

The Four Ways Mission Community

St James, Swimbridge | The Holy Name, Gunn | St Paul, Landkey | St Peter, West Buckland | St Michael, East Buckland

Revd Shaun O'Rourke, Priest-in-Charge. Tel. 01271 830950

12th June 2020 for 14th June – Corpus Christi

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to our weekly letter. Much has happened over the last week and we have the possibility, if we meet the requirements, to open our churches for private prayer.

I must make clear that this is **not** opening for public worship as we are still not allowed to meet in groups to pray. One of the most striking realities to come from this pandemic is that the church has never been closed down: our buildings are restricted and shut, but the body of Christ - the real church, us - has marched forward ever more committed to our faith and finding new ways to be the church. Many have worked for their communities providing help and support. Many priests have been exploring new ways of worship and finding that we are reaching the fringe of our communities. This is something the church has been trying to do for years and, through live streams (e.g. Mission Prayer) and new ways of presenting church, our evangelism is growing. We must keep doing this when we do reopen our buildings: after all, passing on faith and telling the people about faith and God is our primary goal. We cannot abandon those who have searched for God in these troubled times.

The link to Mission Prayer is <https://www.facebook.com/mission.prayerprogramme>

Yesterday, I had a Zoom meeting with all the clergy of Exeter - over 150 of us - and our Archdeacons to clarify what we need to do in the coming weeks before we can open our church buildings. Our main concern is for the welfare and safety of those who come into our buildings for private prayer. The decisions that the church makes are going to be challenging for us, but we have a duty of care to our communities and each other and we will achieve what is being asked of us. I will be meeting with our wardens next week, hopefully as a group on the internet, or by phone to discuss our way forward. We will let you know what is happening, where and when, once it has been thrashed out and planning and meeting our requirements have been met, so be ready for the outcomes.

Wishing you all a blessed week ahead

Fr Shaun