



Outreach

The Parish Newsletter of St. James Church, Briercliffe

Available on our church website, www.briercliffestjames.co.uk

Issue 1 - October 2020



Welcome to this new format – a newsletter, rather than a magazine, to keep you informed about the work and life of our church.

Just as other places of worship, our church was closed between March and the beginning of July. Behind the scenes Father Paul and other church members were working hard to keep in touch with people and towards reopening the church building. After careful planning and in line with government guidelines, the church was opened for private prayer in June and then for worship on Sunday July 5th. St James now has its full pattern of services with coronavirus Covid-19 guidelines in place.

Past and Present

Here, at St James', we pride ourselves on being much more than a building. We are an outward looking, friendly group of people of all ages; keen to reach out to our community, offering uplifting worship and a wide range of activities. Please visit our website www.briercliffestjames.co.uk to get a flavour of what we have achieved over the last couple of years. Our Harvest Festival Weekend was one of the highlights of 2019.

Although we are only able to make a tentative and watchful re-start, we are welcoming familiar faces and newcomers. The church itself is planned out with 2 metre distancing for individuals or family bubbles, with sanitising stations, mandatory wearing of face coverings and clearly explained guidelines for services. We have a number of beautiful additions to the decoration of our church produced by members of the congregation during lockdown, and in recent days we have been able to enjoy the singing of our choir once again.

Although we have temporarily suspended Sunday School individual activity packs are provided during Thursday 6.30pm and Sunday 10.15am services to encourage our young people to be fully engaged in worship.

Pastoral Work

Our Pastoral Team are normally busily involved in preparations for baptisms alongside home/hospital/hospice visiting within and beyond the parish. Although this pastoral ministry has been suspended, during lockdown contact has continued mostly by telephone and texts. Please ring our Parish Pastoral Assistant, Janet Hartley Tel: 07947 217947 if you would like a member of the Pastoral Team to contact you.

Looking to the Future

Since the arrival last year of Father Paul as our Interim Vicar we had been building for the future at St James' with lots of exciting plans and ideas. Little did we know that the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown would put these on hold. Now that we are able to hold services we hope, when the time is right for you, to encourage your return to church so that together we can look to the next stage of the life of our church.

We have some enjoyable and encouraging things for you to see and hear. The sanctuary and altar in church have been decorated tastefully with symbols of hope and we are beginning to enjoy some music and very small group singing during Thursday evening and 10.15 service on Sundays.

When the time feels right for you, we would be delighted to welcome you back to St James'.

Take care. Stay well. God bless you.



Responding to the challenges of Covid-19: A message from your Church Finance Team

The “new normal” brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic has, for all of us, led to a number of changes in the way we go about our daily lives. One of the unfortunate consequences of our current situation is the increasing uncertainty around financial security for ourselves and our families. We, as your church family, are in the same position.

As you may know we are required to be self- sufficient as a parish, to cover all our costs, carefully balancing income and expenditure so that paying the bills, including the stipend of our vicar, can be met in full. Our ‘income’ comes from the generosity of people like you and giving to the church has been possible in a number of ways.

Cash vs Card – Collection plate. In a world where – because of the risks of cross infection - the use of cash is becoming increasingly rare, a greater reliance on card payments is one of the “new normal” signs. In response to this we have installed a card machine at St James’ where you can tap your bank card and make your donation.

Envelope Scheme - This scheme allows you to put your cash in an envelope and bring it to church each week. Many of you have been faithfully stashing these away during lockdown and returning them when the time has been right for you to re-join us. However, patterns of attendance are, for obvious reasons, uncertain at the moment and now may be the time to consider switching to a Direct Debit/Bankers Order so that we can all be assured that your donations will arrive securely, safely and regularly whether you are able come to church or not.

Planned Giving – Direct Debit/Bankers Order - Moving forward our preferred option for the “new normal” is for increased Planned Giving. This is a weekly or monthly donation paid direct from your bank account. By opting for Planned Giving it allows you time to think about what God does for you and how you can show this through your generous support of your church. Your planned giving helps the church to budget in a more efficient way, enabling us to review our costs and cover outgoings over the year, but also to plan for the uncertainties of the future. Your ongoing support and generosity towards the long-term sustainability of St James’ is greatly appreciated.

Gift Aid – If you are a Tax Payer this optional scheme Increases the value of your donation by 25%. All you have to do is complete a Gift Aid Form and we will do the rest!

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For further information, please contact: Barbara Hanson (Finance Team Member)
Mobile: 07946233271 Email: barbarahanson1@gmail.com

Message for children and their families

There is a letter posted on our church website giving you information about special arrangements for Sunday 10.15am. and Thursday 6.30pm. worship plus lots of brilliant ideas to get involved with at home.

We are looking forward to welcoming you back at church when the time is right for you.

News from St. James' School

Go to our website and click on the link to read the latest news from our church school written by Mrs. Dugdale, Headteacher.



What about our New Vicar?

After a long delay in the recruitment process you will be delighted to learn that there are to be interviews in November for a new vicar at St. James'. If an appointment is made, it is anticipated that the successful candidate will join us sometime soon after Easter next year. Fr. Paul's final Sunday in the parish is January 10th and after that date local clergy will cover services until the new vicar arrives. Further update next month.

In the meantime please join us in our Prayer for a New Vicar

Heavenly Father, we pray for the guidance of your Holy Spirit as we prepare for the appointment of a new Vicar to serve this parish. We pray for our Parish Representatives and all who will be involved and that a candidate may come forward who will be a blessing to us and to this community. Amen.

Interim Vicar: Rev'd. Paul Payton - Email: frpaulp@yahoo.com - Mobile 07866696891

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