

## Responding to Coronavirus

### A word from your Priest in Charge

These are challenging, and for many people, difficult times. We will find out what is really important to us as individuals and also to communities. When, in the future we look back we will realise that some things have changed, and that will include even the church. Indeed, I think that it could be a radically different church, but we don't have to wait until the pandemic recedes.

In challenging times we are forced to look at what is important. For Christians, worship, fellowship and service to others have always been important, during this time of isolation we are going to have to re think how we do this. Although I cannot physically visit you or share in the normal village events, I will seek to be in touch with many people through e mail and telephone. Do feel free to get in touch with me for a chat or if you have concerns.

At times like these we can be overwhelmed. I am reminded of the words in Psalm 91:1-2 'You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

Yours in Christ

*Graham*

### Practical actions

We are following the advice and guidance from the government, archbishops and our diocesan bishop.

### Worship

These are exceptional times. The government has now instructed that **all places of worship are closed**. Churches have traditionally been a place of sanctuary, however, in the current pandemic, they could also be a place where the virus spreads. Our worship of God and our care for one another will continue, but not from within our church buildings.

### Continuing to pray at home

Although all our churches are closed this does not mean that we can't pray. In these challenging times when we are unable to physically meet together, we do not stop worshipping and praying. We can continue to be part of a worshipping community praying at home in unity with sisters and brothers throughout our group of churches. There are daily and Sunday services streamed from the diocese as well as brief prayer sheets for our benefice.

For those with computers and internet access:

- Morning prayer is streamed from the Bishop's Chapel via the Bishop's Facebook page [@BishopsCofEsuffolk](#)
- Radio 4 longwave broadcasts a daily service
- On Sunday, Songs of Praise is on BBC 1 and a morning service on Radio 4.

### **Praying together**

Throughout this crisis, many church members are setting aside time at **9.30am and 4pm each day** to say their prayers in their own homes. A simple service sheet with a reading, reflection and prayers will be available on [www.hachestonchurch.onesuffolk.net/services](http://www.hachestonchurch.onesuffolk.net/services) Even if you are unable to do this each day, on **SUNDAYS** the Ministry Team encourage everyone (if convenient) to find a space at home at 9.30am and read the service. This enables us to feel part of a united church at a time when we are unable to meet together.

### **Light a candle**

We are encouraging people, every Sunday at 7pm, to light a candle and place it in their window as a sign of solidarity and hope in the light of Christ that can never be extinguished.

### **Pastoral support**

Although we are unable to visit, members of the Ministry Team and others are available at the end of the `phone to listen or to pray with you.

Canon Graham Hedger	01473 737280
Canon Deirdre Parmenter	01728 748145
Jackie Clark	01728 723623
Carol Cooke	01728 747625
Jane Slade	01728 723707

### **Supporting others**

For those who are in self isolation it can be a disturbing time. We are working with each Parish Council and other village groups to develop a support system via telephone and e mail, to remove some of the isolation. Also, to provide practical support such as collecting and delivering groceries. Some villages have adopted `street wardens / contacts' to facilitate this process.

### **Remembering others**

These are very challenging times for many people, who face the possibility of the loss of jobs and livelihoods. Britain already has a large number of people who need the help and support of foodbanks. If you are able, when on your very occasional visit to a shop please continue to place an item in the foodbank collections.

Please continue to remember in prayer all those who are continuing to work for our safety and wellbeing, especially those who are providing essential services; those working in the health service, providing social care, in education and the food and retail industry.