



## **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September**

Dear Friends, welcome to this week's Newsletter for all our friends and neighbours of Burchetts Green Parish.

My dog Mac has been taking advantage of the lovely sunny weather in recent days, although the nights are drawing in and the mornings quite cool. If you are able, I recommend taking a quiet walk in one of our lovely green spaces, along woodland walks or by the River at Hurley. It's amazing how refreshing 15 minutes of fresh air and exercise can be !!

Our Harvest Festival celebrations continue this weekend with the Harvest Supper at Hurley on Saturday evening, and a Harvest Festival Eucharist at Hurley on Sunday morning. So our thoughts continue to be ones of thanksgiving and celebration – thanksgiving for all the good gifts that we receive, especially through the fruits of the earth; and celebration of the God who is the source of all good things, and who created us, loves us, nourishes and cares for us. You can find the Harvest Festival bible readings attached / below.



Linking to the theme of 'nourishing food' and 'thanksgiving', in the latest Diocesan 'Pathways' magazine Bishop Steven, our Bishop of Oxford, writes about the Eucharist – a word which means 'Thanksgiving', and a way of worship in which we receive the love and nourishment of God in a unique and special way through Holy Communion. Bishop Steven speaks of how we are meant to travel through life in the strength of the spiritual nourishment we receive at the Lord's Table. And he comments that it may be more difficult than we imagine to return to the habits of regular worship that we might have enjoyed pre-pandemic. He writes:

"I want to encourage you to put yourself in the way of God's grace and to respond to the Lord's invitation to gather round his table, and to do so in a church building if you can."

Commenting that after the last 18 months we may be feeling tired and worn down, Bishop Steven writes that Holy Communion is the meal through which God builds up those who are tired and depleted. He goes on:

"God has set a table for you, a feast. It is the meal through which God reminds us Sunday by Sunday of who we are...where we come to receive grace upon grace as we receive the presence and life of Christ in bread and wine. We come to be sustained for the next part of the journey. We look back

and we remember and find the centre of our faith again. We look forward in hope and in joy and we sing our message to the world.”

**We in this Parish invite you** to join us for worship in any of our three churches, whether you are used to being in church, haven't been for some time, or just want to give it a try. You will find a very warm welcome.

Read the Bishop's full article in the Diocesan magazine 'Pathways', back in print once again and available free at the back of each of our churches.

**Services this Sunday are as follows:**

8am	Stubbings	BCP Holy Communion
10.30am	Hurley	Harvest Festival Eucharist with hymns

**On the following Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October**, we have a service of **Choral Evensong at Stubbings**. These services are much-loved, and will now be held on the first Sunday of each month.

**There is a lot of interest in the new children's Sunday Club at Littlewick Green which launches on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October** – coinciding with the 9.15am Eucharist, and providing exciting activities and child-friendly bible stories whilst parents can participate in the Eucharist in church. More details next week, or from Richard Moores.

**Services for Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October:**

9.15am	Littlewick Green	Family Eucharist with hymns and Sunday Club
5pm	Stubbings	Choral Evensong

We are hearing again of **financial pressures on the most marginalised in our country**, through reductions in benefits and rising prices, with the prospect of energy cost increases too. Please do support Maidenhead Foodshare with donations of goods (these can be left in any of our churches) or money (through their website), as well as national charities supporting the homeless and the vulnerable.

We have also heard again of **almost inhumane conditions in our prisons**, especially for women (including those who have families or who are pregnant) and those with mental health issues. The first 3 months of this year saw a record number of fatalities in prison in the UK (154), and you may have seen news of the recent Ombudsman report into the 18 year old whose baby died after she gave birth alone in her prison cell. We must pray and work for a justice system that is properly funded and managed, treats all people humanely, and offers a real chance of rehabilitation to those who have offended.



**Our churches are open for private prayer this week:**

**St John's Littlewick Green** – open every day 11am – 4pm  
**St Mary the Virgin Hurley** – open every day 8am – 5pm  
**St James-the-Less Stubbings** – open Monday – Friday

**Parish Office.** The Parish Office is open for visitors and phone calls three mornings a week – Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 12 noon. On other days, emails will be attended to on a daily basis. **I can be contacted** on [revjohnnainslie@gmail.com](mailto:revjohnnainslie@gmail.com) and 01628 629827 (do leave a message on the confidential answering machine if I don't answer).



**For our Prayers:**

For our Church and parish, and especially for the selection and appointment of a new Vicar.

For the PCC, meeting this week.

We continue in thanksgiving for all God's good gifts to us, and especially the fruits of the earth and the joys and refreshment we find in creation.

For those living in parts of the world without good healthcare, education, food or clean water – and for organisations that seek to address these terrible deprivations.

For Afghanistan and other places of political change and unrest.

For real and determined action to reduce our impact on the natural environment; for the UN Climate Change Conference COP-26 starting on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

For our criminal justice system, for the care and rehabilitation of offenders, and for those who work in prisons especially prison chaplains.

For Maidenhead Foodshare, and all other local organisations that serve those in any kind of need.

For those in our local community in any kind of need, sickness, or anxiety, and those who mourn the loss of a loved one at this time. For the recently departed and their families and loved ones.

Eternal God,  
you crown the year with your goodness  
and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season:  
grant that we may use them to your glory,  
for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Service arrangements from Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July:**

Our Sunday services will now run as follows:

- You will be asked to sanitise your hands on entry to and exit from the church building
- We will maintain social distancing within the church, including using only alternate pews
- We ask that you wear a face covering when moving about the church and especially when coming forward to receive communion – but not whilst you are in your pew
- There will be a welcome return to singing hymns in church
- Communion will be given in one kind only, as has been our custom throughout the pandemic

These arrangements offer the benefits of not needing to wear a face covering throughout the service, and of joining in with singing hymns; balanced with hand sanitising, the preservation of social distancing and the reception of communion in one kind.



If you are unable to join us in Church for whatever reason, there are many livestream and recorded services available online, including from Marlow at <https://4u-team.org/digitalchurch> and I continue to recommend the daily and Sunday services from Canterbury Cathedral at <https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/worship/online-worship/>

Keep safe, be gentle on yourself, and remember that with God by your side you need never be alone.

With love and prayers,

Fr John Ainslie