

Hello everyone,

There's lots to report and lots going on as we begin to get out a bit more but even if you've had both vaccinations it is still important to stick to all the guidelines and continue to wear face coverings, social distance and keep washing your hands. We will soon have packs of Lateral Flow Tests available for you take away from church and test yourself at home. The Director of Public Health, Birmingham is encouraging all who attend any place of worship to take a test within the 48 hours prior to attending – though we won't be asking you to prove that you have done this, especially as they don't 'go well' with certain medications so do check with your pharmacist if you are not sure. However, I'm now doing them regularly as are some other on the ministry team.



The re-opening of the church went well on Easter Sunday and we will continue to hold the 9.30am service both in church and on Zoom for the foreseeable future. We are also starting to offer Holy Communion on your doorstep or in the garden for those who aren't able to get to church. Please do NOT invite us into your homes as this is not permitted except when someone is close to death! Contact ministers to book.

**Ann Morrell** is more than a 'social distance' from us now and sends us all greetings from Swindon. She was so sorry she wasn't able to say farewell in person to any of her friends at St Laurence. She left Northfield in the snow! However she says, "I like the apartment very much and am beginning to feel at home in this small building of 14 flats, but we are all confined, so have not met anyone yet. It is very reassuring to know that this is the place to be and to see my daughter and family so often."

17 – 22<sup>nd</sup> May is **Christian Aid** week and once again we've set up an on-line fundraising page so we can track donations from members of St Laurence Church. We've set a target of £450 but we usually raise a good bit more than this. The easiest and safest way to donate is through this page <https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/st-laurence-church-northfield?channel=status> but we've enclosed a Christian Aid envelope if you prefer to give this way. Please return it to the Pastoral Centre or bring to church so we can add your donation to the e-total. If you don't use it do pass it on to someone else!

	<p>The climate crisis is having a devastating impact Kenya. Right now families struggle to survive without a reliable water source. Every day, they walk further, dig deeper and build stronger to survive. Unrelenting yet determined. Let's join together and support those on the frontlines who battle coronavirus and fight for climate justice.</p>
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We are also having a plant sale in the Rectory Garden (opposite 6 Rectory Road, B31 2NA) after church on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May from 10.30-11.30am for Christian Aid. You are welcome to drop off plants etc for sale the day before – please leave on the porch if no reply.

Fundraising for St Laurence is picking up again with **Bric@Brac Sales** this coming Saturday and again on 5<sup>th</sup> June from 9am – I am **outside** the Pastoral Centre. We may be able to be even more ambitious and serve drinks at one on 10<sup>th</sup> July .....

Also we have just joined **Easyfundraising** by which you can raise donations for St Laurence every time you shop online! We are registered as 'St Laurence Northfield' so do make sure you sign up to support the right church. when you shop online with one of 4,700 retailers. Each time you raise a donation for our church – and it doesn't cost you a penny! Each donation may only be pennies for over time they really do make not just £'s but £K's!

There are over 3,300 retailers involved including Sainsbury's, Argos, M&S, Booking.com, Amazon, eBay, Uber Eats, Debenhams, Confused.com, Waitrose, RAC, Expedia... the list goes on and on. See the enclosed leaflet for more information and we'll put the link on the e-version of the notices too.

And what will we spend all these donations on? Well, although the builders haven't been around for a while the porch is being made off site and should be with us fairly soon. Also, we have been moving rapidly on with the Church Lighting and our preferred company is going back next week to work on a detailed quotation. The PCC has also agreed that we start to look at designers for the new portable altar and font and also a matching lectern and paschal candle stand. We've already had someone express interest in paying for one of these in memory of a loved one.

Other exciting news is that **Mr Andrew Murphy** has started as Head of St Laurence CofE Juniors and some of the Year 6 leavers have been accepted at the brand new CofE Secondary School '**Christ Church**' at Yardley Wood. It opens its doors in September. We continue to pray for all our local schools during this difficult time.

And even more exciting has been the launch of "**Larry's**" - St Laurence Safe-Spaces After-School Club opened its doors on 22nd April. There weren't many young people in attendance but for those who did attend, their only disappointment was to learn that it is not open every-day after school. I guess it could be if we have more volunteers to run it! Contact Fr David for more information.

Somewhat disappointing is the news that the **Ordinations** will again be very small services so we can not invite you to Revd Theresa's ordination as priest on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June in Birmingham Cathedral but she will be celebrating Holy Communion for the first time the following Sunday in St Laurence. Our ordinand Claire continues to make excellent progress in her training. We've been delighted that she has made her home with us for the last 18 months but she will soon be off to do the long placement and will then settle with another 'link church' for her final year of training. Her last Sunday with us is 16<sup>th</sup> May.

Our **Annual Meeting** has been postponed until **Wednesday 23rd June** at 7pm in church to enable safer attendance but we will zoom it too. This means that the revision of the Electoral Roll will close on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June. If you are already on the roll (which you probably are if you are receiving this) you don't need to do anything unless you have moved or changed your phone number in recent months. If you wish to be on the roll you need to complete the form. It is all handled by Mrs Ruth Clarke so please contact her direct: [mrs.ruth.clarke@gmail.com](mailto:mrs.ruth.clarke@gmail.com) or tel 07464 737568. We will also be looking for some new members of the PCC and 2 more Deanery Synod Reps.

Do check you have these dates in your diary:

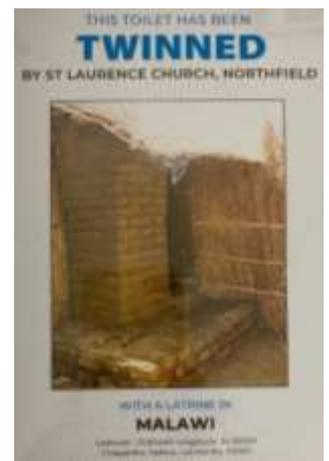
**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 7.30pm** Ascension Day Service in church & via Zoom

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 10am** Corpus Christi Service via Zoom

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Sept 4pm** "Edith Holden's Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November** Christmas Fayre

Thankfully both Peter and I remembered the date of recent 40th wedding anniversary – and YOU did too! We are very grateful for the **Ruby Anniversary** tea rose and the box of truffles. Will one of them survive until our Golden Wedding? Our present to one another was a litter picker each – so more points towards our next (silver) Eco-church award as is our recent toilet-twinning.



Some of you may be aware that I spent 7 hours in A & E recently having pricked the top of my mouth whilst eating and it swelled up rather alarmingly. Everyone who looked after me was lovely but clearly overworked. However, the wait in ambulatory A & E was somewhat bleak as all you could do was sit on a socially isolated chair. I was most glad of my bottle of water! In the light of this I've updated the 'What to take into hospital list' we produced early on in the pandemic. Hopefully, you won't need it!

Be at peace to love and serve the Lord in whatever way you can – every whispered prayer helps.

Blessings Can Jan

27<sup>th</sup> April 2021