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# BENEFICE NEWS

## 5th July 2020

the benefice of saxmundham with kelsale-cum-carlton

# ONE CHURCH

## four congregations

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



### Church, then!

... 9am Benefice Worship led by the WIP homegroup; access via the [St John's church website](#) or the [St John's YouTube channel](#) ... and at 6:30pm an opportunity to dig deeper into today's teaching passage in a ZOOM accessed through <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2907979571>. **Also, check-out the notice below... "Sunday Holy Communion".**

... 10am 'Live from the Lounge' on the [Connections Facebook page](#) and later on

the [Connections YouTube channel](#). This week's guest is Matt Levett exploring how 'Jesus is ... hope'.

## The Bible Reading for this Sunday is: **Genesis 24 34-67 & Luke 12 35-48**

### **‘God is not ashamed to be called their God’**

In our series about ‘The Patriarchs’ we have followed Abraham’s faithful obedience to God’s promise to make of him a ‘great nation’, even trying to give God a helping hand by fathering his slave woman Hagar’s son Ishmael. Then the joy in old age of his wife Sarah bearing their son Isaac and even being prepared to sacrifice him if that was God’s will.

Abraham in today’s reading is very, very old and is worried about Isaac marrying a local Canaanite girl. He sends his trusted servant to his cousin’s house in his homeland to arrange a marriage treaty (Gen 24.37,38) so that God’s promise will be fulfilled when Isaac and Rebekah marry (Gen 24.67). One commentary suggests reading the whole of Genesis chapter 24 which gives insights into local Bedouin marriage customs as well as another example of Abraham’s obedience to God. It also wonders if anyone can recall that in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer Marriage Service Isaac and Rebekah are held up as a model couple for those newly married to obey (I don’t remember this!)

Abraham is renowned as the ‘father of us all’ and even 4,000 years later is seen as the founder of the three great religions – Judaism, Islam and Christianity and is judged to belong to those of whom ‘God is not ashamed to be called their God’ (Hebrews 11.16).

The story of the Patriarchs continues with Rebekah bearing twins – Jacob and Esau – who were even fighting each other in her womb (Gen 25.23) ... the saga continues next week!

The Gospel reading today is also about a wedding. Jesus is warning his followers to be ‘dressed for action like those waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet ... blessed are those whom the master finds alert when He comes’ ( Luke 12.35-37).

Pam Peeling

### **Knock, knock. Come in...**

Now in effect, we are opening the doors of our Benefice Churches for limited hours for private prayer.

St Mary & St Peter's, Kelsale will be open on

Wednesdays and Sundays from 2pm to 4pm.

St Peter's, Carlton will be open on

Fridays from 2pm to 4pm

St John's, Saxmundham will be open on

Mondays from 10am to 12noon and Thursdays from 2pm to 4pm.

Entry is limited to no more than six people at a time, who should keep to social distancing of at least 2m between each other, unless from the same household. Please note – not all areas of the Churches will be accessible.

Please observe the printed guidance regarding hand sanitising, etc, available in each of the Churches, and please keep to the one way entry and exit.

## Sunday Holy Communion

Given our ability to open our churches for Worship from Sunday, we are, as previously indicated, having a shortened service of Holy Communion at 10:30am on Sundays, at least for the next few weeks. This will be in addition to the 9am and 10am online services. On the 5th, this will be at St John's, followed by Kelsale on the 12th and then back to St John's on the 19th. The attendance at these services will be limited only by the space available at each Church given the need to socially distance. Guidelines about the conduct of the services is available on the web-site for those who really want the detail! Do please come along and receive!

## Nic is taking a break

The last few months of lockdown and the vacancy have been busy for many of us, no-one more so than Nic, who is taking the Bishop's advice to take a break from this Sunday evening until the 12th. Although Nic and Jill are staying at home, please respect their quiet in this coming week. Nic has promised Jill that he will not do email!

## Tuesday Morning Prayer

A band of devoted worshippers have been joining together for "Boris-compliant" Morning Prayer at 9am each Tuesday in June, at the Lych Gate in Kelsale. Happily the weather has not required this to be cancelled (though once or twice it was a close run thing!). Morning Prayer will continue on Tuesdays during July, with some positive changes: firstly, numbers will no longer be limited to six; secondly, although it will remain an outside service, it will be possible to move into the Church itself in the event of rain; thirdly, given Nic's break (see above), this coming week (7th, 9am) it will be led by Rev. Sheila Hart.

## Home Groups

A number of Home Groups are meeting very successfully in the ZOOM meeting room and providing a great deal of mutual support to each other by doing so.

Unfortunately, Government regulations do not currently allow the meeting of Home Groups physically. We hope that this might change soon but at the moment we have to respect these guidelines for our own benefit and for that of wider society.

Looking to the future, the Pastoral Care Co-ordinators (Chris, Sue and myself) were discussing how central to lockdown pastoral support the Home Groups have been. Right from the outset, we felt that existing contacts within Home Groups would be the natural mutual support arrangement, and so it has proved to be: a very big thank you to our team of Pastors and to Home Group members. In an ideal world, pastoral support would not need to be structured and all members of our church would pastor each other so that everyone was loved and cared for. In the meantime, enabling people who are not in Home Groups to join would be a good place to start and so Chris, Sue and myself would welcome contact both from those who lead Home Groups to confirm that they would be willing to accept newcomers and especially from those not currently group members who are interested in joining one. We would then seek to act as brokers! Please email us at [pastoral.care@saxstjohns.org.uk](mailto:pastoral.care@saxstjohns.org.uk) if you are in either category.

## Room wanted

As a church, we have been approached by an occasional member of the Connections congregation who is seeking temporary accommodation while she finds a home. This single lady has taken a part-time job at Chantry House but lacks the transport to travel from Pakefield, where she has been living with her mother during lockdown. If you are in a position to be able to help please email the pastoral team ([pastoral.care@saxstjohns.org.uk](mailto:pastoral.care@saxstjohns.org.uk)) where one of us will be able to discuss her needs with you in more detail. Thank you.

## A bed of roses

If one or two able-bodied folk are able to help, Roger M plans to start de-weeding the rose beds at St. John's next week. Please contact him on Monday if you are interested.

## Please Pray For...

- Jack Hague, recovering from surgery --- Beth Sellwood back at Peartree Lodge after a brief spell in hospital. --- Olive Warren who has an appointment with a heart specialist this week --- Spencer Turner who is waiting to see a cardiologist. Also for Nic and Jill that they have a restful break from church duties this coming week.

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

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