

NEWS LETTER

of St. Mary Bromley

24 March 2020

Welcome to our first Newsletter during this time of lockdown due to coronavirus. There have been a series of restrictions imposed on us as the last week or so. With the cancellation of public worship I had a plan was a plan to livestream worship with a few people from the church building. Now the building has to be completely closed. So that was the end of that. With people self-isolating and living alone there was a hope to leaflet the parish. We could support the community's local action and offer St. Mary's as a resource. But with the need now for very little movement that is not possible either.

But we remain a community of people with a parish to serve even if this is greatly reduced. Please find in this newsletter a variety of issues that are worth sharing.

Prayer and Worship

On a daily basis you might like a form of prayer to guide you. The Church of England has daily prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Prayer During the Day is a simple service and Compline is a good way to end the day.

These are available in an app called Time To Pray from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

The St. Mary's Facebook page will have a video each evening available from 7.00 p.m. of Compline for the day. You will be welcome to watch or use the service and join in. There will also be a service available on Sundays from 10.30 a.m.

Living at home

We are used to a familiar routine of activity. Managing all of our life at home can be a new experience. Please see below a document called Working From Home - Top Tips which gives some wise advice.

It is good to keep in touch with people. There are many ways to do this. Obviously there is the phone. Video calling is common with Skype and Whatsapp. There is now a service called Zoom so many people can have a conversation together, see <https://zoom.us>. You could arrange conversations with family, friends or a social group you know. Our Pastoral team recently did this and will be happy to advise.

Contact

We continue to communicate in a variety of ways:

Our website will have information about what is taking place see <https://www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk>

Our Facebook will be source of information too <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysbromley>

However we have decided to suspend our Families Newsletter.

The pastoral Team will be keeping in touch with the congregation in a regular way.

APCM

Maybe not the event at the top of your list at the moment! But the current lockdown does mean that it will be delayed. Currently there is permission to have it as late as the end of October.

And on the bright side

Air quality is now really very good.

New relationships between people may change the character of our neighbourhood to be closer.

Jones Brothers have been recommended for delivering groceries <http://www.jonesdairies.com>

Marks and Spencer are working with Deliveroo to deliver goods.

Rev. Alan Keeler



Working from home – Top Tips

Many of you are finding yourself working from home now for the very first time and this can be daunting. I've pulled together some online tips as well as some tips from our colleagues who do this regularly. I hope you find them useful!

Prepare to 'Start work'

Whilst its really tempting to stay in your PJ's all day (and there is a place for that!), it is also really important to create the routine of getting ready to start work, it helps to prepare you mentally and physically for the day ahead.

Have a shower and get dressed – feeling refreshed and in your clothes for the day will set the right frame of mind. It will also avoid appearing at your zoom meeting sporting the 'just out of bed' look!

Replicate the work 'commute' - go for a short walk before you start to get some fresh air and (hopefully) sunshine. Take your travel mug of tea or coffee. If self-isolating, maybe just take your mug of tea into the garden for 15 minutes before you start.

Establish boundaries

You have set working hours and therefore its important to try and stick to them where possible, to set clear boundaries for yourself on work time and home time.

Stick to a start time and a finish time

Set up a designated workspace, if this is your dining room table, clear it away at the end of the day so you are not looking at it in the evening, tempted to log on

Be fair to yourself – you are at home it will be strange and tricky to get used to in the beginning so if you need to take a bit more time to adjust, that's ok

Establish boundaries

For some colleagues they will have a lot of additional work because of the current challenges and working situation – everyone needs to take care in setting clear boundaries and to manage expectations on how quickly things can get done

Some will find they have less to do not being in the office, perhaps use the time for some personal development – there are free online courses available for Excel, PowerPoint etc.

Establish boundaries

If there are other people in the house ,where possible, find a space where you're not likely to be disturbed

Don't overcompensate – Many people can be tempted to over communicate when working from home - either wanting to 'be seen', or making sure people know what they are doing. That's fine - but it doesn't necessarily make you more productive

Please consider the HSE guidance when setting up your workspace, find out more information here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>

Give yourself a break

Working from home shouldn't mean that you don't take a proper lunch break away from your workspace. This gives your mind a rest by physically removing yourself from work. It can also give you fresh perspective when you return to work after lunch. This could mean:

- Taking a walk at lunch time (if not self-isolating or is possible to do so without contact)
- Eat your lunch in the garden
- Spend half an hour weeding the garden or hanging your washing out (hurry up sun!)

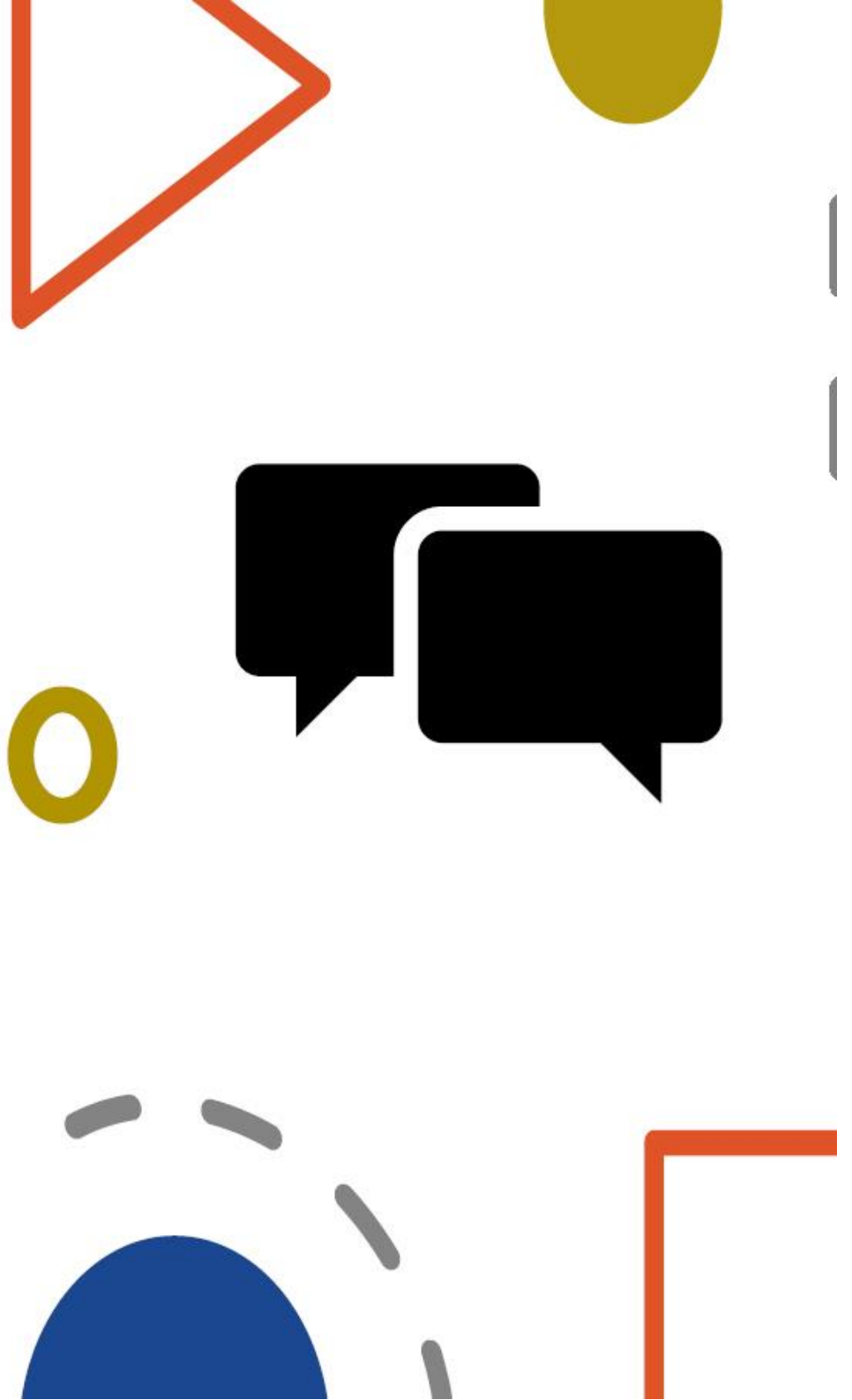
Give yourself a break

- If you can't or don't want to go out at lunch time – watch a TV programme for an hour
- Don't stay glued to your screen all day. It's important to take regular screen breaks and get up from your desk and move around just as you would in an office; research has also found that short breaks throughout the day are more beneficial than less frequent, longer breaks.
- Take some exercise, or just get up and stretch!

Stay Connected

If you're working from home, the chances are you'll be alone, so you won't get distracted by colleagues' conversations and other office noise, but this can be very isolating and lonely

- Pick up the phone and have conversation, rather than relying on email
- If you have a colleague you work closely with or usually sits across from, call them to check in daily
- Use Zoom for one to one catch ups or meetings, so you get to see your colleagues faces too
- Have some background noise – There are numerous apps which provide outdoor background sounds if that's your thing, or have the radio on, the BBC sounds app is good if you'd rather just music without the chatter



Mental Health

What is going on at the moment is unprecedented and while dealing with the practical challenges of working in a new way, many people will be anxious about everything that is going on.

- Don't watch too much news, we all need to stay informed, but once you know what you feel you need to know, switch off, particularly close to bedtime
- Spend periods of time off of social media – There is a lot of positive content on social media right now, there is also a lot of opinion, catastrophising and conspiracies, so if you are on social media, look at following accounts producing helpful content and unfollow or mute those that make you anxious
- Do what you enjoy doing that relaxes you, whether it be reading, exercise, meditation or prayer
- Treat yourself – A new kindle book, a boxset on Amazon prime, Netflix subscription, chocolate, flowers!

