

Diocese of Monmouth

Esgobaeth Mynwy



This email has been sent to all Clergy, PTOs, Churchwardens, Secretaries, and all those on our Friday email list.

Friday Update from Bishop Cherry

Good News

The good news of Easter Day was celebrated rather differently this year but celebrated nonetheless in many and various ways across our diocese. Many joined in with online services. Others gathered in the quietness of their homes, or in gardens, with prayers and services delivered by their local parish clergy. That so much has been done to enable the prayers and worship of the church to continue, has been a tremendous tribute to the faithfulness and ingenuity of our clergy and church families. That, in itself, has been good news.

The joy and hope of Easter continues to be celebrated for another six weeks and rarely has this joy and hope been so much needed in our world. The triumph of Easter holds fast, even in the darkest days of human experience; even as we face a future more uncertain than most of us can remember. That is why Easter is such good news.

Thank you

Thanks to all of you who have sent Easter messages and cards to Wendy and I. I thank God every day for calling us to serve him and his church here in Monmouth.

I would also like to thank you for your continuing financial commitment to the church across the diocese. We expect around 85% of the Ministry Share for the first quarter of the year to come in and that represents an extraordinary commitment in the circumstances. Thank you. Every pound that comes in will help, and will enable us to remain as strong as we can be as the crisis continues.

Further amazing news came to us from the Provincial Secretary the other day, who confirmed that in the last month 141 new financial commitments were registered. Normally there are around 40-50 each month, so this means that the number of donations received last month trebled. For this, we praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

May you know within yourselves the blessings of Easter over the coming weeks.



If anyone missed the link in the Finance Communication to the Gift Direct scheme, please see below:



Gift Direct is the way The Church in Wales manage Gift Aid Donations and they have now put the scheme online.

Please click [here](#) to find out more.

Alternatively if you would like to discuss alternative methods of giving to your church during the Covid-19 crisis please contact Bethan Davies bethandavies@churchinwales.org.uk

Live-streamed Services & Reflections:

11am 1st Sunday after Easter [Eucharist](#) from Bishopstow

Catch up on Bishop Cherry's Tuesday reflection [here](#).

And to view services from Holy Week, click [here](#).

If you missed our visual celebration of Easter across the Diocese you can see that [here](#).

#goodnewsworthsharing



Here are the newly formed choir at St George's Tredegar brought in 'eggspecially' for Easter!



St Cadoc's Church Raglan lit up in blue light supporting the NHS.



Rev Linda Batt took Holy water to her congregation on her daily walk, she said "They brought many a smile to faces and I even squirted a few folk who don't come to church. When they realised it was Holy water and what I was doing, they asked to be blessed".

Add your story to #goodnewsworthsharing

Please send anything you've been doing to debragoddard@churchinwales.org.uk or share on social media with #goodnewsworthsharing

Schools

Schools across our Diocese are continuing to work extremely hard providing care for children of key workers and vulnerable children as well as arranging work for children to complete at home.

Last Sunday school children joined Caerleon Ministry Area in doing something a little different for Easter and held a virtual Easter Bonnet Parade. Even Acting Deputy Head for Charles Williams CiW Primary Kathryn Sperry got involved. You can watch the whole video [here](#).



Resources

Children & Families



All About Direction - the focus of this session - available until Friday, 1 May 2020.

You will need a bowl and two spoons.

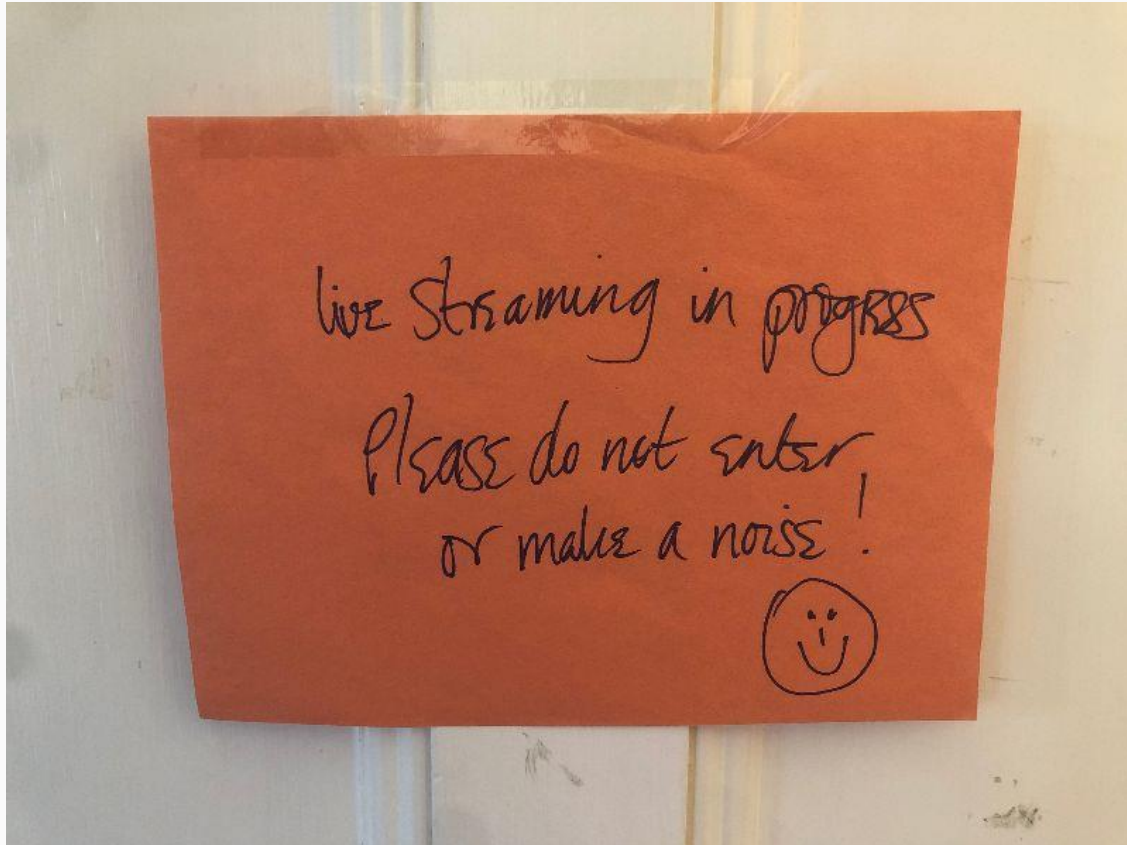
The footage link is <https://vimeo.com/404187225/532944804c> or if families prefer YouTube, then <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c06QkV0X-fc>

There are lots more amazing resources for children and families available on our website [here](#).

Ministry

We have seen tremendous resilience and creativity from both our clergy and laity, Rev Sally Ingle-Gillis, Curate-in-Charge, Wentwood Ministry Area asks,

Is digital ministry the way forward?



We have seen an explosion of online opportunities to engage with each other and our churches over the last few weeks – Zoom, Facebook Live, YouTube, to name just three (other platforms are available!!). And we are using them for our regular services, for prayer meetings, meetings of any other kind, virtual coffee mornings, Sunday Schools, choir practices. The creativity of the human spirit is so evident in all that we are achieving, I'm so excited by it!

What are we learning? Well, I hope we are all learning not to play the numbers game – 200 “likes” does not mean that many watched through to the end! I also hope that we are learning to be confident – feedback I receive often includes something along the lines of “it doesn't matter that it's not slick, it's just so lovely to hear you laugh” or “I love it that you're in the kitchen, what is that.....behind you?”

There are of course some theological debates to be had about various services and how different people are choosing to conduct them, but now is not the time. Let's trust God to be gracious in all that we are attempting.

My advice for how we continue? Let's keep doing what we are doing, don't

forget to pray, don't be afraid to signpost something someone else is doing really well, don't feel we have to sing if we can't (!), and don't forget to rest.

Online ministry is exhausting!

Finally, we must remember that not everyone has the technology, and if you're not willing or able to minister online, the phone is a strong means of connecting with people, and never ever underestimate the value of a hand written note and a stamp!