

The Archbishops (Canterbury and York) announced last Tuesday lunchtime the suspension until further notice of all C of E services and gatherings because of the coronavirus pandemic. They called upon us to be a different sort of church, radically so, in terms of our worship now we're having to be home-based for the not-so-foreseeable. Thus we play our part in decreasing the spread of COVID-19, but hopefully we can increase our vigilance and care for our neighbours and our sacrifice of praise, thanks and prayer to Almighty God through Christ our Lord (not just on a Sunday)!

**TOMORROW.** The Archbishop of Canterbury is leading a service for Mothering Sunday at Lambeth Palace tomorrow which is being broadcast at 8.10am on BBC Radio 4 and BBC Local Radio Stations, For more info see the *Sunday Worship* webpage at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000gm8f>

It is also being shown as a video recording on the C of E website at 9.00am:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/online-church>

... and on that webpage are other online resources.

(The BBC Radio 4 FM schedule for early Sunday morning shows other religious programmes, see:-)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/schedules/p00fz17j/2020/03/22>

**COVID-19.** The Archbishops also called for tomorrow (Sunday 22nd) to be observed at home as a National Day of Prayer and Action. They ask at the end of their announcement (link below) that you light a candle and (safely) make it visible in your home at 7.00pm.

<https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/news/latest-news/coronavirus-archbishops-call-national-day-prayer-and-action>

However, at 9.30am or 11am tomorrow, when St Augustine's Flimwell and St Mary's Ticehurst (respectively) would have had their main service, why not as part of the National Day of Prayer and Action, use the prayer leaflet produced by our Licensed Lay Reader, Penny Evans, entitled "**Prayers for Healing and Help in a Time of Crisis**", for use by our congregations at home and by anyone going to pray in St Mary's. [See adjacent link on our website homepage.]

There will be copies in St Mary's **to collect and take home – PLEASE DO NOT HANDLE ANY OF THESE AND THEN LEAVE THEM IN CHURCH.**

Or there are more prayer resources here from the C of E website, and worship resources below it:-

[www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources)

### **DAILY WORSHIP**

Simple C of E Morning Prayer and Night Prayer for daily use, especially with the isolated in mind:-

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/midweek\\_worship\\_at\\_home\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/midweek_worship_at_home_0.pdf)

Here are the full texts of the C of E Morning/Evening Prayer, Prayer During the Day, and Night Prayer (Compline). See this webpage (click on its *More Options* for a fuller choice, e.g. BCP):

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Every weekday there is the 9.45am BBC Radio 4 LW (Long Wave) Daily Service (15 mins), info at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000gkv0>

Or the ecumenical *Oremus* daily service text at [www.oremus.org](http://www.oremus.org) - click on *today* (to the left).

**Rural church worship resources and reflections in response to coronavirus**, see:-

<https://arthurrankcentre.org.uk/together-apart/>

Together Apart issue a weekly email. The Week 1 reflection is by Revd Dr Mark Betson, National Rural Officer, formerly our Diocesan Rural Officer. It's not on their website, so it's below.

**And finally ... some good news!** Finley Thomas Cole was born on Saturday 14th March at 9.23am to Tom and Annika Cole, weighing 7lb 12oz, and Eleanor is enjoying being a big sister!

Continued ...

**THE C of E PRAYER FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy.  
Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

**Call 01580 849280 for volunteer help** in Ticehurst, Flimwell and Wallcrouch (the Ticehurst Community Friends ansaphone number, coordinating local volunteers).

**Please do watch out for your neighbours**, especially the elderly, and for friends in the congregation who you know are not on email/our email circulation list. We'd love to add people to our email list, but we need their permission confirming what their email address is! (By contacting me, or our Administrator Di Freeman on [admin@ticehurstandflimwell.church](mailto:admin@ticehurstandflimwell.church) )

**Please consider giving more to Nourish**, our local Food Bank providers (based in TW, collection point in the village store) and items for Family Support Work at their table/noticeboard in St Mary's (turn right on entry).

**And also please consider putting aside** for giving later, or for payment in a different way (BACS, direct debit plus gift-aiding) what you would be putting in Sunday collections. Some of you won't be able to, I know. But like many organisations and charities, this year's parish and diocesan finances will surely take a huge hit.

A copy of this update (and the Together Apart attachment) will be posted up in St Mary's for our people who are not on email/internet and for any visitors to see (but not handle!).

**Do contact me if you need to chat.** (Leave a message with name and number if I can't answer.)  
**Revd Ashley Evans, Vicar.**

**Phones - 01580 200316, 07763 070177**

**Email - [revd@penandashley.co.uk](mailto:revd@penandashley.co.uk)**

**God bless you all.**

**Ashley**

**21st March 2020**

# TOGETHER APART: A RURAL CHURCH RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS

## Week One

**Welcome to our new weekly email, full of reflections and resources to support, encourage and sustain you and your rural churches during the coronavirus outbreak!**

In partnership with our national church colleagues and fellow rural mission and ministry organisations (more info below), we have decided to respond to the challenges faced by rural churches - in common with churches, communities and individuals across the world - with a suite of reflections and resources that we hope you will find helpful.

Each email will contain a Bible passage, a short reflection and a prayer, plus practical suggestions of ways you might like to respond locally. We'll also highlight information and resources available on our website and signpost to our partners.

We'd also love to be able to share resources that you are producing and using in your own churches and communities, as well as stories of creative and surprising local responses to coronavirus; please send anything you'd like to contribute to [louise.davis@arthurrankcentre.org.uk](mailto:louise.davis@arthurrankcentre.org.uk).

Be assured of our love and prayers during this really challenging time.

The Arthur Rank Centre team

*Things are going to be different from now on*

### **Bible Reading: John 19:25-27**

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

### **Reflection**

Things are going to be different from now on.

This was my first thought when the initial disbelief and shock had subsided from the spread and speed of the coronavirus and the measures to hamper it. Our practice and the way we do things is going to have to change.

For me, the most significant moment was when the Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued their statement suspending public worship, adding that '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 more characterised by the prayer and service we offer each day.'

In the midst of chaos and fear we are being asked to step up and step out in what we do as Christian communities where we live.

In the Gospel reading for Sunday we see Jesus at the most painful time in his life reaching out to his disciples, followers and family, pointing out that while things were going to be different they were to carry on. This was especially true for the new relationship between the disciple and Jesus' mother, called to care for one another; a new family built not on blood but on the love Jesus taught.

This Sunday, Mothering Sunday, we are especially called to prayer and action for the sick and anxious in our communities, loving them as Jesus has loved us, and demonstrating this in new and inventive ways that respond to the whole of our communities and not just those we know well.

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ,

you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you.

In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake.

Amen.

(From [churchofengland.org](https://www.churchofengland.org))

Revd Dr Mark Betson, National Rural Officer for the Church of England

20.3.20

The Arthur Rank Centre

<https://arthurrankcentre.org.uk/>