

MICHAEL'S MESSAGES Edition 2 – 24 March 2020

To all friends at Christ Church West Wimbledon

- I started to compose this latest edition on Mothering Sunday evening, ready to announce to you that I was planning to open Christ Church on certain days and at certain times for quiet prayer – when suddenly all the clergy received an email from the London Bishops announcing that all London churches would have to close, even for private prayer, because of the number of coronavirus cases currently prevalent in London. This is very disappointing news – but totally understandable giving the present serious situation. Even ordinary tasks like church cleaning simply cannot happen at the moment, but when the restrictions are lifted, we will quickly convene a cleaning party to get things ready for our first Sunday back in church! And what a Sunday that will be!
- There is a story of a sign writer who was asked to adorn a church sign with the phrase: '**Glory to God in the Highest**'. Quickly though somebody covered up the 'e' so it read '**Glory to God in the High St**'. And this is absolutely spot on – do remember that **GOD IS EVERYWHERE – AND NOT JUST IN CHURCH!** He is certainly with you in your homes as you adhere to the current restrictive guidelines. For myself, I continue to say Morning and Evening Prayer at the Vicarage – and remember everyone each evening at 5.55pm. It is good to know that a lot of you have also accessed services on the BBC and online.
- One or two of you have asked about the church and financial giving. Although the church is closed, we are still having to pay our regular bills – Parish Share to the Diocese, insurance, utilities, salaries to those we employ and so on. Thank you to those who give via your Bank. For any of you who normally put gift aid envelopes or cash in the collection bags each Sunday, you might like to think about giving via your Bank while the church is closed. If you would like further information about how to do this, please do contact in confidence Lynda Coleman: lynda.coleman1@btinternet.com
- Julie Grainger has been walking up to Wimbledon Common each day and taking a photo of the beauty of nature – she is happy to send you a copy by email. If you would like her to add you to her circulation list, please email Julie on juliegrainger88@gmail.com
- Here is a moving prayer by an anonymous friend of someone at Christ Church. Their friend is having cancer treatment and about to go into 12 weeks of isolation:
May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake. May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable. May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent. May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options. May we who have to cancel our trips remember those that have no safe place to go. May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all. May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home. As fear grips our country, let us choose love. During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbours. Amen.

This latest newsletter comes with my thoughts and prayer for you all. Michael Burns, Vicar