

OUR NEWS

JULY 2020



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CHURCHES CAN RE-OPEN FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP FROM JULY 4

Bishop Philip has said he is delighted by the news that churches will be able to start opening again for public worship from July 4.

But he has also said that no parish should feel there is any pressure to reopen until they are comfortable that they can do so safely.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson made the announcement in the House of Commons on June 23. It was among a raft of measures loosening the coronavirus lockdown in England.

Bishop Philip said: "It is of course very good news that we will be able to meet in fellowship once again, to worship – and see one another without the need for a webcam – albeit within the continuing constraints of social distancing.

"That weddings can also now take place will be an enormous joy and a relief to large numbers of people, although the numbers allowed to attend services will, for the time being, be restricted to 30.

"So of course, today represents a milestone – but I would also urge a degree of caution.

"Many people will quite rightly remain worried about what the news means for them, for their health and the health of those around them. The virus may be reduced, but it is still very much present in our society.

"It is very important that parishes only reopen their churches when they feel comfortable that they can



do so safely – nobody should feel compelled to do so from July 4, or indeed at any point before they are really ready.

"It is important, too, to recognise that we will not be going back to pre-lockdown life. Rather we'll be pressing on to the new future that our God opens up for us.

"Let's walk into this new and emerging future with care, yes, but also with our hopes set high on the God who always calls us forward to follow him."

EXTENSION TO ROPF DEADLINE UNTIL JULY 31

The deadline for the Return of Parish Finance (ROPF) information has been extended until **July 31, 2020**.

Under the Church Representation Rules, all PCCs must send a copy of their annual report and accounts to the secretary of the Diocesan Board of Finance even if they have not yet held their APCM. This return summarises the finances over the last year and gives details of regular giving.

The information provided in the forms is vital for planning at national and diocesan level giving leaders the whole picture and can give useful insights into the continuing life of the parish, benefice and our diocese.

Please complete the form online at <https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/> before July 31, 2020. Using the online system saves on time and postage costs.

If you have not previously accessed the online system for the ROPF returns and don't know your log in details, then please contact Church House by emailing info@truro.anglican.org or calling 01872 274351.

PRAYER DIARY OUT NOW

The latest edition of the Diocese of Truro Prayer Diary is out now. This edition covers the months of July through September.

To download your copy, [click here](#).



BISHOP'S LETTER

“ There are some events that seem to tip the world into a new place. One is the Covid-19 crisis. Another was the murder of George Floyd. And, to be personal about it, the latter has tipped me, personally, into quite a new place. ”

BISHOP PHILIP

I used to pride myself (and I use the word advisedly) on the fact that I'd ministered in a multi-cultural parish in inner London, and worked for an international mission agency travelling widely in the world, so that I was awake (if not 'woke') to these issues. But if that were so, then how come I'm only now really waking up to the fact that racism is endemic in our society, and that many of the structures of our society have been built upon it?

And if you want evidence of that then look at that other crisis of our time, COVID-19. Why is that members of ethnic minorities have suffered so much more from it proportionally than white people? It is increasingly clear that for the most part the answer lies not in genetics (it never does, when it comes to racism). It's simply that COVID-19 magnifies existing inequalities in our society. Put simply if you belong to an ethnic minority in this country you are more likely to be

lower paid; more likely to be an job that exposes you to infection; more likely to live in crowded conditions; more likely to have a poorer diet; more likely to have poorer health... and therefore more likely to be killed by the virus. COVID-19, terrible as it is in itself, has shone an appalling light on our society.

So we have no room at all for complacency. As a church and as a diocese we must do so very much better. We need to ask how this affects us at every part of our life together and I'm determined that we should do so – and not least by including minority ethnic voices in all of our conversations about these things. We need policies and practices that make a real, discernible and tangible difference.

The Kingdom of God consists of those 'from every tribe and tongue, language and people' (Revelation 7:9): we must repent of anything in us which suggest it is anything less than that.

CYBER AWARENESS RESOURCES AVAILABLE

In June Devon and Cornwall Police held two free Cyber Crime Awareness webinars for parishes.

Laura Cowie and Grahame Mace from Devon and Cornwall Police's Digital Capabilities Unit lead the sessions.

Laura has been in the force's Cyber Protect role since January 2017 after moving from her previous post within the South West Counter Terrorism Unit. She is a strong advocate of raising awareness of the growing threat of cyber crime.

Grahame brings a vast range of knowledge with him from his previous post as Detective Inspector in the City of London Police. Grahame has many years of experience investigating and dealing with fraud and cyber crime, at both local and national level.

During the sessions Grahame and Laura discussed some of the recent topics that have been in the headlines and answered participants' questions.

The sessions covered what cyber crime is and why criminals changed their tactics; who cyber criminals are and the causes of attacks; how to spot phishing emails and Smishing and what to do if you've clicked on one; spear phishing and sextortion; practical guidance you can implement to secure the keys to your online world; information on apps; where to go for advice and guidance and how and where to report.

The aim of the sessions was to provide parishes with advice and guidance to help them better protect themselves from cyber criminals.

If you weren't able to join in with the sessions, fear not! There are some of the resources from the sessions available on the diocesan website [here](#).

The resources cover Zoom bombing, video conferencing and protecting yourself when homeworking.



DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM & GROWING THE CHURCH THE SAINTS' WAY REACHING FAR BEYOND OUR CORNISH BORDERS WITH INTERNATIONAL MISSION LINKS

Now, perhaps more than ever, we need to embed in our hearts that we are a Christian community that, in its entirety, is huge, fantastically diverse and global. As the Church of England in Cornwall, we don't necessarily reflect that diversity, even if we are doing a lot of searching, listening and learning. But the desire to change that is gaining strength and momentum, and one of the ways we can encourage that is through our international mission partnerships.

Many churches across the Diocese of Truro have flourishing international mission partnerships – but we know little about them. A recent survey showed that in some way, through partnership, prayer or sponsorship, we have parish links with 35 countries across all six continents.

We have heard of some great initiatives, like from St Luke's Boscoppa, who worship from Bishop Bronsecombe C of E School. They have partnered with St John's School in Kilimatinde, Tanzania. The story of its creation includes a Cornish Christian mother, with her three young children and husband, a joint church mission to central Tanzania and a miracle. This led on to two primary schools, continents apart, becoming connected through prayer and mutual support.

In St Kea, they partner with links in Spain and Kenya, as well as a local link supporting the Truro Foodbank. Ordinand Paul Salaman recently interviewed all of these mission partners during an online service. "It was really helpful to have mission partners from different parts of the world together, to share and pray together, particularly over the common challenge of coronavirus that all are facing in different ways."

As a diocese, we have international partnerships with the Strangnas Lutheran diocese in Sweden, the Benedictine Abbey (of Celtic origins) at Landevennec in Brittany and the Anglican Diocese of Mzimvubu in South Africa. These links strengthen us as



PICTURED LEFT:
From St Luke's
Boscoppa to
Tanzania with
Thomas and
Patrick

communities through prayer and a mutual desire to know more about what God is doing beyond our own small corners.

We also have a working group, the **Truro Diocese International Links Committee**. This will oversee, further develop and share communications around the diocesan international links. Bishop Philip has tasked the group with exploring a diocesan-wide link with churches in Lebanon, a region historically linked to Cornwall through trading. Lebanon has experiences that we have much to learn from, not least its churches' generosity of welcoming strangers, most especially the large influx of Muslims from Syria, which has enhanced their reputation and led to significant church growth.

Of our own history, Bishop Philip says, "We in Cornwall are inheritors of a remarkable and distinctive Christian heritage stretching back many centuries, possibly to the very earliest days of the Christian faith. This is a land where the gospel has been shared with passion and commitment, and at risk to life and limb, from the days of Piran and Petroc through to the days of John Wesley, Henry Martyn and Billy Bray... Just as the good news has been shared within Cornwall, so it has been shared far and wide beyond these shores."

And of our present and future, the bishop asks that **'we be a church that rejoices in strong, warm and mutually encouraging international links'**.

There really isn't a better time to turn words into action, be curious and reach out to our neighbours.

The International Links Committee exists to encourage that. It will support parishes to develop their existing links and establish new ones.

This is a call to action, for parishes to let us know about their links, how they enrich their Cornish community and how they feel they enrich the churches and communities that they partner.

An international newsletter will be available in July to share news, offer ideas and generally encourage this important area of church growth. You can sign up to receive this newsletter [here](#).

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about the Truro Diocese International Links Committee on the diocesan website [here](#).

For more information email Christine Salaman christine.salaman@truro.anglican.org

Read the full story [here](#).

NET ZERO: HELP US REACH IT

Many people have observed how enthusiastically wildlife has responded to the absence of human activity during lockdown.

So maybe now is a good moment to boost the bio-diversity of the land around our church buildings. Making a fruit or vegetable garden around your church or installing bird or bat boxes around your buildings will not only diversify the local habitat, but will tick two boxes on the **Green Church Kernow** (GCK) scheme (tasks 6 and 8 'community' section), helping your church towards the next award on your list!

As we return to our churches and begin to take up church life again under the 'new normal' (whatever that may mean) we will recall that the world's environmental challenges are still with us and that the Church of England's General Synod has challenged us to reduce the carbon footprint of our churches to net zero by 2030.

Less than 10 years to net zero is a very tight timescale, but is not impossible if every member of every church ensures that every church plays its part. Within our diocese, a task force has been set up, chaired by Dean of Truro the Very Revd Roger Bush, with representation from across diocesan structures. The first meeting has already taken place; the group will give leadership and co-ordination over this vital issue to the whole of the diocese as we work for the safeguarding of God's creation.

The diocese already has schemes in place to enable all parishes to make significant progress towards eliminating their own carbon footprint including GCK and **ten pledges**, and to engage in 'carbon-offsetting' for those carbon emissions which may not be eliminated immediately. 'Carbon offsetting' involves taking part in positive actions that mitigate the negative effects of our carbon emissions, for example by contributing to the preservation of the Amazon rainforest or to community forestry schemes in the UK and overseas. Task 7 under the 'Christian living' section



of the GCK scheme has information about two organisations that can help - **arocha** and **coolearth** or contact the Luci Isaacson, the diocesan environment officer, to find out more. There are also local Environment Champions you can speak to. These are people in your area who has attended one or more of the Environment Champion Events Luci has run in recent months and who is therefore able to help and resource parish churches as they seek to find their way towards Zero 2030. All churches need one!

If you would like to find out more about helping your church tackle this issue and perhaps be your church's Environment Champion, click **here** and book onto the next event. To find out more of what it is all about before coming, please watch the video of the last Environment Champion Event which is linked from the booking form.

The national church also has a series of webinars, free and open to all, which you can join **here** and which give incredibly helpful insight into overcoming some common barriers to climate friendly work in our churches.

As always, but especially now that we are able to return to our church premises, do send your stories of environmentally friendly activity that has been happening in your parish - with pictures if possible, so that we can share good practice and encourage one another in caring for God's good creation.

BISHOPS' WARNING OF ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Church of England bishops have joined with counterparts from around the Anglican Communion in signing a statement warning of 'Environmental Racism.'

The Archbishop of Canterbury together with the Bishops of Salisbury, Oxford, **Truro**, Dover, Woolwich, Sherborne, Loughborough, Kingston, Reading and Ramsbury, have joined a list of eight archbishops and 38 bishops worldwide in signing an open letter stating that black lives are predominantly affected by the effects of climate change, as well as police brutality and the spread of COVID-19.

Published by the Anglican Communion's Environmental Network, the letter reads (extract): The world is slow to respond to climate change, hanging on to an increasingly precarious and unjust economic system. The delayed global response to climate injustice gives the impression that #blacklivesdontmatter. Without urgent action black lives will continue to be the most impacted, being dispossessed from their lands and becoming climate refugees.

We stand at a Kairos moment - in order to fight environmental injustice, we must also fight racial injustice.

It is estimated that there are 40 million climate refugees in the world today, and by 2050 that number could reach one billion.

Take action for climate justice to show #blacklivesmatter.

Read more **here**.

BECOME A 'WILD CHRISTIAN'

A Rocha UK is working for the protection and restoration of the natural world and committed to mobilising Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment. Programmes include **Eco Church**, a fast growing community of churches and Christians responding to the environment crisis together, sharing tips, and learning together.

Looking for ways to continue celebrating and protecting God's creation at home? Become part of the **Wild Christian** scheme, a community of families and individuals exploring the connections between our Christian faith, the natural environment, and how we live.