



Open Door

## Prepare to be Forever Changed

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07-20-2015

### FIRST OFF, I'M HAPPY TO SEE THAT SO MANY OF YOU ARE ENJOYING THE NEW STREAMING OF OUR SERVICES ONLINE ...

I'm sure many of us have been taking a look at different online services, including the weekly Church of England or Diocesan service from the Cathedral, or Archbishop's kitchen. There is a wide range of options at parish level too ranging from one vicar doing the whole thing pre-recorded from their home, to a family in their living room or garden enacting Bible stories cutting to other church members from their homes. Some parishes, like St Peter's, are even doing a live service by Zoom (video conferencing programme) incorporating up to 30 households meeting at the time they would usually meet on Sundays. Everyone is doing their best in the current climate, rapidly learning new skills and technology, each week getting better as new skills are acquired and hoping to create the sense of normalcy: the familiar; hoping to get through this as best we can until we can return to normal.

At St Michael's we have been offering a range of things to be 'church' trying to acknowledge the differing preferences of our church members from stylistic differences (9.30 vs 11am vs choral evensong etc) to just whether someone has access to anything other than a TV or radio. We have been doing an online service every Sunday with different church members across all congregations taking part, a weekly newsletter, worship at home resources, telephone calls from Pastoral Co-ordinators supported by others, a landline telephone conferencing system as well as video conferencing for meetings and home groups and social groups. At times, it's exhausting and challenging but we are doing our best and people seem genuinely grateful and appreciative from the feedback we are receiving.

*Do we like what we see, or do we prefer the familiar?* What we are offering and doing; does it feel like church for you? Does it feel like a service, or a performance? I wonder if it's akin to the difference between watching a streamed National Theatre play at your local cinema or (now) on TV compared to how it feels sitting in the theatre on the actual night of the live

performance? Which is more preferable?

A number of us are continuing to meet in home groups or social groups within our church family by Zoom or WhatsApp. Does this feel more like church to you? Does seeing familiar faces make it feel more like church? The chance to ask after people who are not included and share information on what everyone is up to in lockdown, like making scrubs or learning how to take photos of the moon using a camera and telescope. Does this help to replace the time after church when we share coffee and have a natter and catch up, which we have now lost? 'Church' exists in the many acts of service which our church members provide to their neighbours and communities: shopping, delivery of prescriptions. Is it this type of 'church' that satisfies the need in us to 'do' church?

There are huge challenges to putting together online services, technology possibly been the least challenging. Access is a big issue: they are available to a group which is both smaller and bigger than the usual congregation. Smaller because they exclude those without computer access, and we have about 40 households where that is the case, but bigger because those who can't make it to church, for whatever reason, are now included, plus our audience can now include people from around the UK and the world – an audience who would never in fact walk through our church doors in the Marketplace. What tone do we go for? Jolly and upbeat? Mournful and sombre? Some people are finding this time of lockdown difficult, full of fear, loss, loneliness, stress of working long hours, or combining work with homeschooling. Whilst others, find lockdown a positive experience and challenge everyone to count their blessings and be thankful. It just isn't that easy for everyone. Each of us has their own

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## This Sunday's Online Service for Sunday 10th May 2020

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12802/page/58119/view/>



Email any prayer requests here:

[office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk)

Resources for adults:

[www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome10may](http://www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome10may)

Resources for families:

[www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome10may](http://www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome10may)

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unique response to this pandemic and each response is valid and acknowledged. So, having discovered the possibilities of the online world, will we change how we do 'church', or return to the old normal? The problem is none of us knows when this pandemic will be over. We are just at the beginning really. So, we need to adapt to a new normal. But how do we do this as a church? How do we welcome both those who are excluded from the online world and those who are excluded from normal church? How do we offer a place that can acknowledge both despair as well as hope, and pain as well as joy?

A much quoted article [read it here](#) written by *Aisha S. Ahmad*, an academic with experience of crises around the world says "Now more than ever, we must abandon the performative and embrace the authentic." We need to mentally shift which takes patience but the end result is transformative growth. He says "may this tragedy tear down all our faulty assumptions and give us the courage of bold new ideas." Our response? "Prepare to be forever changed."

Sue Reid

## CHOOSE YOUR LOCKDOWN HOUSE

### House 1

Mother Teresa  
Richard Coles  
Julian of Norwich  
Usain Bolt

### House 2

Kate Bottley  
Pope Francis  
Fanny Crosby  
Martin Luther King Jr

### House 3

Aretha Franklin  
Archbishop Justin Welby  
Elizabeth Fry  
Mark Wahlberg

### House 4

Dorothy Day  
Lewis Hamilton  
Katherine Jenkins  
Giles Fraser

### House 5

Christine Ohuruogu  
St Francis of Assisi  
Corrie ten Boom  
C S Lewis

### House 6

Mary Berry  
Desmond Tutu  
Queen Elizabeth II  
Søren Kierkegaard

### House 7

Rosa Parks  
Johnny Cash  
Florence Nightingale  
Dr Rowan Williams

### House 8

Beyoncé  
Martin Sheen  
St Augustine  
Christina Rossetti

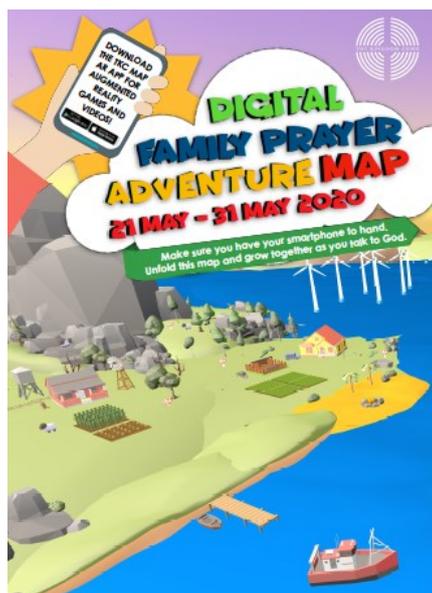
### House 9

Joan of Arc  
Stormzy  
Harriet Beecher Stowe  
John Donne

Which lockdown house would you choose and why...?



Thy Kingdom Come is a global initiative, in which Christians are called to pray for the nine days between Ascension and Pentecost. We are invited to pray for God's Spirit to move within the church, equipping us to share God's love with others and to pay attention to how God is speaking to us today.

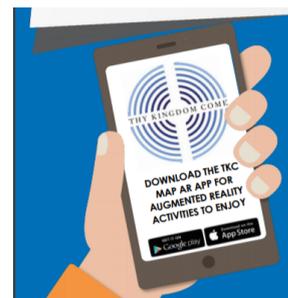


We will shortly be distributing copies of the family prayer map for families or individuals to enjoy doing during the 11 day period of Thy Kingdom Come.

As well as the map, The Family Prayer Adventure podcasts are a fun and engaging way to help families pray together. There is one following each daily theme of Thy Kingdom Come, and they are about 10-12 minutes long. They feature a game, an interactive Bible story (written and performed by folks like Bob Hartman), a chance to pray and great music. Click here for more details:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/digital-family-prayer-adventure-map>

Download the app by searching for TKC MAP AR



Each day you will find a short reflection and a challenge to find 5 hidden objects on the map. There is also a different fun resource each day that uses Augmented Reality (AR) and helps you to explore and try prayer during #ThyKingdomCome. This new A4 version of the map has been produced to make it really easy for you to access through your tablet or computer during this time where we are all staying at home.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness



## Lockdown Activities & New Skills in our Church Community

### Lockdown Bollinbrook School Staff



The staff at our wonderful church school, Bollinbrook Primary have put together a fantastic video which has been sent out to all the pupils and their families to bring joy and laughter and to let them know how much they are missing the children. Set to the song by Mary Mary called Shackles

(Praise You), which the school choir sing regularly, watch the full video on our Facebook page. It's brilliant—spreading joy and hope to all.

We continue to pray for the whole school community who have been touched by the Covid-19 virus.

### Lockdown Chris Wightman



Chris has been making scrubs for Macclesfield Hospital. Thank you Jenny for the photo. I owe you!! Hope you are still alive by the time this goes to print...! (Ed)

### Lockdown Alan Wootton



Alan Wootton has been learning how to take photos through his telescope. Here's his photo of the moon, taken with 5 inch refracting telescope, and a Canon DSLR camera.

He says "photographing the moon is relatively easy, because it is bright, but recently I have been trying to photograph galaxies, which are much more difficult because they are very faint, and require exposures of hours rather than fractions of a second. I am still at the beginning of a learning curve on this, but enjoying my experiments. To me, it's appreciating God's wonderful creation!

Learning a new skill during lockdown times? Please share it with us: email [office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk)

## “Don’t wash your hands”

Christian Aid faces a huge dilemma this year. For decades, it has relied on the generous donations of the general public to fund its overseas aid and development programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and

addressing crisis situations. Last year the total raised was in excess of £8m and engaged around 57,000 volunteers. This year, due to Covid-19, there are no door-to-door collections, but we are still being encouraged to donate. This year the focus is on Kenya, which is experiencing its worst drought in living memory, and now has Coronavirus to contend with too. The prospect is extremely worrying. What were we all told to do to combat Coronavirus? “Wash your hands”. Well, that’s not difficult if you have soap and water. Christian Aid is helping Kenyan’s to build water traps and dams, without which many will die from a basic lack of water and hygiene. We remember from Holy Week how when Pontius Pilate could not find any fault in Jesus he ‘washed his hands’ claiming to be “innocent of this man’s blood” (Matt 27:24). Please let’s not “wash our hands” of the plight of our Kenyan brothers and sisters. If you can, please donate a little something to Christian Aid this year. There is also an [online petition](#) calling for the government to cancel the debt of some of the poorest countries to help them survive.

You can give directly here: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/CAWeek2020>.



## Church Membership Database

You may recall hearing that we have purchased a new church membership database, called iKnow. It’s a tool which will help us to stay better connected and facilitate communication with everyone.

One of Sue’s lockdown tasks has been to get this up and running by doing some online training courses and developing her knowledge of the system and its possibilities as well as uploading everyone’s details —something there has never been enough time to do in the Church Office. Having got everyone on the system, we now getting the structures of our church set up e.g. groups, teams, church roles etc. and then allocating the appropriate permission rights to various roles as well as customising the language and data capture points to suit our needs as a church. Because the system is now populated with real data it may be that you get an odd email from iKnow or the life events diary that appears in your inbox. Please don’t worry about this or feel you have to act on it just yet, but simply enjoy seeing the possibilities this new database gives us. As individual church members you will be able to see and edit your own data, see your rota reminders, see the names and certain details of those in the same teams as you, and be able to message them, to view adverts for church events, to add prayer requests either publicly across the whole database or just to a defined group we allocate for prayer requests eg prayer letter editors or those on the weekly prayer rotas etc.



0800 804 8044  
Daily HOPE  
A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

Professional Telephone  
Listening Service

The Hope Centre  
Registered Charity 1140845  
**07958181927**  
**10am - 4pm every day**  
**READY TO LISTEN!**

The next step once permissions are set up (this is important to meet our GDPR commitments) is to allow certain groups to start testing the system out. We are thinking initially of the 9.30 congregation so they can start adding their children’s details etc, the choir as a team and the welcome teams so we can explore rotas more. While we are in lockdown, it is an ideal time to ‘play’ with rotas and associated reminders etc. so we can explore the full potential of this system. More details of that to follow soon.

Of course, we are aware that not every church member has device to enable access to this, so we will continue to communicate in other ways to ensure that no-one misses out.

