



PARISH OF HAWLEY
Holy Trinity – All Saints
parishofhawley.org.uk

The Revd Canon William Perry SSC
vicar@parishofhawley.org.uk
01276 609498



Dear Friends

As I'm sure you're all aware by now, on Tuesday our Archbishops decreed that all public worship in the Church of England was to be suspended until further notice.

So much has happened since then that it's hard to believe that, as I write, it's still less than three days ago! It seems almost like a different era. As, in many ways, it was; I suspect that Covid-19 will come to be seen as a watershed event, with a sharp divide perceived between the world "before Coronavirus" and "after Coronavirus". As the Bishop of Guildford has said in his pastoral letter, "the very word 'unprecedented' is becoming almost a cliché."

Everyone is still adjusting as best they can, and everything is still very much in a state of flux. So this is just a preliminary mailing to everyone on the Church Electoral Roll, and others for whom I have contact details, to let you know that the life and prayer of the Church has not stopped, even if it continues for the moment in much altered circumstances; and that much thought is being given to how most effectively to maintain it, and of course how we can support one another, especially the most vulnerable or isolated.

While public worship – defined as "Church services which the public are invited to attend and take part in" – is no longer taking place, the Archbishops have urged that "Churches should be open where possible", and that "Prayers can be said by clergy and ministers on behalf of everyone." With that in mind, our **immediate plan** is as follows:

- We aim to ensure that Holy Trinity is open for private prayer from 9 am to 12 noon each day. Everyone is welcome to visit but they are asked to wash their hands before coming and to maintain a distance of 2 metres from any others present.
- Clergy and/or a lay minister will usually say Morning Prayer on behalf of the parish at 9.30 am. This may be followed by a private Mass, by the priest alone; Holy Communion will not be distributed. If you happen to be in church at the time, you may wish to make an act of "spiritual communion" instead.
- We intend that All Saints should also be open for private prayer at regular designated times. We have yet to finalise this, but it will be advertised on the noticeboard and in subsequent mailings.
- Subject to any restrictions which may be imposed, I will continue to be available to provide on request the Sacraments of the Church, sick ministry, spiritual counsel etc. on a private basis.

This Sunday is of course **Mothering Sunday**! A day when, so far from closing our doors, we usually make them even more open and welcoming than usual, if that were possible! While that clearly cannot happen this time, I hope that we will have something **on our website** to mark the occasion, and I am most grateful to Emily Brown, one of our number who last year graduated in Film Studies, for her generous offer to put her skills to use to help show that the church is still very much here and still offering the sacrifice of prayer and praise. For those of you on the internet, please do look regularly at our website, **parishofhawley.org.uk**, which will carry all up-to-date information.

Looking slightly further off, please note that the **Chrism Mass** at Winchester Cathedral on April 4th has been cancelled, as has the planned **Richborough Festival** at Canterbury Cathedral on May 16th. All other parish events are also suspended.

We intend to keep in regular contact over this period with everyone who has an association with either church. If you suspect that there is someone who we may have missed out on, or who would simply like to be kept in the loop, please do let me know (with an email address if possible). It is even more vital than ever that we ensure that our church family holds together, even if we are unable to meet up, and that we redouble our efforts to look out for each other and for everyone in need.

With my love and prayers to you all.

William.