



June 2020

Churches Together in Dorset Newsletter

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On 22nd March, the Presidents of Churches Together in England called for a National Day of Prayer and Action.

In a series of video messages released on 6th May, Presidents of Churches Together in England encouraged people to keep on praying in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. Archbishop Justin Welby : “We pray out of love to a God who is love” Pastor Agu Irukwu : “We have a Father who hears our prayers...Be encouraged that our prayers are not in vain.” Archbishop Angaelos commented that the churches were presenting to the world many opportunities for acts of grace and kindness, but also asked that people continue praying “for our churches, our Church, for our nation, for our world.” Archbishop Vincent Nichols : “It’s God’s work that we’re involved in. And we need the help of God, and we need to pray for that continually.” Revd Dr Hugh Osgood : “Let’s keep praying and be assured prayer does make a difference.”

The Trustees of CTE echo this, lending their support to CTE’s Prayers of Hope initiative, which has included churches’ united singing of [The UK Blessing](#) and Christians across the country being invited to join together in [prayer](#) at 7pm every Sunday evening, with resources and a weekly radio broadcast on Premier Christian Radio.

Find the CTE Presidents’ video messages and a transcript of each [here](#)
Find the Trustees’ video messages [here](#)

The Church in Dorset during Covid-19

Things have been very different for churches and ecumenical groups in Dorset. People have not been able to gather together inside church buildings ; groups have not been able to hold face-to-face meetings ; planned events such as Pentecost Sunday walks and have been postponed or cancelled ; local initiatives such as Open the Book are not operating, and Boscombe Angels and Street Pastors are not patrolling.

However, the churches in Dorset have continued to explore different ways to be Church and to carry out mission together. Below are just a few examples :

Churches have continued to provide a range of live and recorded services via online platforms. Aside from this, Bournemouth Area Quakers have circulated quotations from the Bible and Quaker Faith and Practice, and have shared responses ; the Roman Catholic in Weymouth has used Zoom and Skype video conferencing for bible study and reflection ; from Ascension to Pentecost, the churches of Weymouth and Portland shared daily reflections, including a 24-hour online prayer meeting ‘Thy Kingdom Come.’ PACE (Programme for Applied Christian Education) has continued to provide free online assemblies and RE lessons for primary and secondary schools, which have been widely viewed during lockdown and which it hopes will be widely shared.

The Salvation Army BH1 Community Project in Boscombe has remained open (with social distancing measures in place). In the BCP area, local churches have worked alongside Faithworks to bring hope to the most vulnerable during the Coronavirus, and Dorset Council has also engaged with local churches. Churches in Weymouth and Portland have worked with local people, businesses and organisations to feed over 1,000

people during the pandemic, produced and distributed a leaflet informing people where they can get help, delivered food for the food bank and provided an emotional support helpline, whilst the Anglican and Methodist churches on the island have worked as part of a resilience group with volunteer groups and the local council to help ensure that nobody has been left behind during the crisis.

St George's Methodist Church, Boscombe have packed food parcels, which they have distributed to around 70 people, and their food bank has started cooperating with 'The Giving Stream' - the scheme whereby if a church buys a hamper, a second hamper is given to a family in need.

Churches have set up prayer and pastoral support systems. For example, the Quakers in Boscombe have been using Zoom so people who feel isolated might have a chat ; Weymouth churches have been praying for each others needs, and their online coffee mornings have continued ; the Roman Catholic Church in Weymouth has used the phone to contact parishioners who have relied on weekly get togethers through church services, lunch-clubs and house-groups, to catch up with them and see how they are doing, volunteers providing a listening ear and checking if they have any practical needs.

Churches across the BCP area have joined the prayer line initiative, Try Praying, and have engaged with Hope in the Community to create BCP - wide telephone befriending groups that link a volunteer (e.g. a church) with 3-4 older people who want a chat but do not use the internet.

News

PowerHouse in Poole has been awarded funding to develop its ambitions which you will find at www.harbourambition.com Harbour Ambition seeks to deliver a "Community Empowered" approach to the development of the Poole Quays regeneration area, seeking a positive working partnership with BCP Council and other alliance partners to ensure that development promotes community, delivers on the highest standards of environmental sustainability and meets the aspirations of local people.
<http://www.harbourambition.com/>

Opportunities



Holiday Hunger This summer will be a tough one for families, as school vouchers will probably not be available during the summer holidays for families who normally get free school meals.

As God's people, how can we show them they are not forgotten? Foodbanks will be issuing special holiday vouchers, but is there anything else that we could do as the Church to reach out to families in our local areas? Here are some ideas from Faithworks : one church is running 'Munch' - packed lunches for local families to collect ; some churches are considering batch cooking for lone parent families ; one church / food bank is adding activity books into the food parcels. Please email hello@faithworkswessex.org.uk if you are planning something or would like to be part of 'Operation Holiday Hope.'



Churches Supporting Care Homes : Prama are seeking input to creating a new Christian Care Network to support every care home in the conurbation through their local churches.

At least 18 churches are supporting over 40 care homes. Faithworks are building up a map of existing connections to help Prama as they start up a new way of linking all of this work together. Email steve@pramafundation.org.uk if you have a local update or if you would like to be involved,



Routes to Roots : appeal to raise £10,000 towards refurbishing the Hill Street building in Poole to give homeless and vulnerably housed people a centre, where they can access all the help they need to make lasting changes to their lives. The [appeal](#) is live on the Aviva Community Fund's crowdfunding platform for just one month. Alternatively, you can give [here](#)



The **L&TSW (Living and Telling) 2020** course will be taking place online on 6th and 7th July. Run by SWYM (South West Youth Ministry), which assists and resources the churches in the South West to establish the best models of ministry, stand in partnership together, and learn from each other, the event is ideal for supporting children's and youth leaders and offers training for churches wishing to take someone on for this role. SWYM is also looking for people interested in becoming a Ministry Partner to assist in their work. [Bookings close on 26th June](#). Find out more [here](#)



St Mungo's - Coronavirus and homelessness: how to help during the pandemic. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the vulnerable people St Mungo's work with are facing more uncertainty than ever. Their focus – as always – is on the safety and welfare of their clients, including people who are homeless and people living on the streets. They are working closely with partners on how they can help people rough sleeping or in hostels to self-isolate, to protect them from the coronavirus. Now more than ever, they need your help to ensure those sleeping rough and those in homelessness services are not forgotten and have somewhere safe to stay and to self-isolate to protect them from the coronavirus. Find out more about how you can help [here](#)

Hope in the Community BCP - wide telephone befriending groups which links a local volunteer (e.g. a church) with 3-4 older people who want a chat and don't use the internet. If you are interested in getting involved, telephone [01202 419 506](tel:01202419506) email hticbournemouth@btinternet.com hticpoole@btinternet.com



Churches Together in England

Statements from CTE Member Churches on the death of George Floyd in the United States and protests around the world against racial injustice can be found [here](#)

A range of guidance, resources and stories regarding the re-opening of places of worship for private prayer can be found [here](#)



Churches Together in Britain and Ireland



Climate Sunday Local churches are being encouraged to hold a local Climate Sunday any time during a one-year period starting on 6th September (the first Sunday in the annual season of Creation Time). Free resources will be provided to suit every tradition and style of worship. To register, visit the Climate Sunday [website](#)

Churches speak out on racism Churches and Christian organisations across Britain and Ireland have issued statements following the death of George Floyd in the USA and the resulting protests around the world. Read more [here](#)

Sign up to the monthly CTe-News [here](#)

Resources



Faithworks have been sending out a *briefing* each week to the churches in the BPC conurbation with updates which they might find useful. They have created the shared website www.churchbcp.org.uk/response that has prayer topics, a list of online services, contact numbers etc.

Faithworks Prayer Line 08081 963686

Holiday Bible Club August 2020 BCP churches are considering organising an online version of Holiday Bible Club to be available during the summer school holidays which would be available to any church wishing to use it. Please email john.ainsworth@virgin.net



Urban Saints has taken its **mission online**. It has new resources for young people, group leaders, parents and carers, new social media for young people, new online groups, new opportunities to pray for the mission, new weekly competitions and new deals for churches and parents on Energize - web-based discipleship resources for transforming young lives. Find out more [here](#)



PACE has created assemblies and RE lessons for primary and secondary schools, which have been widely viewed during lockdown and which it hopes will be widely shared. Here are the links to some :
Courage (The Story of Deborah) This primary school assembly from Andy Mason looks at a girl in the Bible who had the courage to lead and do the right thing when it was difficult and scary. <https://youtu.be/PJrfZEteqUU>
Listening (The Parable of the Sower) This assembly for primary schools retells Jesus' story of the sower and shows us 4 ways to listen. <https://youtu.be/StJB7aw-brE>
Panic or Pray? (Jesus Calms the Storm) This assembly for primary schools by Andy Mason explores the choices we make when we're scared. <https://youtu.be/4UYngmx2-zE>
Life After Death This RE lesson for secondary schools by Dave Pegg looks at what Christians believe happens when we die and might not be what you expect! <https://youtu.be/PpGyUnC9Llq>
<http://thepacetrust.blogspot.com/>

parenting for faith 'Me, God and Covid-19' - Parenting for Faith

Printable pages to use with your family or share with families in your church, which it is hoped will serve as a springboard, facilitate many great conversations with children and help to capture where God was and how children connected with him in the midst of Covid-19.

Activities including : Draw a picture or diagram of God in your home with you : Where is He and what is He doing? Something I miss about church as a building. If I was in charge of online church, I would... God says He turns all things together for good (Romans 8:28) : What good do you see happening because of Covid-19? Why do you think God made hearts that can be lonely? Who from the Bible would you pick to be in lockdown with? If God is everywhere, then why do we go to a church building? What emotions have you felt during your time at home? What will you miss about now when we can go back to normal life?

Head to parentingforfaith.org for free podcasts, videos, articles and encouragements as well as more help in discussing the spiritual side of this season with children.



Together, Apart A set of free, intergenerational resources for this this time when we cannot be together. Read more [here](#)

Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch : Helpline for people in need of food and essential household items, as well as general information and advice led by BCP Council [0300 1237052](tel:03001237052), 7 days a week 8am – 8pm. More information can be found [here](#)

Dorset Council Area : Helpline for people in need of help who do not have a support network [01305 221000](tel:01305221000), 7 days a week 8am – 8pm. communityresponse@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk More information can be found [here](#)

Bridport Town Council Area

If you are vulnerable, or know of someone who is vulnerable, self-isolating and have no immediate support available, please contact [01308 808900](tel:01308808900) email enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk. More information can be found [here](#). A leaflet with useful information can be found [here](#).

Weymouth Food Bank 07531 167 465

Transport Weymouth Community Volunteers 01305 830 255

Dorset Council Helpline 01305 221 000



Weymouth Keep in Touch - Essential Aid and Listening Ear Project

Continuing to offer support for all those in need : food help, including food delivery and a weekly hot lunch ; prescription collection, a listening ear. Call [07980 730 029](tel:07980730029) or [07514 114 680](tel:07514114680) or email Julie on juliehursthouse@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk



Ready for the New Normal The United Reformed Church has produced a helpful guidance document encouraging churches to consider key questions for when the lockdown starts to ease, including : what must resume, what shouldn't resume, and what might we do differently? Read it [here](#)



Dorset Race Equality Council (DREC) is an independent organisation dealing with the issues that ethnic minority communities and individuals face in the whole county of Dorset.

They support individuals or community groups that face racism, religious discrimination, anti-social behaviour or those who struggle to find enough food and self-isolate, not being able to understand the national guidance, home educate or how to access financial support. They also have a dedicated Coronavirus Support page on their website www.dorsetrec.org.uk

Church of England Mental Health Reflections Booklet For Mental Health Awareness Week 2020, 7 of the 13 reflections on Supporting Good Mental Health have been made available as a podcast series. Find out more [here](#)

Katja Babei
County Ecumenical Officer Churches Together in Dorset

Email : katjactd@gmail.com

Tel : 077899 52472