



St Alban's Vicarage,
Broadmead Avenue,
Northampton.
NN3 2RA

17th March 2020

Dear friends

It is with deep regret that I must inform you that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued advice that all public worship is to be suspended; therefore there will be no public services at St Alban's until further notice.

However we can still pray and worship at home joining in with others using:

- #LiveLent: Care for God's Creation - the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2020. With weekly themes shaped around the first Genesis account of creation, it explores the urgent need for humans to value and protect the abundance God has created. This daily audio content is available via the app and daily emails. Sign up for free.
- The BBC's Daily Service and Sunday Worship - radio programmes will be using some of the themes from #LiveLent as part of their broadcasts.
- Prayer for the day - each day the Church of England publishes audio and text of the Prayer for the Day.
- Smart speakers – daily prayer and #LiveLent audio content can be accessed via our smart speaker apps.

Other ways of joining in worshipping *with* others but from our own homes will be brought in soon – I will keep you informed.

I will be in church saying prayers on behalf of us all. I will say Morning Prayer at 8.30am Tuesday to Friday and 9am Saturday and Sunday. You can join in with me by using the daily prayer app. I will light a candle in the porch each evening at 6.30pm when I begin Evening Prayer.

Whether you choose to join with me in prayer at those times please pray for all who are suffering in this pandemic and for all who are working hard to fight it. Please see the last page for some prayers you might like to use at this time. Other prayers can be found on the Church of England website.

Please show others compassion and if you are able, offer to assist your neighbours in need. Please keep in touch with each other by phone and social media, communication at this time is vital for everyone's well-being. Please feel free to ring me. I would also like to know if you have symptoms or are diagnosed with having the Corona Covid-19 virus so I can specifically pray for you.

We are making arrangements to keep the Food Bank open in a safe way though without offering refreshments or a listening ear. Anyone under 70yrs who can help with the Food Bank distribution please ring me. We are also in need of more food to distribute.

By our service, and by our love, Jesus Christ will be made known, and the hope of the gospel – a hope that will counter fear and isolation - will spread across our parish and across our country.

The Archbishops have called, along with fellow church leaders, for a day of prayer and action this coming Sunday - Mothering Sunday (22nd March). Mothering Sunday has always been both a day of celebration for many and a sensitive and emotional day for some. Wherever you are this Sunday please do join in this day of prayer and action and remember especially those who are sick or anxious, and all involved in our Health Service. As one action, we are calling on everyone to place a lighted candle in their window at 7.00 p.m. as a sign of solidarity and hope in the light of Christ that can never be extinguished.

As Bishop Donald said in a recent letter to clergy, "We haven't faced a crisis on this scale in this country in our lifetimes. History tells us of many, and of great work and wonderful courage from Christians at such times. Knowledge of world affairs will suggest that in this country we have been part of a cocooned minority, spared many of the difficulties which nations and churches often face. May we learn quickly to trust our Lord and to act wisely."

I will be in touch again soon with further information regarding our church's life when it is available.

God bless you

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev'd Judy Evans

Vicar of St Alban the Martyr, Northampton