

## Dear Friends of Christ Church West Wimbledon,

Following the advice of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to all the clergy in the Church of England, I have had to suspend all public worship at Christ Church for the foreseeable future. I have also had to suspend all business meetings, all church activities and all church social gatherings.

In their letter the Archbishops said that “being a part of the Church of England is going to look very different in the days ahead. Our life is going to be less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday and on weekdays, and more characterised by the prayer and service we offer each day.”

I am well aware that the current situation is a frightening and bewildering one for us all and that some of you are particularly vulnerable to this illness. Please be assured of my prayers and pray for one another, our nation and the world – and particularly for those who work in the NHS.

**Continuing the Church's ministry at this time:** Sara will still email the weekly pewsheets to those on her circulation list so that you can use the Sunday readings. It will also be on our website: [www.christchurch-westwimbledon.org](http://www.christchurch-westwimbledon.org). Why not listen to the Daily Service at 9.45am on R4 LW?

Although I can't visit, I will be available by telephone (8946 5954) or email ([ccww.vicar@gmail.com](mailto:ccww.vicar@gmail.com)) and I anticipate being at home for much of the time. Do give me a ring if you need something or you would just welcome a chat over the phone – leave a message if I happen to be out and I will call you back. If you are ill or self-isolating and need some practical support, please do let me know as I may be able to put you in touch with someone who can help with groceries and over the counter medicines. It is best to contact your pharmacy about ensuring the supply of prescription medicines.

**Pray and be a good neighbour:** Please look out for your neighbours, especially if they are elderly or chronically ill. Do pray – and do keep washing your hands. One suggestion with the need for regular hand washing for 20 seconds is to say the **Lord's Prayer** as you wash your hands – rather than singing happy birthday twice! It takes the same amount of time and is a good way to be regularly praying for those affected by Covid 19.

**Being in touch with one another:** We are a very friendly and sociable congregation. It will be very hard not to see each other week by week. Keep in touch with those you know in the congregation. May I also suggest that you might like to pause wherever you are at **5.55pm each evening**, just as the 6pm news starts, and hold everyone at Christ Church up to God in a moment of quiet prayer? Perhaps set an alarm to remind you to do this each day!

Here is a prayer you might like to use which I have composed:

*Eternal Father, look with love on your people of Christ Church and pour upon us the gifts of your Spirit. Although we are apart, draw us to you and to one another, so that by our growing love and unity we may bring healing and life to all. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Here is a prayer you might like to use written by the Dean of Southwark:

*Loving God, source of healing and comfort, fill us with your grace,  
that the sick may be made whole, that those who care for us may be strengthened,  
that the anxious may be calmed, and those most vulnerable be protected,  
in the power of Spirit and in the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

With my best wishes and prayers for you all, *Michael Burns*, Vicar

St Patrick's Day 2020