

17th May 2020

On the Covid Frontline

This comes from Nigel Beeton, (pictured below in his PPE) who works in Radiology in a hospital in the East of England, and who is one of the resident poets on Parish Pump!

During this time of the coronavirus crisis, he is writing a weekly diary of his life at the hospital

You can say what you like about the coronavirus, it has certainly brought some colour into our lives! This morning I encountered one of my colleagues. Starting from the top, she was wearing a bright yellow visor, a pale blue regulation issue surgical mask, bright pink scrubs and bright orange clogs. She looked like one of those rainbows that we now see all over the place!

I can assure you that her bright pinks scrubs did not come through the NHS supply chain! No indeed, those scrubs were put together and stitched by a member of the public.

Scrubs, for those of you not addicted to *Holby City*, are pyjama-like outfits of trousers and top which do nothing for your figure (mine's a hopeless cause anyway) but which are cool to wear and easy to keep clean. The idea is that you can change out of your day clothes and into scrubs and vice versa so you are not carrying bugs into or out of clinical areas. They were originally worn in the operating theatre environment, hence the term associated with 'scrubbing up' for theatre. Their use had become considerably more widespread but the advent of the requirements for PPE in the covid situation put enormous pressure on demand for scrubs, and our existing stocks quickly ran out. It was the same story across the NHS.

But the public have responded magnificently. Carol, my wife, sews, and in fact she has made us both masks that we can wear when out and about (but not at work). It took her a while, and of course she's at work nursing so doesn't have the time to make scrubs, but I would think that a set of scrubs must take several hours to make. The hospital has put one of those wire cages on wheels in the front entrance so that donors can put their home-made scrubs into it. There's a poster on it thanking contributors most effusively but otherwise it's just a bare wire cage. So these paragons of home sewing, after all these hours of cutting, stitching, overlocking and elastoplasting the occasional cut finger, just drive up to the hospital and deposit the fruits of their labours into a wire cage.



I think that is true charity. No formal thanks, no prize for producing the most scrubs, no smiling grip and grin photos in the local paper (grip and grins are out for the duration anyway). Just the simple satisfaction of knowing that you are making a real difference to the working lives of staff facing the greatest challenge of their health service careers. (It's certainly been the greatest challenge of mine, and if any twenty-somethings setting out on their careers will have to face worse, then I tremble at the thought.)

If you, or someone you know, has been sewing scrubs, then on behalf of all of us, may I say:

Thank You!

Prayer Surge and church attendance since lockdown

Recent research commissioned by Tearfund has found that some three million new people have turned to prayer in the UK since lockdown began. The online British bookstore Eden reports a 55 per cent increase in sales of Bibles in April. Demand for prayer resources from the 24-7 Prayer organisation has been going through the roof.

The Tearfund survey also indicates that record numbers have begun attending church online since the lockdown began. Usually, about 5-7 per cent of the nation attends a Sunday service at least once a month. But over the past couple of months, this figure has jumped - to 24 per cent of the British population. Almost one in four of us.

"I've never known a time in my life when people are more open to [God's word] than they are now." says Nicky Gumbel, vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton.



Virtual Choral Evensong – live on YouTube on Tuesday 19th May

More than 250 singers and a host of stars including Stephen Fry, Alexander Armstrong, Simon Russell Beale and the Revd Richard Coles are going to gather for a Virtual Choral Evensong to be broadcast live on YouTube on Tuesday, 19 May at 6.30pm.

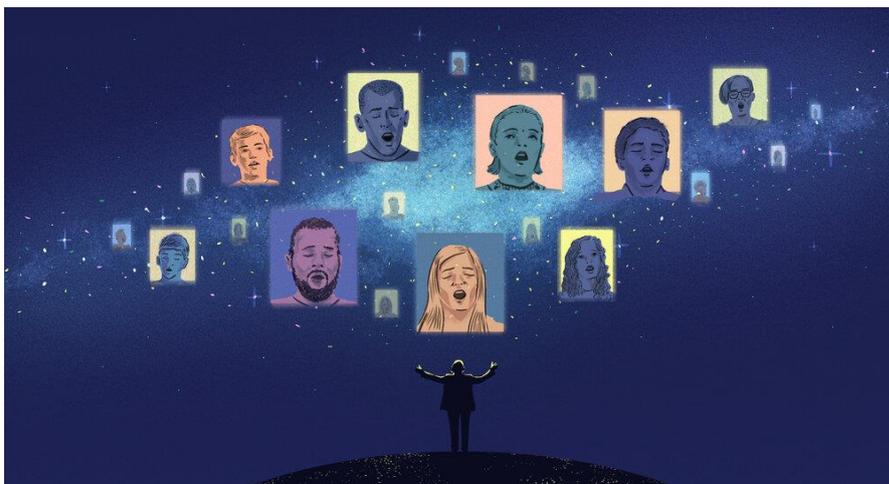
This project will bring together more than 950 video and

audio submissions from around the world for various parts of evensong including an introit, responses, psalms, the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, a hymn, anthem, readings, organ voluntaries and prayers. It is bookended by Cosmo Sheldrake's Evening Chorus, an improvisation using endangered British birds' songs recorded in Dorset woodland.

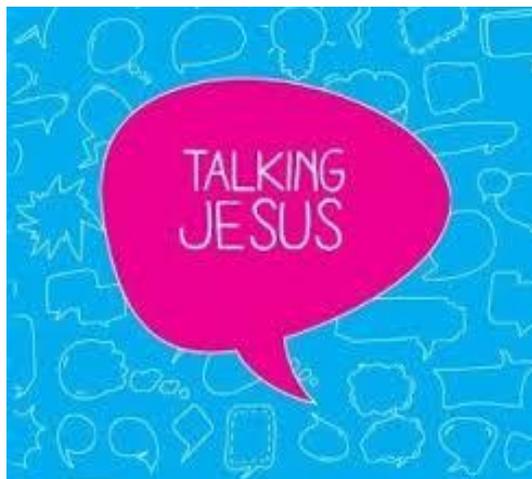
The project, in association with ChoralEvensong.org, is in aid of the Cathedral Choirs' Emergency Fund, set up by the Friends of Cathedral Music and the Ouseley Church Music Trust. The fund aims to raise £1million to support choirs that might not survive the Covid-19 lockdown.

It has been organised by the Rodolfus Foundation, the charity dedicated to helping young singers perform great music to the highest standards. Donations can be made at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/cathedralchoirs>).

For more information: <https://www.therodolusfoundation.org.uk/virtual-evensong>



Online 'Talking Jesus' course FREE during the Covid-19 lockdown



HOPE Together has made the hugely popular Talking Jesus course available to rent free to watch online during the Covid-19 crisis.

Announcing the new online opportunity, Roy Crowne, executive director of HOPE Together, said: 'We have had lots of requests during the Covid-19 lockdown to make the Talking Jesus course available online. We are thrilled to do this and to make the course free for churches to use online over the next few months. There seems to

be an increased interest from non-Christians in spiritual issues. People are searching for hope. We want to help equip Christians to tell their story and to make the most of every opportunity to talk about the hope we have because of Jesus.' The Talking Jesus course includes six practical, video-based teaching sessions with inspirational testimonies to give real-life examples from people who are talking Jesus. There are also short parable-style films designed to get groups thinking. To access the course free until the end of August visit www.hopetogether.org.uk/talkingjesus HOPE Together, the Church of England, and KingsGate Community Church in Peterborough, developed the course to equip Christians to talk about Jesus, sensitively, appropriately and with respect in everyday life. Recommending the course, the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu said, 'The most helpful way people hear the Good News of God in Jesus Christ is by a follower of Jesus Christ sharing their encounter with Jesus Christ. This inspiring course will help Christians to be witnesses to Jesus Christ wherever God has placed them.' The Talking Jesus course is ideal for small groups. Group members are invited to discuss the video teaching, apply it to local situations, and pray together asking God to help each one to make Jesus known naturally and effectively as opportunities come up in everyday life. The goal is to equip Christians to make the most of every opportunity to help friends, colleagues, and family members to consider Jesus for themselves and become his followers.

Source: Parish Pump