



# The Grapevine

Issue 15 Addendum

April & May 2020

## The Rector writes... Love in a time of COVID-19

There is a children's song that goes:

*"Love's not love till you give it away...."*

But how does that work for us right now? What does love look like when there is limited physical contact between us and reduced opportunity to meet and actively serve others? What shape does love take when we live in a time of anxiety and uncertainty? How can we best express love when we are isolated and alone and opportunities for giving to others are severely curtailed?

I think we find the answer in the Cross. Love is fundamentally Cross-shaped. It is the shape of sacrifice. It is the place where vulnerability is accepted and embraced as a necessity. It is where risk is taken for the sake of others.

Love is the shape of the NHS, teachers, prison officers, in those who deliver to our doorsteps and keep our supermarkets stocked.

Love is also found in the sacrifice of staying at home and relinquishing the cafes, restaurants, social clubs and sporting activities which frame our days. Love is found in acceptance that the safety and protection of others is paramount. We stay home. We pray.

May the mercy and protection of God be yours.

Sharon

## The Church of England in Saddleworth

*"Celebrating God's presence in all people."*

[www.cofeinsaddleworth.org.uk](http://www.cofeinsaddleworth.org.uk)

## ‘Church of England in Saddleworth’ goes On-Line

Whilst public worship is suspended, we will be using Facebook Live Streaming to engage with our community in Saddleworth.

We are aiming to provide a few short services or reflections at regular times each day.

Visit our website:

**[www.cofeinsaddleworth.org.uk](http://www.cofeinsaddleworth.org.uk)**

The ‘Home’ page has been adapted to show:

- † the current ‘Live Stream or Last Broadcast’;
- † ‘Previous Broadcasts’;
- † Details of ‘Future Broadcasts & Live Streaming’.

Alternatively if you are a Facebook user you can follow our new Facebook page:



**‘Church of England in Saddleworth’**

@CofESaddleworth



## Issue 15 of The Grapevine

When we were assembling the content in early March for Issue 15 of The Grapevine nobody could have expected the change in our lives by Passion Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March.

As a result Issue 15 is being released with this addendum.

Issue 15 does have some interesting articles, but it also has lots of information about things that have now been cancelled.

You should assume that anything scheduled to happen in April or May is cancelled. In addition, the Whit Friday walks (5<sup>th</sup> June) are also cancelled.

The OATIN Plant Sale has also been cancelled. Almost a quarter of the charity’s income is raised through the ‘Plant Sale’. The Trustees would be delighted to receive donations of any size.

At this point in time no decisions have been taken about when Issue 16 will be produced.

# Prayers in Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic

## ***General Prayers***

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing  
can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

God of compassion,  
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross,  
but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## ***For those who are ill***

Merciful God,  
we entrust to your tender care  
those who are ill or in pain,  
knowing that whenever danger threatens  
your everlasting arms are there  
to hold them safe.  
Comfort and heal them,  
and restore them to health and strength;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(continued overleaf)*

***For hospital staff and medical researchers***

Gracious God,  
give skill, sympathy and resilience  
to all who are caring for the sick,  
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.  
Strengthen them with your Spirit,  
that through their work  
many will be restored to health;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***From one who is ill or isolated***

O God,  
help me to trust you,  
help me to know that you are with me,  
help me to believe that nothing  
can separate me from your love  
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

***For the Christian community***

We are not people of fear:  
we are people of courage.  
We are not people who protect our own safety:  
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.  
We are not people of greed:  
we are people of generosity.  
We are your people God,  
giving and loving,  
wherever we are,  
whatever it costs  
For as long as it takes  
wherever you call us.

*Barbara Glasson  
President of the Methodist Conference*