers in these places. For more details please contact Mike Fawcett (Companion Diocese coordinator, [coordinator.cdsg@gmail.com](mailto:coordinator.cdsg@gmail.com)).

**Debbie Cooper** (Poverty and Hope Appeal coordinator).

If you would prefer to give to Poverty and Hope via St. Nicholas Church, please send your cheque made payable to St Nicholas Church PCC and marked "Poverty and Hope" to the church office. If you can Gift Aid your donation, please do so.

We hope you will contribute with the same generosity you have done when we have handed out envelopes each year.

*giftaid it*

## **WE INCLUDE IN OUR PRAYERS:**

**All those in key jobs who are keeping us safe.**

**And:** Angela Anderson, Yvonne Auld, Isabelle Burman, Valerie Burn, Betty Court, Brigitte Davies, Carol Dixon, Eugenia Footman, Michelle Fribbens, Maureen Fricker, Joanna Friel, Gillian Harris, Elizabeth Heath, Max Lardner, Ken Lye, Eric Mountford, The Mouzouri family, Denise Payne, Judy Peebles, Maria Petrovan, Penny Pinto, Brenda Pocha, Ruth Radley, Peter Rawlins, Rachel Saxby, Lucy Shelford, Tim Shields, Joe Stashko, Pat Taylor, Joan Wells, Alistair Williams, Anne-Louise Whittaker. **Added this week:** Jeanne Pearce, Keith Gardner

**Those who have died:** Jean Adams, Jean Ellen Barker and Fr Charles Briggs.

If you know of anyone who should be receiving these emails but isn't getting them, please do let us know – or get them to contact us.

If you have anything for inclusion in our weekly newsletter, please send it to [stnickschislehurst@icloud.com](mailto:stnickschislehurst@icloud.com)

Gal 5: 16 – 24

Luke 17: 11-19

Sickness and healing. Very topical subjects in today's gospel reading. Of course, our attitudes to these subjects have changed a lot in two millennia. Leprosy – or any skin disease, for that matter (the Bible often uses leprosy as a generic term) – is no longer seen as a sign of God's disfavour or as a punishment. A skin covered in blemishes is not now taken as a sign of disgrace, nor is the opposite regarded as a sign of moral rectitude.

But the idea that sickness is visible is, sadly, still often with us. We forget that just because we can't see the symptoms of an illness, it doesn't mean that a person is completely well. And that has serious repercussions. Mental illnesses, which often do not have easily visible physical manifestations, are only now beginning to be taken as seriously as they deserve. And even in physical illnesses, as we have seen in recent months, some people can get the same illness as others, but without showing any of the visible symptoms. A study earlier this year of a town in Italy suggested that 40% of people testing positive for Covid showed no visible symptoms. They were not ill, according to our usual understanding of the term, but of course they could still pass the virus on to others.

If our understandings of illness have changed since Jesus' time and are changing now, our gospel reading today also challenges us to think about our understandings of returning to health. It uses three different words to show Jesus' power at work in these people.

The ten lepers plead for Jesus to have mercy on them. They have heard he can make people better. They might even have heard he can forgive sins. So, when he tells them to show themselves to the priests, they aren't surprised but immediately go off to do so. And as they went, they were cleansed, 'made clean'. I wonder what you understand by this. At the least it suggests that their physical symptoms, the blemishes and disfigurements of skin disease, were wiped away. The Greek word which the gospel-writer uses here can mean anything from general cleaning away dirt, to making (and declaring) something ritually clean, to freeing from the defilement of sin. However, we understand it, they hurried off to the priests to show themselves as blemish free, because this kind of healing needed external verification, needed someone 'in authority' to declare that it had happened. Once the priests had declared them 'clean' they would be able to rejoin their communities.

One of them understands what has happened in a deeper sense. He realizes that he has been healed. The writer uses a different verb. Its primary meaning is about physical healing or curing. It's linked with the Greek word for physician or doctor.

I wonder whether this is the only one of ten who realized something more had happened to him. Perhaps the rest were so focused on their physical symptoms, the disappearance of their blemishes, that they failed to realize that something else had changed, something deeper inside them was different. They were cured. Their illness, the thing that caused them to be different, was gone. In modern terms we might say they weren't just asymptomatic, they were healthy. But only one of them realizes that his cure is more than skin deep. Only he realizes that being declared

'clean' by a priest is only half the story – because he is completely whole again. He wouldn't have understood that his body had previously been attacked by a bacillus – but he recognizes that he is now different inside, not just on the surface. He is 'cured'. And so he returns to acknowledge it.

But then we get to a third word. When this man returns to give thanks, Jesus says to him 'Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole' (in the BCP) or 'your faith has made you well' (in other translations). Is Jesus saying this is the only man to be truly cured? Is he implying that because the others didn't come back to him, their health is somehow impaired? I don't think so.

Here Jesus uses a word which means 'safe and well', 'safe and sound', 'whole'. In fact, it's often a word associated with 'salvation'. If cleansing removes the physical symptoms, and curing removes the disease itself which is causing the symptoms, 'being well' in the sense that Jesus means it now is even more profound. This man has been restored to life in all its fullness, the kind of life that many people only dream of, the kind of life that filled the apostles at Pentecost when others thought they were drunk; that made the Samaritan woman at the well run home to tell others about Jesus; that turned Saul the persecutor and zealous Pharisee into Paul the apostle and great founder of churches.

There's another clue to the kind of life this man's faith has brought him into. When Jesus tells him to get up, he uses the word 'Anastas'. This doesn't just mean get up, like you would in the morning, or get up from your table after dinner. It isn't even the same 'get up' that he said to the paralysed man on the stretcher who had been lowered through the roof. Yes, it does mean those things, but it is also the word 'Rise' that is associated with Jesus' Resurrection and with rebirth into eternal life. Indeed, the Greek word for the Resurrection is 'Anastasis'.

Ten people have cried out to Jesus for help – and received it. But only one person has recognized the change in himself and has acknowledged Jesus' power working on and in him to cure him. He has given thanks and celebrated his wellness by returning to Jesus. This recognition and celebration of Jesus' grace – his faith – has enabled his own rebirth and new life.

Three kinds of 'getting better'.

We may not have visible symptoms. We may not at the moment be sick. But we are all in need of the final kind of wellness Jesus offers: the wholeness of life in all its fullness; the life in the Spirit which Paul describes in our epistle. And so as we pray for Christ to have mercy on us, let us also pray that we recognize his power at work in us and let us celebrate the grace that he gives us, so that we, too, might hear him say those words: 'Arise, your faith has made you whole'.

Amen