

A message from your local Church.

Dear Friends

We live in very uncertain times, many are worried about themselves and their loved ones because of the threat of Covid-19 or corona virus, and Government advice is that we limit social contact, especially with those who are elderly or who have underlying health problems. Because of this all churches have been advised to suspend public worship for the foreseeable future. But this doesn't mean that your local church has disappeared – we just need to be church differently, and that's why we are writing to you.

Although we are advised not to meet together in church or in public buildings, it doesn't mean we can't support one another. If you are unable to leave your home to do your shopping because of illness, no local family or lack of transport, please let us know and we will do our best to help. We can't promise everything – the shops are struggling to keep up with demand, but we will do our best.

We want to keep in touch with those who would like a phone call, so if you would like us to call you, please give us your number – you can ring the number at the end of this letter. We will also be putting thoughts and prayers on our website and Facebook and there are many other resources available on the Church of England website. The BBC broadcasts regular services on the Radio: Radio 4 (longwave )at 10.30 each day and Choral Evensong on Radio 3 each day at 15.30.

We are particularly sad that we cannot celebrate Mothering Sunday or Mothers' Day in Church as we usually do. Many families will feel they aren't able to go out together and some people may feel especially isolated. But it won't just be those who are Mums who are affected. Lots of people give us love and care throughout our lives and so we also celebrate their love for us on Mothering Sunday and thank God for them as well. The Bible Reading we would have heard this Sunday is a timely reminder that we need to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. That we need to bear with one another and forgive one another if we know there are unresolved grievances. (Colossians 3:12-17) All this will be especially important as we help one another to weather this storm.

There is already evidence that communities are joining together to help each other. We will all find ourselves having to slow down – especially as people who had to commute to work now find themselves working at home. Scientists have already noticed that air quality is improving as we stop commuting long distances. With more time we can stop and look around us, enjoy the signs of new life in our gardens and the countryside. Maybe, if we all play our part, as we are able, we will learn to be kinder and more considerate and our communities will strengthen, as we work together.

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you taught us to love our neighbour,  
and to care for those in need  
as if we were caring for you.  
In this time of anxiety, give us strength  
to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick,  
and to assure the isolated  
of our love, and your love,  
for your name's sake.

**Amen.**

If you would like to be included in our phone contacts, please ring either  
Rev Becky on 01757 335644  
or Rev Anna on 01757 270325