

Dear Friends,

Just 3 more days of Lent after today! Palm Sunday begins our Holy Week celebrations, as we begin the journey towards the Cross and the Resurrection. The last year has felt like one long Easter Saturday, confined in a small space and surrounded by death. But we know that through Jesus death is swallowed up in victory, the one who went through the agony of the cross is alive, and death has no hold over Him. From the wild celebrations of Palm Sunday, within 4 days Jesus is sweating blood in prayer in the garden, within another 4 days the disciples are scurrying around Jerusalem, scarcely able to believe what they're hearing from Mary, Peter, John, and the Emmaus travellers. Whatever our highs and lows, Jesus is there, with you, with all of us.

A full list of *Holy Week services* and times for prayer is attached - please let me know if you have trouble opening it! A few things to highlight

- For *Palm Sunday*, just as last year we're asking people to make their own Palm Sunday cross, and either email a picture to myself or Ruth, or post it on one of the church Facebook groups. If you can do this by Saturday, we'll show pictures of the crosses as part of Sundays service. Get creating!

- Our *Maundy Thursday* service will be a community litter pick. It would be very difficult to share in foot washing, or a full recollection of communion, and this is a good way to follow the example Jesus set at the first Last Supper. We'll be litter picking from 3 sites around the parish: Oak Tree Park (top of Abbey Manor, meet by the gate from Forde Park) at 11am, St Peters churchyard at 2pm, and St James churchyard at 4.30pm. Please wear strong footwear, thick gloves, and please bring a litter picker and hi-viz if you have it. We're borrowing some pickers and high-viz from Westfield Community Association for those who don't have them. Each litter pick will last 60-75 minutes

- On *Easter Sunday*, we are hoping the government will allow singing outdoors - it's currently banned! So, watch this space, and if in doubt, bring something noisy to shake or bang instead! You don't need to book to come to this service.

St James was open yesterday for the *National Day of Reflection*, and it was well used by people wanting somewhere to light a candle, pray and remember. A big thankyou to those who staffed it on the day, and to our Bellringers, who tolled the church bell 365 times after the minutes silence at noon. A local photographer came to watch us light all the remaining candles in the evening, and at time of writing his pictures have had nearly 600 positive reactions on Facebook. It's lovely to see how something very simple can touch people.

For those who would have wanted to attend *Chris Rusling's funeral*, a video of the full service, and a separate one of the committal and burial, are both available online. Click on <https://www.funeralstreamingservice.co.uk/christopher-hugh-rusling> and use the password Cirrus. Please keep Erica in your prayers, as well as Alan Reads family, and others in our church family who have been bereaved or are facing serious illness (Jan Quinn, Christine Davies, Barry and Elizabeth Julier)

St Peters Community Centre will be trialling a new *Community Pantry* in the next few months. We'll need a volunteer team to collect, sort and distribute food to local households in food poverty. If you're interested in helping, there's a Zoom meeting at 12 noon on Tues 30th March for 30mins. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87507802011> Meeting ID: 875 0780 2011 Passcode: Pantry. If you can't manage Zoom, please contact David directly and we'll contact you another way.

We'll send a separate email in the next couple of days for the*APCM (churchy name for AGM), * which is this Sunday at 2pm over Zoom/YouTube, with a full list of the Mission Partners who have been nominated, so we can pray over who to vote for. /*If you have nominations for mission partners, churchwardens at either church, or St James PCC members, please submit them to the church office by 9am tomorrow (Thurs). */

Finally, after Easter we'll continue sending out this *e-news*, but less regularly, every 2-3 weeks, whilst David is on sabbatical. Please keep your eyes peeled for them, as there will be several post-lockdown changes to adapt to in our church life and practice, hopefully new events and groups starting to happen, along with Pentecost, some form of prayer for Thy Kingdom Come, and Gift Days at both churches to give thanks to God for his goodness and faithfulness through all the seasons of our pilgrimage.

May God bless this coming week to us, and help us to walk closely with Jesus

yours in Christ

David and Ruth

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<http://www.stjamesyeovil.org.uk/>

<http://www.stpeters-yeovil.org.uk/>

St James and St Peters on

Youtubehttps://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS_rhjBAJTixz3kIXLMN_Xw/

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