

Church Matters



Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore
St Peter & St Paul Church, Stondon Massey

April 2020

Donation 50p



HE IS RISEN

PRAISE be to the
of our **LORD**

GOD and **FATHER**
JESUS CHRIST!

In his great **mercy**
birth into a living
resurrection of
from the dead, and
that can never perish,

he has given us **new**
hope through the
Jesus Christ
into an **inheritance**
spoil or fade.

1 Peter 1 v 3-4

EASTER 2020

Join us **ONLINE** for Holy Week and
Easter Services - See inside for details



Services - April 2020

There are no services in either church until further notice.

Sunday Services will continue and can be viewed online from 10.00 each Sunday either from the link from the website or Facebook—details below.

Daily prayers are being broadcast on Monday's to Saturdays at:

09:30 12:00 18.30 and 22:00

and on Sunday's at 22:00

You can view these live or go to the videos section on the Facebook page where you can view past broadcasts.

***** See Page 7 for Holy Week and Easter Service Times *****



Church Website: <http://www.blackmorechurch.org.uk/>



Facebook—search: **Priory Church of St Laurence - Blackmore**

Services in church will resume as soon as we are able and will be notified by email.

If you currently do not receive regular emails from the church office and would like to, please email: **blackmorevicarage@gmail.com**

Keep up with news from the Diocese on the Diocesan Website:

<https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/>

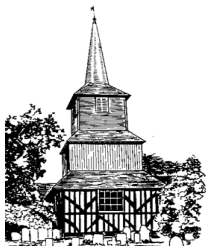
Church Matters - Articles and Advertising

Please submit all articles, information and pictures to the Church Matters email address: **blackmorechurchmatters@gmail.com**

Copy Deadline for **May** is **Friday 24th April**

To advertise contact Jill Griffiths or the Editors. For rates see table below:
(Churches/Registered Charities: free)

Annual	B/W	Colour	Single Issue	B/W	Colour
Full Page	£110	£175	Full Page	£ 15	£ 25
Hall Page	£ 55	£ 90	Half Page	£ 10	£ 15



**Priory Church of St Laurence
Blackmore
and
St Peter and St Paul
Stondon Massey**



***Reverend Sam Brazier-Gibbs ,
The Vicarage, Church Street, Blackmore, Ingatestone, Essex CM4 0RN
Telephone: 07894 948867 Email: revsbg@me.com***

Dear Friends,

What a strange time we find ourselves in. I do hope you are managing to look after yourself and stay well. Being separated in this way is making us think seriously about how Church works, what it means to be a part of the body of Christ, and how we can stay connected in worship, prayer and fellowship.

Many of you have been engaging in some of our online prayer times. We have been holding live streamed meetings on Facebook four times a day for the past two weeks.



We have joined in the ancient tradition of saying morning prayer, midday prayer, evening prayer and compline (night prayer).

I am finding this is giving deep rhythm to my day. It has always been my custom to say morning prayer and night prayer on behalf of the people in the parish and the world and the church. It has been enriching to add those two further times of prayer and a special blessing having people join me from their own homes to pray with me. In some ways it has made me feel more connected to our church family rather than less.

There are of course lots of people who are not on social media and we have been offering to send an email with a link to our prayer services immediately after they have finished. If you would like to receive this please would you email me at blackmorevicarage@gmail.com.

We are also trying to keep in touch with those who don't use any type of technology. It has been so nice to speak with people on the telephone. I have also been sending out postcards with notes of encouragement and assurance of my prayers.

Whilst this pandemic and current crisis is incredibly troubling and may cause us some worry and anxiety we must look for the moments that bring us joy, peace and love.

For me I have found moments of beauty, peace, joy and love in connecting with parishioners in this new way, having requests for help from people I've never met in

the community and building new relationships, being mindful of other people and their needs, and taking the time out to pray each day.

I have found such joy in the deepening of friendships in ways I expect would not have happened if we were not going through this current time of trial each day.

The Bible tells us that suffering is often the path to growth, love and glory. I pray that during this time of enforced social distancing, isolation and disconnection you will find that your relationships become closer, that you will be surrounded by friends and family even if they can't be in the same room and that you will feel more closely connected to those whom you love.

Above all I pray that you will take this time to cultivate a relationship that really is life changing and life giving. A relationship with the living God the Father through the person of Jesus Christ, His Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

With love, your friend and Vicar

Sam

AFTER THE FALL !

When I became unsteady on my feet my daughter would say, remember Dad if you fall at your age you don't bounce anymore, you break. I should have heeded her warning, because I did break; my hip, three ribs and a torn shoulder tendon.

Unfortunately my rib injury caused bleeding into my thorax causing my right lung to collapse, thankfully I am progressing and hope to make a full recovery although still experiencing breathlessness.

I would like to extend my thanks to all who sent me get well cards who enquired after me and who held me in their prayers during the difficult time of my recovery. A special thanks to the Pastoral care team who were unstinting in their care and concern, not just my welfare but that of June's also. It is most reassuring to have such provision in a church whereby physical needs are met as are spiritual and prayer support. A special thank you to Jenny Dodd who went the extra mile and beyond in her Pastoral role and to Alan Dodd for the support given to Jenny in her caring role.

I must confess I had great difficulty praying for myself even in the most difficult of times in the hospital. I don't understand this but it seemed almost selfish on my part to be saying to God help me out again, or was I so sure of his love and care for me that I took for granted a loving father would never abandon his child. I do know I had a peace and reassurance that all would be well and again thank those who held me in their prayers.

In the coming weeks and months us seniors will be faced with the challenge of avoiding infection from the coronavirus as so many in our village will be at risk.

Let us pray they will be given every assistance so their needs are met and are not subject to exposure to the virus.

My thanks to all again,

Ken Sexton



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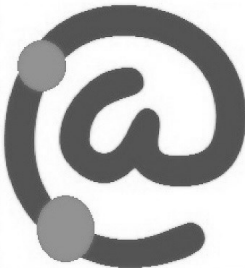
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Palm Sunday

There will be a service of worship on Palm Sunday recorded and uploaded onto Facebook and will be available from 10.00am. A link will also be put on the church website main page which will take you to the service recording.

While we cannot distribute palm crosses we are asking people to draw a cross on their palm and write 'Palm Crosses' and '2020' on it (see picture).

If you are able, please take a photo of your palm with the cross on it and either email it to Sam at revsbg@mac.com or send them to 07894 948867 using WhatsApp or picture text.

Then on Palm Sunday (5th April) post them on Social media (twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc.) and tag the post with #palmcrosses20 and the words 'Hosanna in the highest, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'

You could also mention St Laurence, Blackmore, St Peter and St Paul, Standon and Chelmsford Diocese in your post.

Let's tell the story of Palm Sunday to the world!



Please remember that the parish office 01277 821464 is open during this COVID19 crisis Monday to Friday 10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm. Outside these hours Rev. Sam is available on revsbg@mac.com blackmorevicarage@gmail.com and 07894 948867. If there is ANYTHING you need please do not hesitate to call she will do what she can to provide or co-ordinate help and care.

Holy Week and Easter Services

Holy week Monday

09.30 Morning prayer
12:00 Midday prayer
19:30 Evening service - Night prayer.

Holy week Tuesday

09.30 Morning prayer
12:00 Midday prayer
19:30 Evening service - Interactive prayer stations.

Holy week Wednesday

09.30 Morning prayer
12:00 Midday prayer
19:30 Evening service - Stations of the cross

Holy week Thursday

09.30 Morning prayer
12:00 Midday prayer
19:30 Evening service - Maundy Thursday meal

Good Friday

11:00 Morning prayer including walk of witness
14:00 Last hour at the cross

Easter Saturday

19:30 Prayer vigil by the Fireside

Easter Sunday

06:15 Live Sunrise service
10:00 Easter morning service with breaking of bread

These will be accompanied with recordings of church members telling the story of Holy Week and Easter, the Lord Jesus Christ's passion, death, burial and resurrection. Let's tell everybody about this most incredible good news!

Reflections . . .

*“And remember, I am
with you always, to the
end of the age.”*

Matthew 28.10

“I am with you always”

The eleven disciples met Jesus on a mountain in Galilee where Matthew tells us ‘they worshiped him; but some doubted’ (v17). Jesus knew their (and knows our) human frailty. However he had a great task for them which was to go and make disciples of all nations.

How would they do that? What would they say and do? Jesus knew this task would leave them feeling anxious so he left them with these final words “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

In these difficult times there will be days where we are able to worship, pray, read, learn and engage with the Living God. Yet we will also have days where we struggle to find His presence in our daily lives and in what we see going on in our communities, country and around the world.

Jesus knew the disciples doubt. Yet he still gives them this charge. They have been with him since the beginning. “Follow me,” he said, and they did. He put up with their power struggles, thoughtless questions, greed, lack of faith and selfishness and finally, most painfully, their abandoning him.

Now, despite all of that, despite their doubt at this mountaintop moment, he chooses them again. Is there any greater proof that there is hope for us? Jesus looks in the face of those who worship and those who doubt, and says, “I need you to proclaim the Gospel.” We need to do this now, more than ever.

In your prayers this month please remember . . .

All those affected by Coronavirus across the world.

We pray for all those hospitalised by the virus. We pray that they will be able to get the care and help needed to give them the best chance of recovery.

We pray for the medical teams treating people and trying to contain the outbreak. We pray for their health and safety in these trying times.

Pray for the scientists looking for a vaccine and we give thanks for all who are using their skills to create new types of ventilator machines to help save more lives

We pray for all those in ‘lockdown’, praying that people will be sensible and adhere to the Government guidelines.

We pray for those who are on their own at this time, praying that family, friends and neighbours will look out for them and support them.

We pray for all those whose jobs and livelihoods are at risk at the moment and give thanks that our Government are putting in measures to help.

We pray for those balancing hectic family lives with children at home 24x7 and give thanks for the technologies that are enabling people to keep in touch and keep the education going.

We pray for our vicar Rev Sam, for Anthea, our Reader, for our Church Wardens Stuart, Sandra and Jan and for both our PCCs.

We hold in our prayers all those in our church family and others known to us who are unwell or suffering the loss of a loved one. May they receive the healing love, peace and strength of our saviour Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus Christ, help us to show your Love by our actions in these difficult times. *Amen*



Family News

Happy Birthday



Anthea Gray, Kerry Allardyce, Andrew Smith
Margaret Laing, Debbie Thwaite, Richard Thwaite
and anyone else celebrating a birthday in April

Notice of Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCM)

(* Subject to confirmation ***)**

The APCM for **St Laurence** will be on Sunday 26th April following the morning service.

The APCM for **St Peter and St Paul** will be on Sunday 3rd May following the morning service.

Nomination forms will be available for both churches at the start of April.

Reports for inclusion at the meeting should be submitted to the church office by April 10th.

Situation Vacant

Treasurer - St Laurence

After many years of faithful service Brenda Leigh will be giving up her role as Treasurer at the APCM (28th April)

A new treasurer is therefore required. There are no specific requirements for this role although a knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word would be useful along with good numerical skills.

Brenda will continue to be around to help out as necessary until the new treasurer is up to speed with all that is required and there is support from the diocese available as required.

MODS Report

It is very sad but we must protect our members at risk through Corona Virus, protect the NHS and save lives by following government guidelines and cancelling our 2020 Programme until further notice.

We will of course let you know the moment we can resume our programme, but in the meantime, please take the advice of the government by staying at home and don't forget if you have any problems just ring the church office **tel. 821464**.

We promise that the entertainment we have lined up for you will be worth the wait.

Fortunately, we signed off with a fantastic afternoon of dance when we held our 'Strictly Come Tea Dancing' afternoon in Church on Sunday Afternoon the 8th March, run by the wonderful and 'long suffering' Debbie.

We learnt the Cha Cha Cha and the slow Foxtrot along with several sequence dances. It was brilliant and it took me personally back many years. Tea and cakes were enjoyed during the interval. The second half of the afternoon we did attempt to put into practice what we had learnt in the first half. It was a good job that Debbie was still providing support.

Everyone I have spoken to really enjoyed the afternoon whether they actually did any dancing or not. The music Debbie used was worth listening to in its own right.

Well done everyone we will certainly do it again.

Peter Mason





REACHING THE NATIONS

Sean Wood, working with Agapé UK

We're currently living in very strange times. I've certainly not experienced anything before, that has had such an impact on society, as that which we're currently experiencing with the Covid-19 pandemic. The only thing in my experience that I can really compare it to is the odd 'snow days' that occasionally lead to school closures and public transport grinding to a halt! The media certainly seems to have had a mixed effect; it's undoubtedly helpful to be made aware of any sort of healthcare threat, but I also can't help but feel that the volume of reporting has led some to panic and overreact, such as we've seen with the unnecessary panic buying. But, I'm certainly no expert, so I'm trying to reserve judgement.

It's been a difficult few weeks in my work. Covid-19 has led to the cancellation of all of our global projects to Malta, Greece and St. Petersburg, Russia (global projects are our short-term overseas trips that we provide for UK university students to go to meet with Agapé teams in other countries and work alongside them for a few weeks in meeting and building friendships with local students and looking for opportunities to have discussions about faith with them). A couple of work trips that I had lined up have also been victims of the cull.

After the cancellation of my projects, I suddenly found myself getting very frustrated at the impact of what we're going through. Where is God in everything that is happening? I've spent much of my time over the last 6 months working on these projects. Has it all been in vain?



Our global project to Russia won't be taking place for the first time in 20 years!

The answer has got to be 'no'. I'm still convinced that God is good; Easter, after all, is the perfect time of year to remind us of that. Death will always be a bit of a taboo subject, but the fact remains that it is one of the only certainties in life (along with taxes). As Christians, Jesus' death at the first Easter has given us hope in the face of death (unfortunately, He still commanded us to pay our taxes, though)! The Resurrection demonstrates that Jesus has the power to defeat death, and all we need to do is confess to Him that He knows better than us about life, thank Him for what He's done for us – through Easter – and, as we've admitted that He knows best, we ask Him to help us to live the rest of our lives in the way that He demonstrated to us. Jesus' promise is that, if we respond to Him in this way, He will help us to, one day, defeat death just as He did! That's certainly something for us

to hold onto when everything that we usually rely on is under threat.

Don't worry; despite my disappointment, I'm not all doom and gloom about my work at the moment! I've been really encouraged by the reaction that I've seen in some people around me. In churches up and down the country, I'm sure, church leaders are exhorting us to not fear, but to see the incredible opportunity that we are being presented with to serve our neighbours, both in word and in deed. At my church here in Birmingham, St. Luke's Gas Street, our vicar (to a visibly depleted congregation on the last Sunday we were able to gather) encouraged us recently to take the opportunity to speak hope into the lives of our friends and neighbours who might be experiencing fear. More than that, though, we have a great opportunity to show love in practical ways; we can reach

out to those who are self-isolating by offering to bring them anything they need, give them a phone call, if they are missing communication, and even go out and do their shopping for them!



ARE YOU SELF-ISOLATING DUE TO COVID-19?
WE ARE YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND WANT TO HELP!

There are many neighbours living on Cherington Rd, Rissington Ave and Windrush Grove that are ready, willing and happy to help with **picking-up your shopping (yes, your entire list!)**, a friendly phone call if you're alone or lonely, posting mail or any other needs for as long as you need support.

Hollie on Rissington is coordinating volunteers. Text or call her at **+44 7771 676302** with what you need and a neighbour will be in touch.

If you're not self-isolating and would like to be available to help your neighbours with these needs join the WhatsApp Group via this link: <https://tinyurl.com/CheringtonCovid19Help>

General Cherington Rd Gatherings WhatsApp group:
<https://tinyurl.com/CheringtonRd>

CORONAVIRUS IS CONTAGIOUS AND WE'LL TAKE EVERY PRECAUTION TO ENSURE WE'RE ONLY SPREADING KINDNESS BY AVOIDING PHYSICAL CONTACT, WASHING HANDS REGULARLY AND DELIVERING TO YOUR DOORSTEP.



This is the flyer that we have sent out to our neighbours.

go as part of exchange programmes between universities. For Christian students, if they are involved in outreach on their campus here in the UK, their time overseas can end up being a break; they're in an unfamiliar place and they're not sure where to go to for support. With Agapé having a presence in over 190 countries across the world, it's my desire to set up a programme to help connect UK students with existing local Agapé teams in the places where they're going to study (if these teams currently exist) and to provide them with a coach, back in the UK, who can support them, and give them relevant training, so that they can stay active and make the most of their time in a different country. I'll do my best to keep you updated on my progress in developing the Agapé UK Study Abroad programme!

Thank you all for your ongoing support and prayer for my work from Blackmore and Stondon. I pray that you are all able to stay healthy and hopeful.

STAY SAFE - Online and Phone

In these challenging times we are all grateful for the array of technology that allows us to keep in touch. However, there are many unscrupulous people who are constantly trying to scam us to take our money or break our equipment. The following tips may prove helpful:

- No bank or other legitimate company will ever call you, text you or email you to ask for bank or any other personal details. Do not reveal these details however convincing they may sound.
- Do not click on any links in emails or messages unless you are 100% certain of the sender. If you are unsure manually type the website name to access it.
- Ensure you have different passwords for bank accounts, emails and other accounts / sites where your bank information is stored.
- Ideally have a different password for all sites you log into (this is difficult but if you use the same password and it becomes compromised the hacker then has free access to all other accounts / sites you use).
- Make a regular backup of you PC / Laptop / Phone—especially your important files / photos etc.
- If you receive an automated telephone call where you are asked to press a number to speak to someone about the issue—DO NOT—it will rack up high phone charges

Examples of some common current scams—(there are many others)

- TV Licensing **will not** text you to say your TV licence has expired
- Amazon **will not** call you to say your subscription is being auto-renewed
- HMRC **will not** call you to say you have a refund
- Microsoft **will not** call you to help you fix security issues they have detected
- Internet providers **will not** call you to say you are being disconnected

If you have any doubt whatsoever **STOP**.

If on the phone hang up or take a number to call them back. Then call a trusted friend or family member and ask for advice.

Doorstep Scams

New doorstep scams are emerging. Please take care and only answer the door if you are 100% sure of the person calling. Current scams include:

- People offering to do a Virus test for money - SCAM
- People saying they need to take your dog into quarantine to prevent the spread of the virus—SCAM
- Cold callers offering kindness by way of running errands, collecting prescriptions and doing shopping - asking for cash upfront or for your credit / debit card and PIN—SCAM

If you experience any of these or other doorstep scams, please inform the police.



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Upcoming Events (tbc)

*** These events will only go ahead if social distancing restrictions are lifted ***

Thu 16th April	10.15am	Coffee Cake and Craft morning	Blackmore Baptist Church
Thu 23rd April	7.30pm	St. George's Day Celebration	Prince Albert
Fri 24th April	12.00pm	Blackmore Lunch Club	Blackmore Baptist Church
Tue 5th May	2.00pm	Tuesday 2-4 club	Stondon Village Hall

*Regular Activities (*** upon re-commencement ***)*

Mondays:

10.00am Play & Pray at Blackmore Tennis Club

7.30pm Jubilate Choir Practice (1st Monday of Month)

Tuesdays:

10.30-12.00 pm Serenitea Cafe at St. Laurence

2-4 Club 1st Tuesday of Month at Stondon Village Hall

Wednesdays:

10.00-11.45am Little Ones for Toddlers and Carers at St. Laurence

11:00 Social Tennis, Blackmore Tennis Club

Thursdays:

8.20-9.30am Open the Book Assemblies at Blackmore Primary School

12.00-2.00pm Bible Study and Lunch at Corfu, Blackmore Road

7.30 to 9.30 am Create - 2nd Thursday in month - St Laurence Church

WHO'S WHO AT

ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH, STONDON MASSEY

Rector:	Rev. Sam Brazier-Gibbs	07894 948867
Reader:	Mrs Anthea Gray 6 Whitegates, Lindsell, Dunmow, Essex CM6 3QL	01371 852241
Churchwarden:	Miss Jan Mackintosh Ness Bank, Hook End Road	821524
Assistant Churchwardens:	George Goodwin June Wiggett	824311
Secretary to PCC	Mrs Chris Hall St Austell, Ongar Road	821447
Treasurer:	Mrs Anne Springate	364772
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator	Mrs Jenny Dodd	823452
Church Flowers:	Mrs Anne Springate	364772
Weddings, Funerals Blessing of Marriages - Bookings	Contact Vicarage Office Rev. Sam Brazier-Gibbs	821464 07894 948867
PCC Members:	Mr George Goodwin, Mrs Chris Hall (co-opted), Mrs Cynthia Kelly, Mrs Josie Mills, Miss Tamzin Mills, Mrs Valerie Ruffels, Mrs June Wiggett, Mrs Kathy Honeyman, Mrs Anne Springate, Mrs Marian Grant (co-opted).	

ST LAURENCE, BLACKMORE ST PETER & ST PAUL, STONDON MASSEY

Please note that the Diocese has very strict rules about memorials and the maintenance of our Churchyards. Please contact the Church Office before any decision is made.

WHO'S WHO AT

THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST LAURENCE, BLACKMORE

Vicar:	Rev. Sam Brazier-Gibbs	07894 948867
Reader:	Mrs Anthea Gray 6 Whitegates, Lindsell, Dunmow, Essex CM6 3QL	01371 852241
Churchwardens:	Dr. Stuart Jennings The Moathouse, Church Street	821078
	Mrs Sandra Keeble 6 Woollard Way	822266
Secretary to PCC:	Mrs Gill Hall Tormist, Nine Ashes Road	823280
Treasurer:	Mrs Brenda Leigh Holly Cottage, Church Street	823935
Planned Giving Co-ordinator:	Mr John Hughes	821805
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator:	Mrs Jenny Dodd	823452
Church Flowers:	Mrs Catherine Jennings	821078
Weddings, Funerals, Blessings of Marriages - Bookings	Contact Vicarage Office Rev. Sam Brazier-Gibbs	821464 07894 948867
PCC Members:	Mrs Jenny Dodd, Mr John Hughes, Mrs Margaret Laing, Mr Peter Mason, Mrs Brenda Flack, Mr Kevin Wood, Mrs Carol Riley, Mrs Celia Hatt, Mr Andrew Smith	

Burial of Ashes in Churchyard - Reminder of Diocesan Regulations

To comply with churchyard rules and regulations as laid down by the Diocese please also remember that Ashes must be interred and arrangements for this must be made with Rev. Sam either directly or via the Vicarage Office.

Ashes must not be freely scattered in the churchyard.



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