

Update for everyone in the six parishes 23rd March 2020

Dear All,

First to thank you all for everything that you are doing to encourage one another in the Parishes. As I have said in each of my emails so far please pass on the information in this email as widely as you can and encourage others to pass it further.

Yesterday's YouTube stream [Churches of Ilmington Tredington Plus](#) appeared to work and I have received several encouraging responses. It is not meant to be perfect but it is a way for us to continue some form of worship and connection in unprecedented circumstances. Amongst the many conversations I have had today I spoke to Chris Windass who leads the Adderbury Ensemble in my old parish; he like many business people is facing severe financial disaster as a result of the virus, but he has very generously given permission for us to broadcast their music as part of the YouTube Stream, so you won't just be listening to me all the time! Copyright is generally difficult, hence the lack of hymns, but as Helen said it does mean you can choose your own favourites at the end. We are already thinking ahead, next Sunday will probably be a Book of Common Prayer communion service.

We have just completed our daily round of the churches, and pleased to see some of the resources have been used. Please encourage people to take leaflets away not least to prevent any spread of the virus. It does look as if we will reach the point where it will be difficult to keep the churches open.

Do encourage people to phone or email even if only for a chat, and look out for anyone who falls through the net of getting support.

I have just received the latest Diocese update, which usually comes at this time of the day. I have edited it down a bit to items of interest to PCCs and congregation.

Thought for the day from Bishop John

I read that in Venice now, with the drastic decline in water traffic, the water in the canals has become clean and clear and the fish are coming back. In this season, so full of challenge, we also have God given opportunities. One of these is to go deeper with God in prayer. As time goes on, we may have time to lay aside the 'busy traffic' of living in 5th gear in our thinking and our doing and being still in the presence of God.

We have the opportunity to be more present to the presence of God and, as it were, to 'reboot' our lives in Christ. Our fruitfulness in ministry flows from our rootedness in Christ. This evening's reading from Jeremiah reminds us of this:

"Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, they shall be like a tree planted by water sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when the heat comes." Jer.17.7-8.

Just as the now clean water in Venice is attracting new life, so our lives, entrusted to God, can become sources of the abundant fertility of God.

+John

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London churches closed for private prayer

Bishops in London - the UK's coronavirus epicentre - have gone one step further than official Church of England guidance requires and closed their church buildings for private prayer. In a joint statement they said:

“Sadly, London is ahead of the rest of the country in seeing a steep rise in the number of those falling sick with COVID-19. We have all heard the strong calls from the Mayor and the Prime Minister not to leave home unless it is essential, and not to use public transport unless we have to.”

Further information can be found here...

<https://tinyurl.com/swzlubz>

The situation is being assessed by the *Diocesan Coronavirus Planning Group*.

Coronavirus related scams

I know that these are anxious times, and I don't want to add to people's anxiety. There are probably no more scams than normal, but inevitably fraudsters will be switching tactics to take advantage of new opportunities. The City of London police have issued the following advice...

http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/images/document_library/UDR03164.pdf

Mothering Sunday service with the Archbishop of Canterbury

If you didn't manage to hear it yesterday, you can catch up here...

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/online-church>

Latest national guidance

The Church of England's website has been updated with the following guidance for churches:

What about key workers. It can be found at...

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

Best wishes,
Stephen