

Letter to WSAM churches

19th August 2020

Dear Friends

Greetings from a much damper and greener Manse! I hope you all managed to stay dry, while your gardens soaked up the rain.

I have just this evening written the minister's letter for the September edition of the Messenger, which will be the first time we have managed to produce a Messenger since April. In view of the fact that this is now possible, and as there has been little really 'new' news in this newsletter in recent weeks, as some of us are able to meet for worship and most people are managing to get out and about a bit more, the Elders and I have taken the decision that **this will be the last weekly Newsletter, at least for now.**

Other things, including the pattern of worship, will remain the same for the time being; and short items of personal news relating to the church family, which have been carried in the newsletter, will be fitted into the Sunday Bulletin.

I am very aware that there are a number of people from each community who are not yet able to attend worship, for a whole variety of reasons. You haven't been forgotten. There is no intention to drop all the things we put in place, online and in print (or email), to keep everyone in contact with each other; we just need to keep re-adjusting the balance as the situation changes.

Worship this coming Sunday (23rd August)

We will produce the Sunday Bulletin, with its order of service, and try to ensure it is distributed to everyone in all three congregations, as usual.

The 'Sunday at Six' Zoom evening worship will take place again, providing online worship which is mostly live and which also gives you the chance to sing hymns to Ellen's piano accompaniment. I think we have now got this working quite well, with many thanks to Keith Crichton for technical assistance. This week our readings move from Genesis into the book of Exodus, and we begin to hear the story of Moses. This Zoom service was originally a Pulborough initiative but members of all churches are very welcome to join us, either online via computer of some sort or by ordinary landline phone - let me know if you would like details.

The 'After Church Coffee' Zooms (one each for the Billingshurst and the Pulborough congregations) will continue too, for a relaxed chance to chat and exchange news at 11.30 on Sunday mornings. Of course new people are welcome, either online or by phone - just ask for details.

Billingshurst will have a short service starting at 10.30am, led by Jon Ogan; everyone welcome but please remember it's important to phone Brenda in good time.

Petworth will also have a short service at 10.30am, lead by Maureen Purser - again all are very welcome but if you intend to be there please make sure Maureen knows.

Pulborough will have a short service outdoors in the church garden at 10.30am, weather permitting! I will be leading it. There is no access to the building, except to use the toilet. All welcome but it's important you let Gerald know in good time if you intend to be there.

For all services please remember to dress for the weather, as windows and doors are open even where services are held indoors. Obviously one of the advantages of knowing who is coming is that we can let you know if services have to be cancelled at short notice because of rain or for any other reason. Bring your own Bible or cushion if you want them, and a bottle of water, as the kitchen is not in use. Please use the hand sanitiser as you arrive; sit where you're asked, as it's still very important to keep a distance from each other; and leave promptly at the end, rather than chatting on church premises (sorry - I think that's one of the hardest rules!). In each church there will be a retiring collection as you leave. Please remember masks are now a legal requirement indoors.

Obviously, if you, or anyone you've been with, has any symptoms of Covid-19, or has tested positive in the last 14 days, you won't come out and put others at risk!

Have a really good weekend, and stay in touch - with each other, especially those who are still quite isolated, and with me.

Anne Lewitt

These letters and Bulletins, with some details removed for confidentiality, are now being added to our church websites so that they are more easily and widely accessible.