

Holy Trinity Church, Mothering Sunday 22nd March 2020

Dear friends,

In these extraordinary days of the Corona virus outbreak, a week has truly seemed a long time. From imagining ourselves only a few days ago keeping most things open, through to the closure of colleges, schools and churches on Friday, things feel like they are changing at a frightening pace.

The words of St Paul become more and more relevant

Phil 4:5–7 The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything ... and may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

However, as noted in the Church of England's recent communication, we have certainly not "shut up shop", but are very much "in business", and before long, this may all start to feel quite normal. Caring for one another had always included cheery phone calls and inquiries after health. And having decided to try our hand at online services (our first at 10.00am today, [here](#)), Archbishop Justin is now broadcasting live from Lambeth Palace at 9.00am! (recording available later, [here](#)).

In the meantime, we have received letters of encouragement from our Archbishops, Bishops Christopher and Richard, and Joshua Rey who will be coming to be our Vicar in the Summer. Some highlights include the following: "This is a defining moment for the Church of England ... less about attendance ... and more [about] prayer and service ... an opportunity to live out our faith by acts of love and kindness to others". And for those already ill, or who are self-isolating, "make sure that they know that you are praying for them".

Churches Together in England and Wales have also called for a National Day of Prayer and Action, asking us to send out a sign of hope by lighting a candle in our windows tonight at 7.00pm. Bishop Christopher adds: "The light of Christ will not be extinguished as we seek to live Christ-centred, outward-focussed lives, we can be a light to those around us in these difficult times".

A full statement about the call to prayer, signed by all of our CTE leaders is available [here](#).

The theme of light recurs in a warm letter of encouragement from Revd Joshua and Annie:

"We are guided by a light that shines more brightly than the darkness is dark. Let us ... take thought how to face [these challenges] together. There will be practical things we can do to help ... ways we can encourage and support. Let us be compassionate, imaginative and diligent [and] ensure that nobody is lonely or cut off ..."

He concludes with a word of from the Old Testament reading set for Evensong today

"Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Josh 1:9)

Please remember, too, those from the parish who are still very much at work in hospitals and surgeries, emergency services and front-line provision of all kinds, often risking their own health in the process. We pray also for all those who work in the entertainment, hospitality or retail sectors, whose hours are curtailed and who may be facing financial hardship. Finally let us pray for all those who are currently ill, or finding isolation difficult or frustrating.

As noted, our administrator, Sunny, will be continuing to work from home and can be contacted in the usual ways. All relevant information will appear on the Church website (www.holytrinityroehampton.org), which will be updated later today. We are aware that modern technology is not accessible to all, and are posting out information to all those who request and making sure everyone knows relevant phone numbers etc.

Yours in Christ, Tom Kemoh and John Moxon