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BENEFICE NEWS

21st June, 2020

the benefice of saxmundham with kelsale-cum-carlton

ONE CHURCH

four congregations

St Peter, St Mary & St Peter, St John, Connections

Variety of Style - Variety of Content

This Sunday, via the [St John's church website](#) or the [St John's YouTube channel](#) you can share in a formal Holy Communion service conducted by Nic and led by Elizabeth. Also this week, a new teaching series begins, looking at the Patriarchs and the relevance of their stories to us today. This will be available from 9am onwards.

Additionally, 'Live from the Lounge' has the second in its new series "Jesus is..." Tune in to the [Connections Facebook page](#) at 10am, or catch it later on the [Connections YouTube channel](#). Stick around afterwards for some ZOOM jibber-jabber as you consume your own coffee and cake(s)! (... yes, *actually* happening this week!!)

"There are seven in here now; we're nearly full!"

With the relaxing of restrictions applied to public spaces - in this case our church buildings - we're trying to get a feel for how many people might want to visit our churches for private prayer. If you are such a person please send an email to churchwardens@saxstjohns.org.uk - this will help us in understanding how popular such a move would be. Thank you. [Adrian & Stephen]

The Bible Readings for this Sunday are:
Genesis 21.1-21 and Matthew 18.1-6

SUFFER the little Children!

In the C of E years ago Baptisms (usually referred to as Christenings) were 'done' in batches on Sunday afternoons. I remember one church that had a particularly ornate font cover and round the rim was carved the text, 'SUFFER the little children to come unto me for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven' (Matt 19.3 Authorised Version). It had been carved by a local man in the 19th century and it always made me smile because the word 'suffer' was more deeply cut and stood out from the rest ... maybe his kids were causing him grief and he could not share Jesus' love for them! (Reminded me of the old woman who lived in the shoe...)

Jesus does have a habit of turning the world upside down, doesn't He! In our Gospel reading today when the disciples ask who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven Jesus says 'unless you change and become like a child you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven' (Matt 18.3)

We only have to turn to the Prayer Jesus taught His disciples and that includes you and me. When we address God as 'Our Father' it follows we must be His children with all the blessings and challenges that brings day by day.

It feels like our familiar world is being turned upside down at present. Where to turn? Who to trust? What to do? The words of an old hymn come to mind ...

Lead us Heavenly Father lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but Thee;
Yet possessing every blessing
if our God our Father be.

Pam Peeling

... and of Your own do we give you ...

One of our homegroups has recently been considering generosity and the conversation got around to the recognition that 'closed building' means that no offerings are being received. This then led to their request for bank details to allow people to set up a regular giving scheme... or just to make one-off gifts... and to the further suggestion that the bank details could be made public so everyone has the info' they would need if they decide to give electronically.

So...

for Kelsale: Sort Code 09-01-52, A/C 01429705

for St John's Sort Code 20-98-07 A/C 60694827

for Connections - same as St John's but with the reference 'CONNX'

(and if you want to do St John's and CONNX please do them separately else we get in a terrible muddle trying to subdivide your gift!)

This is an appropriate time, then, to say 'Thank You' to all those who give financially in support of the whole ministry of the Benefice. Even during the building closure, some bills continue and we still want to pay the parish share! Be assured of our gratitude ... and remember that God sees all your 'secret worship'.

Adrian & Stephen

Food on Sunday

Within the Benefice worship service each week (accessible on the website from 9am each Sunday morning) we are starting a new Sermon series based on the Patriarchs from the book of Genesis – what do their stories have to say to us today?

As an additional activity, we are offering what you might call a whole-church Bible Study on the Genesis passage; Sunday evenings at 6:30, via ZOOM (normal address: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2907979571>). In this session, the morning preacher or I will dig deeper into the passage, which we will discuss together. This is not a service as such: short prayers, reading the passage and studying God's word together. All are welcome.

Nic

Parish Profile

Your thoughts are encouraged for the new parish profile! Would you like to share your vision for the Saxmundham Benefice as we come to appointing a new rector, hopefully this year?

What are your hopes & prayers for what the church here will 'look like' in 5 years time? And what should we be looking for in a new rector?

Answers on a post card through the letterbox of the church shop (At the Crossroads), or better still email Adrian and Stephen at churchwardens@saxstjohns.org.uk

Your views are important!

Paul writes to the church in Ephesus (Eph.6:10-20)

“Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armour of God that you might be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”

Paul goes onto say: “pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication....keep alert with all perseverance”

I am encouraged by Paul’s reminder to pray at all times: this pandemic is not only affecting our health, livelihoods and mental health but also forcing us to live separate lives from one another. God has created us to be relational beings, just as He is relational as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

If you would like someone to pray with you, then members of the Wholeness and Healing team are available by phone, please feel free to call: Jill 452423: Shirley 602866: or Fran 602907.

Could you be a Debt Saviour?

The BBC ran a documentary last Autumn called “Debt Saviours” about the work of Christians Against Poverty (CAP), with whom we work in partnership to operate the Suffolk Coastal Debt Centre.

Following Kirsty’s decision not to return to work after her Maternity Leave, we are looking for a new Debt Coach to join the leadership team of the Debt Centre, taking over the role that Chris Cotton has filled so admirably over the past year. If you are interested in considering the post (and being considered for it), please download the job specification from the St John’s website and get in touch with one of Chris Cotton, Doug Fletcher or myself. Any of us would be very happy to talk about what the role entails.

Nic (nic@saxstjohns.org.uk)

Please Pray For...

- Janice Cobb who is recovering from surgery.
- Betty Wiseman who had a fall earlier this week and is now in Aldeburgh Cottage Hospital
- ...our Churchwardens and Nic as they look to open our churches during the day and plan for delivering services once again.

Don't get lost

Click this link for the [St John's](#) YouTube channel, and
Click this link for the [Connections](#) YouTube channel, and
Click this link for the [St John's](#) church website, and
Click this link for the [Connections](#) website.
... and '[Life from the Lounge](#)' on facebook

[One click here to see the Lectionary readings for every day.](#)

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