



A MARTYR'S MESSAGE

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FROM ST. GEORGE'S PARISH CHURCH - NEW MILLS

Song & Drama at St. George's



ST. GEORGE'S SONG CLUB

Over the next few months, a couple of new exciting groups will be starting within the church. **St. George's Song Club** and **The Martyr's Players**.

St. George's Song Club is a term-time after-school activity led by Jen Rackstraw, Louise Moore and Leon Shufflebotham.

The aim is to provide a fun, musical learning atmosphere where children can meet and enjoy singing.

There are no auditions and no previous experience is necessary.

The children will work towards a performance at the end of each term when friends and family will be able to come along and see what the children have been learning.

All sessions will be free and refreshments will be available for children on arrival.

The club will meet on Wednesday afternoons from 3.30 pm to 4.30 pm at St. George's Parish Hall.

Our leaders are DBS checked, Safeguarding and First Aid trained.

The Martyr's Players is a new amateur community theatre group based at St. George's Parish Church in New Mills.

The group will meet weekly to read plays, rehearse, and work towards staging plays and reviews, and nights of entertainment.

At each session we will read a chosen play socially, possibly one which we are planning to stage in the future, and everyone will get a chance to read a part. We will also have some fun and take part in drama games and activities for us all to get to know each other and 'break the ice'. Refreshments will also be available throughout the evening.

If you are interested in getting involved but not keen on performing, there will be plenty of opportunities to help with backstage, scenery and prop making, costumes, make-up, refreshments, and front of house.

If you have any ideas on the sort of plays or productions you would like us to arrange or if you would like to register your interest in getting involved, then please do get in touch with us.

St. George's Song Club

Call: 07790 923549 or

Email: songclub@newmillschurch.co.uk

The Martyr's Players

Call: 01663 749323 | 0778 951 8313

Email: martyrsplayers@newmillschurch.co.uk

"Offering a welcoming, God-centred environment to the people of New Mills"

'MASKS'

FR. OWAIN MITCHELL | VICAR OF NEW MILLS

"The greatest trap in life is not success, popularity or power, but self-rejection, doubting who we truly are." (Henri Nouwen, Spiritual Direction, 2011; SPCK)

Masks, or if you prefer, face coverings, have become part of our normal way of life over the past year. They reduce the risk of infection and help prevent the spread Covid-19. Initially, many perhaps struggled with masks - walking past familiar faces without recognising the person behind the mask; struggling to communicate fully because our facial expressions were hidden; self-conscious because this was something new. Our face-coverings, whilst protecting us and others, inadvertently created barriers.

However, for most people, masks are nothing new. Our outward appearance can often be little more than a mask to cover what's going on deep within our hearts. Many of us hide behind masks in order protect ourselves or others - we put on a brave face when we're feeling sad or scared; we hide from those feelings and emotions deep within ourselves in an attempt to appear normal before others.

We often give the appearance of fitting in when we feel, deep down in the core of who we are, that we are different or broken. It's hard, and it hurts when we find ourselves admitting that we have perhaps not been as successful as we'd hoped to be, as popular as we would like to be, or as confident as we would wish to be. It can be difficult to say that we are afraid, doubting, struggling, exhausted, lost and at sea. And so we put on masks to hide from ourselves, and to appear how we think we ought to appear. Yet they prevent us from being truly free, from being who we really are and accepting our status as God's beloved children.

We may be fortunate enough to have people in our lives with whom we feel safe and secure enough not to need our masks; people with whom we feel confident enough to be ourselves. But what of the deepest, darkest secrets, feelings and emotions we struggle to admit even to ourselves?

With God, we can be our true selves. Henri Nouwen wrote, "There is in each of us an inner voice of Love that says: 'You are the Beloved of God!'" (Ibid.) We don't need to deceive ourselves or others, because God created and loves each one of us intimately. He dwells in our hearts and knows the truth about each of us. God doesn't demand our time or attention, He simply invites us into a living and a loving relationship, where we can find comfort, peace and hope in this life, and joy and fullness of life in the world to come.

God doesn't love us because of our masks - who and how we appear to be. He loves us because He is, and we are; God is love, we are His beloved. When we share our true selves with Him, we begin to accept ourselves, and find peace and joy, light and hope.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

SUNDAY 27TH JUNE 2021 | 11.30AM

This year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), delayed from April due to Covid-19, will be held at 11.30 a.m. on Sunday 27th June in Saint George's.

The APCM is made up of two, sometimes three meetings. The first meeting known as the Vestry Meeting, is usually very brief. Its purpose is to elect the Church Wardens who will serve for the coming year. Anyone who lives in the parish, and whose names are on the civic electoral register or on the church's Electoral Roll are entitled to attend and to vote for their representatives.

The second meeting, at which anyone whose name is on the church's Electoral Roll can attend and vote, is an Annual General Meeting. At this meeting, church members elect the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Deanery Synod Representatives who will serve in the coming year. The Electoral Roll, a list of members of the church, is revised or renewed. Various reports are given on the work of the PCC over the past year (April – March). Those present have the opportunity to ask questions, share views and to help shape plans for the coming year. In many parishes, reports are also received from other groups and bodies within the church. This is an opportunity to both thank those who have contributed to the work of the PCC and to celebrate all that God has done in and through members in the parish in the preceding twelve months.

Many parishes then hold a third meeting, the first meeting of the newly elected PCC though others hold this on a separate occasion. This meeting is simply for the new PCC to appoint its officers for the coming year – secretary, treasurer, and so forth.

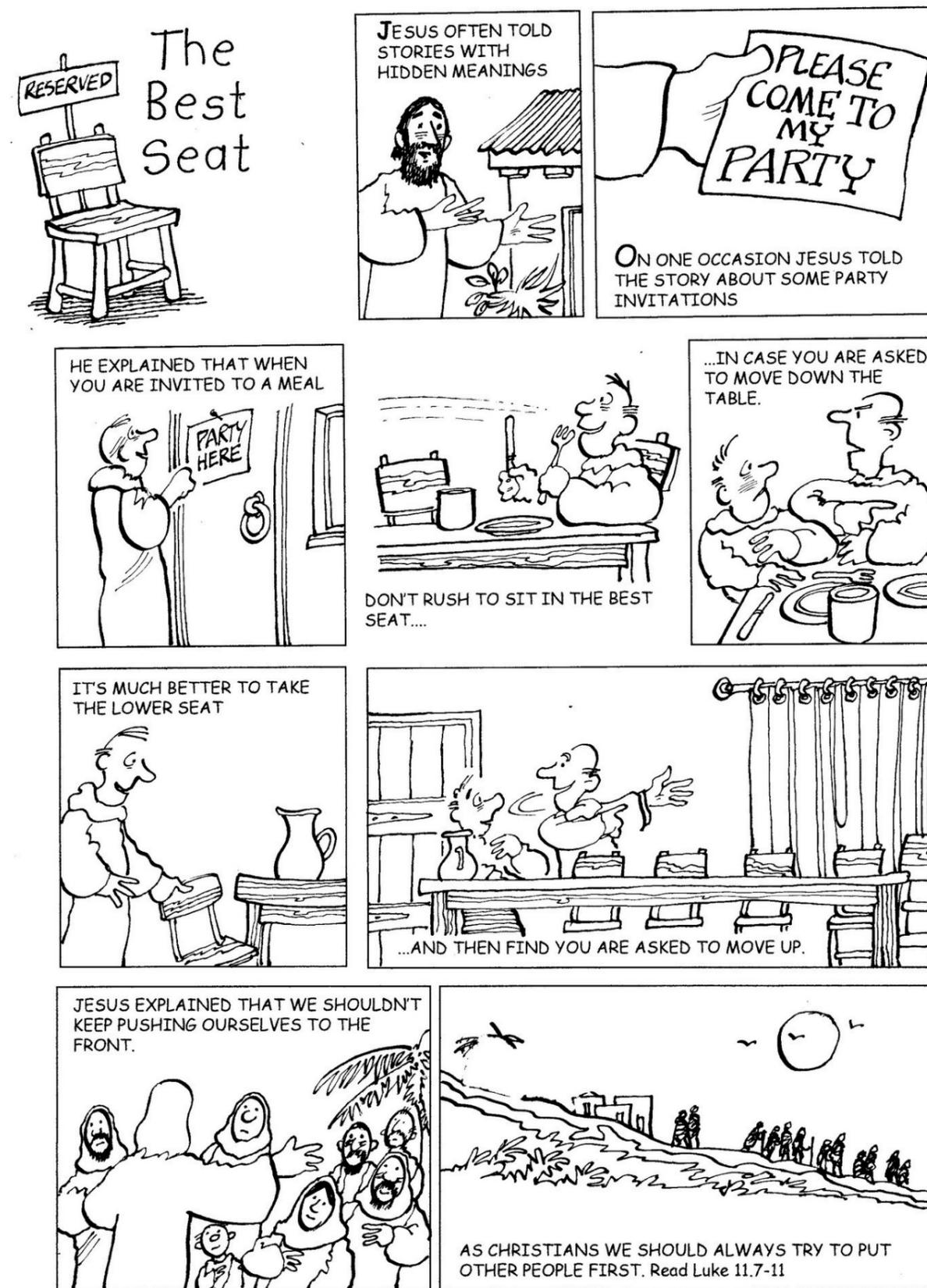
Both Church Wardens and PCC members are elected to serve for a maximum of six years (two stints of three years maximum). This means that, as well as a vacancy for the position of Church Warden, there are a number of vacancies coming up this year as members come to the end of their term of office. If you feel that God might be nudging you to stand, please do have a word with Father Owain, Richard, David or any of the current members.

If all reports covering the year April 2020 to March 2021 could be forwarded to Father Owain by Monday 07th June, report packs will be prepared and will be available in church on Sunday 20th.

Please do make a note of the date and time, Sunday 27th June, 11.30, and join us if you possibly can as we celebrate the many graces and blessings we have received from God over the past year and express our gratitude to all who contributed to our worship, work and witness.



Please submit your prayer requests to Fr. Owain by calling the vicarage on: (01663) 743225 or email: vicar@newmillschurch.co.uk



MEET THE TEAM

Over the next few issues of 'A Martyr's Message' we will be introducing you to people of St. George's Church who have key roles within our church.

Our first in our 'Meet The Team' series is Tim Hawkins, our Organist and Choir Director.



Three essentials required:

1. A good apprenticeship. Here I was very fortunate. As an organ student I was under the direction of an inspiring and creative director. John Witham was fearless. We would tackle repertoire beyond our ability, he would plan ambitious liturgies and deliver them. We sang services at our cathedral where John let me play the cathedral organ. He was generous and encouraging. But it had to be right. Second best wasn't, and isn't good enough. Going to music college was an important part of my life, and studying the organ there was very enjoyable. But I honestly didn't learn much there about directing the music in a parish church, or conducting a church choir. Most of those skills I learnt from John. For example at music college, in one choral conducting class I had to rehearse a Kyrie from a Mozart Mass. The choir of 50 were music undergraduates who virtually sightread it, the accompaniment was played by a professional pianist. Not helpful or realistic training for a career in parish music!

2. Planning. I spend hours on this. Normally I plan about three months in advance, selecting hymns, anthems and organ music. I complete a month at a time, starting with each Sunday's theme and noting the psalm from the lectionary (no choice there!). Then I select the hymns, much helped by a publication from the Royal School of Church Music which not only lists hymns for each Sunday (based on the bible readings) but even suggests where in the service they should be placed. I do exercise some editorial control to avoid all the hymns being in a minor key, or all being 'long' for example; I try to make sure there is rotation, and introduce new material occasionally. I am occasionally asked if I have favourite hymns. I don't. But there are probably hundreds of hymns I don't like, either because the words are drivel or because the music is banal. Or both. But I don't let my personal views colour my judgment when creating hymn lists. Feast days may be an opportunity to perform an anthem, so that needs researching.

Then I have to plan the organ voluntaries. I have a large library and repertoire, but constantly learn new music. I play for about ten minutes before a service - that's forty minutes of music each month, plus a recessional piece at the end. This leads on to...

3. Practice/Rehearsal. I practise for about two hours every day. At least a quarter of the music I play is new to me, but even music already in my repertoire needs careful revision before I can perform it. On Wednesday evenings I take the choir practice. I have to plan the rehearsals (Christmas music should really start in the early autumn!) and take care to finish rehearsals on time! Fortunately, Leon is our head chorister and deals with all the administrative, logistical and librarian duties leaving me free to deal with musical issues. I cannot miss this opportunity to thank the choir for their wonderful support, dedication and good humour. Working with them is so rewarding and great fun!

Other interesting aspects of the job include teaching the organ (that is a real pleasure), playing weddings and funerals (occasionally playing in other local churches) and discussing the welfare of our organ with our organ builder. Given the very poor state the organ is in, that will be taking up an increasing amount of my time!

COME AND JOIN THE CHOIR!

St. George's has a long-standing choral tradition and the choir has always played an important part in the worship. St. George's Parish Church is unique in the sense that we are the only church in this part of the Derby diocese that has a regular church choir that sings and rehearses weekly.

We are a mixed, four-part choir, led by Tim Hawkins, our Organist and Choir Director. And the choir is affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music.

Currently, we are only allowed to have six members of the choir singing due to the current COVID regulations, so we cannot wait until we are allowed to welcome the rest of the choir back into the choir stalls singing together again.

When we can introduce the full choir again, we will be looking to welcome anyone who would like to come along and join us. We are especially interested in Sopranos and Tenors but anyone is welcome.

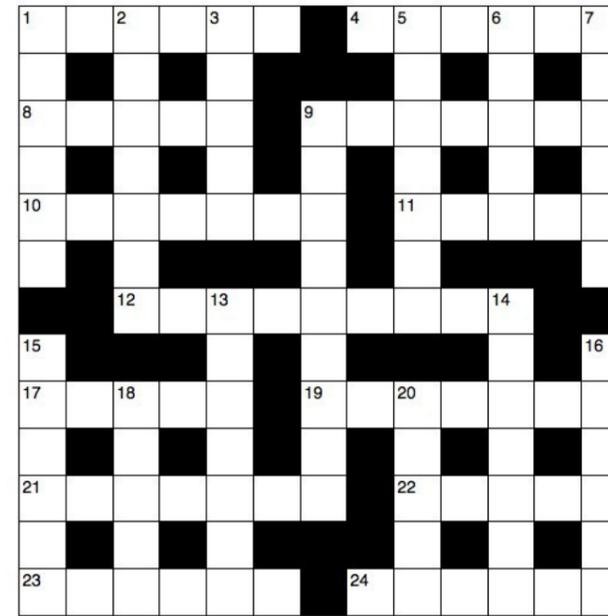
We rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 to 8.30 pm in the church and we sing at the weekly Sunday morning service at 10 am which lasts about one hour. We also sing at several special services and events throughout the year. We host an annual festival of choirs, where we are joined by several local church choirs from across the area to sing Choral Evensong together.

We also visit other churches on occasions to sing Evensong and we also attend the Royal School of Church Music Chester Area Festival where we join a mass choir to sing in the beautiful Chester Cathedral.

The choir has a great social side and regularly visits the local pub following rehearsal!

If you are interested in joining the choir, please call Tim on (01663) 746226 or email: choir@newmillschurch.co.uk

PUZZLE FROM THE PEWS!



Across

- 1 Military tactic used by Joshua to attack and destroy the city of Ai (Joshua 8:2) (6)
- 4 Place of learning (6)
- 8 'When Moses' hands grew — , they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it' (Exodus 17:12) (5)
- 9 Unpleasant auguries of the end of the age, as forecast by Jesus (Matthew 24:7) (7)
- 10 Stronghold to which girls in King Xerxes' harem (including Esther) were taken (Esther 2:8) (7)

- 11 Where Saul went to consult a medium before fighting the Philistines (1 Samuel 28:7) (5)
- 12 Propitiation (Hebrews 2:17) (9)
- 17 Turn away (Jeremiah 11:15) (5)
- 19 So clear (anag.) (7)
- 21 'I have just got — , so I can't come': one excuse to be absent from the great banquet (Luke 14:20) (7)
- 22 Long weapon with a pointed head used by horsemen (Job 39:23) (5)
- 23 Musical beat (6)
- 24 What the Israelites were told to use to daub blood on their door-frames at the first Passover (Exodus 12:22) (6)

Down

- 1 Fasten (Exodus 28:37) (6)
- 2 Art bite (anag.) (7)
- 3 'The people of the city were divided; some — with the Jews, others with the apostles' (Acts 14:4) (5)
- 5 Contend (Jeremiah 12:5) (7)
- 6 Possessed (Job 1:3) (5)
- 7 Sheen (Lamentations 4:1) (6)
- 9 'You love evil rather than good, — rather than speaking the truth' (Psalm 52:3) (9)
- 13 Large flightless bird (Job 39:13) (7)
- 14 They were worth several hundred pounds each (Matthew 25:15) (7)
- 15 'A — went out to sow his seed' (Matthew 13:3) (6)
- 16 How Jesus described Jairus's daughter when he went into the room where she lay (Mark 5:39) (6)
- 18 The part of the day when the women went to the tomb on the first Easter morning (John 20:1) (5)
- 20 Narrow passageway between buildings (Luke 14:21) (5)

Answers on page 8

POEM - THE ANCIENT CHURCH

Sometimes I sit within my pew
And gaze upon an ancient view
Of stones, which, set by mason's line
Have stood through centuries of time;
Of glass, whose colours, vivid, bright
Have told their wondrous tales of light
And filtered sunshine's timeless rays
To countless eyes through countless days.

The pulpit where, through long past years
God's servants preached to faithful ears;
The lectern and its Bible read
Aloud to both the quick and dead;
The feet, which down that aisle have trod
To worship everlasting God;
The angels, as they downward gaze
Have heard ten thousand songs of praise!

Songs of joy, and infant cries
As they gathered to baptize,
Songs of love and celebrations
In marriages and confirmations,
Songs of sadness and of loss
Sung before the Saviour's cross.
So many lives have come, then flown
Within this ancient house of stone.

So, as I sit and wonder how
Such history should guide me now?
Such faithful worship through the years
May move me to shed humble tears.
These ghosts bring me joy, not fear
I know I'm just a tenant here
And in one way they are my guide –
They keep me free from pompous pride!

By Nigel Beeton | The Parish Pump

FIVE MARKS OF MISSION AS SEEN AT SAINT GEORGE'S

The five marks of mission have been used since 1984 as an understanding of what contemporary mission is about. Put simply, mission is to carry on the work of Christ in the world; it is God's mission, and we are invited to join in, working to build God's kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. The five marks were adopted by the General Synod of the Church of England in 1996 and many dioceses and other denominations used them as the basis of action plans and creative mission ideas.

In what ways do we join with Christ in God's mission here in New Mills?

To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (Tell)

- preaching and teaching
- hymns and music at our services
- interaction with the wider community
- a welcoming church
- pastoral offices – weddings, baptisms & funerals
- work with the schools
- website & social media presence
- Lunch Club
- our visible presence in the community
- Kingdom Season 2020 resources – prayer cards & candles distributed through local shops; prayer stones & cross, etc.
- occasional prayer walks around the churchyard
- Strategy 2021-26 – this underpins all that we do
- A Martyr's Message – quarterly magazine
- Live and livestreamed services for special events, e.g. Anniversary of first lockdown, death of HRH Prince Philip, etc.

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers (Teach)

- sermons
- magazine articles in A Martyr's Message
- by word and example
- schools work
- pastoral offices
- online presence
- children's & adults discipleship resources on website
- Thy Kingdom Come 2021 – online and paper resources; Facebook reflections, etc.
- occasional apologetics pieces on Facebook e.g. What is Easter? Thy Kingdom Come reflections, etc.
- recorded Collective Worship for St. George's CofE Primary
- Life Events strategy 2021-26
- Discipleship resources – printed and on website
- Recorded pieces such as series on the Advent Wreath; Spiritual Pilgrimage of Saint George's, etc.

To respond to human need by loving service (Tend)

- we seek to work collaboratively with community groups, rather than to compete against them
- members of Saint George's are involved in the work of local groups and organisations e.g. theVolunteer Centre, visiting care homes, the foodbank, Wellspring (Stockport) etc.
- Lunch Club

- our work supporting New Mills Youth & Community Project and Youth Matters
- we offer free or low cost Hall hire for community groups to have somewhere to meet
- daily prayer calendar for Church & Community – shared through 'A Martyr's Message'
- Our response to the pandemic

To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation (Transform)

- our outward looking attitude
- charitable giving
- support and help given to local voluntary groups and organisations
- supporting the Community Payback Scheme
- seeking to work collaboratively with, rather than competing against, existing provisions by signposting what help is available

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth (Treasure)

- energy saving lightbulbs
- Compost area in churchyard
- recycling waste from the church and the hall
- Youth Matters proposed flower beds on The Field
- using local business and labourers where possible to reduce our carbon footprint

Please do contact Leon or Father Owain if you know of anything we've missed so that we can celebrate all of the ways we are responding to these five marks of mission.



After months of lockdown, the Sunday procession probably needed some practise.

DONATE TO ST. GEORGE'S PARISH CHURCH HERE



St. George's Parish Church relies entirely on the generosity of our regular congregation giving because we do not receive any funding from the government. The money we receive goes towards the community work, pastoral work, missionary and ministry work within the parish of New Mills.

We are also responsible for the upkeep of this beautiful and historic building of St. George's. The money that our regular congregation gives also has to cover the electric, lighting, heating and repairs. This special building is here as a place of prayer, sanctuary as well as being a useable space for the whole community.

For the work and life of St. George's to continue, we need your help.



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1. Scan the above code with your smart phone camera.
2. Click on the link.
3. Select your donation amount.
4. Choose the 'Gift Aid' option*.
5. Complete payment using the safe donation site.
6. Your donation is gratefully received... Thank you!

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- WEEKLY SERVICES -

Wednesdays

9.15am - Said Holy Communion

Sundays

10.00am - Parish Holy Communion

As we start to open up after lockdown we will be reinstating the weekly services.

Please keep an eye on our website and Facebook pages for up-to-date information.

A warm welcome always awaits you at St. George's.

Answers from page 5 - Puzzles from the Pews

ACROSS: 1, Ambush. 4, School. 8, Tired. 9, Famines. 10, Citadel. 11, Endor. 12, Atone-ment. 17, Avert. 19, Oracles. 21, Married. 22, Lance. 23, Rhythm. 24, Hyssop.

DOWN: 1, Attach. 2, Biretta. 3, Sided. 5, Compete. 6, Owned. 7, Lustre. 9, Falsehood. 13, Ostrich. 14, Talents. 15, Farmer. 16, Asleep. 18, Early. 20, Alley.

Guidance for attending public worship during COVID 19

It is now mandatory to wear a face covering when entering the church for public worship.

Everyone who wishes to enter this building for public worship is welcome. You can enter on your own or with members of your immediate household. Numbers will be limited to allow for social distancing and necessary hygiene measures. Please be patient if this means you have to wait.

We confirm we have read and complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19 in places of worship.

What we have done:

We have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment
We have cleaning, hand cleansing and hygiene procedures in place, in line with government guidance
We have taken all reasonable steps to help everyone maintain a 2m distance between different users of our church

What we expect you to do:

Refrain from entering if you are feeling unwell or have experienced any COVID-19 symptoms in the past seven days.
Take responsibility for your own safety and that of your household and other people by maintaining social distancing and observing all hygiene measures
Ensure children are supervised at all times.

PARISH PEOPLE

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This magazine is free of charge.

If you would like to support us by advertising in our next issue (September 2021), or if you have a story you would like to share with us, then please get in touch:

publicity@newmillschurch.co.uk or call: **(01663) 749323**

All information in this magazine was correct at the time of going to print.

The Deadline for the next issue of 'A Martyr's Message' is Friday 20th August 2021

This magazine is also available to download and view on our website.