

Dear Friends,

At this extraordinary time, we have been instructed to suspend all public worship until further notice and as a Benefice we have **cancelled all our services and group activities** until we are instructed otherwise.

This is a time, however, when we need to turn to God in prayer. We have made arrangements for our 4 church buildings to continue to be open during the day, so if you wish, and are not self isolating, you can come and reflect and pray. We are arranging for some printed materials to be left in the churches to help you pray.

The clergy and lay ministers will be keeping regular times of prayer and, on a rotation basis, be saying morning and evening prayer in our church buildings at 9am and 5pm - do please join us in prayer - from your own homes or wherever you are at the time.

We are all still working our usual hours, so please be in touch by phone or e-mail if you would like to talk or are in need in any way, or have a specific prayer request our pastoral teams are also at the ready should you need them, or know of a neighbour who does.

I have asked Michele to send out our regular pew-sheet each Friday as she normally does, with the Sunday readings and some prayer points as well as any other information we have. Please use the readings to reflect on, find some hymns to sing along to online or in your CD collection and continue to worship God in any way you can!

Remember this call to stay away is as much to save others and reduce the stress on the NHS as it is to protect yourself. We reflect on Jesus' summary of the commandments at this time: to love God with everything we have, to love our neighbour and to love ourselves.

We remain a community of faith, even when we are not meeting together - we must continue to pray together.

God bless you and keep you and make His presence known to you in these difficult times,

Mary

The Church has a variety of resources available to help us to pray.

Here is the website address:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-daily-prayer/todays-prayer>

Using the Church of England website you will be able to join the Anglican Community in morning and evening prayer as well as download apps for your smartphone. Or on Alexa.

There are updates on Church of England Coronavirus website along with more information and worship at home resources.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>