

27th April 2020

Dear friends

I am writing this letter on Monday 27th April, a significant day in our lives and in the life of the parish. It was on this date, eight years ago, that I was instituted as rector of the parish and Joan and I began our ministry here. We thank you for your love, care, support and prayers, and we want to assure you of our love, care, support and prayers during those years and especially in these extraordinary times.

The regulations to help restrict the spread of the coronavirus are impacting on all our lives, in so many ways. One of these is that we are unable to meet together to worship the Lord and interact with one another in person.

Sunday Services Online

Although, we are not able to meet in person, we are able to worship together on Sunday mornings at 10.30am for our online service. This service is available on Facebook and on the website. Please do help others find us and follow us, share posts with family and friends. (www.facebook.com/bchurchni | www.bchurch.co.uk).

Sunday Services by Phone

From Sunday 26th April people can listen to our Sunday service at 10.30am by telephone. The phone number is 028 4040 0345. Calls will be charged at the standard network rate but, for many people, calls to this number may be included in their network package. Each Sunday service will be available until the following Sunday.

Daily Services

In addition to the service on Sunday I, or a member of the team, lead Morning Prayer each weekday at 10.00am and I celebrate Holy Communion on Sundays at 9.00am. This helps those who join with us, albeit it a virtual way, to worship and pray together. An Order of Service for Morning Prayer and Holy Communion were included with my letter in March. Please contact the Parish Office if you did not receive that letter or if you have misplaced the Order of Service. Readings for May and June are included in this mailing. Please feel free to use all or some of the readings. Also included are the Bible 2020 readings.

Youth and Children's Ministry

Ava and the team are continuing to provide an online ministry to children and young people. Please do help and encourage children and young people to connect with these ministries.

Giving

Thank you to everyone who contributes financially to support the ministry and mission of the Church. We have heard of scams in other places, where people are calling at homes, saying they are collecting church weekly envelopes. No-one has been authorised to collect weekly envelopes on our behalf.

Some parishioners have asked how they can continue to give at this time. For those who have access to the internet, please consider giving online. There's information on our website about giving by Standing Order, making a one-off donation, or giving by cheque. Please contact the Office if you would like further information.

Support and Pastoral Care

Although pastoral visiting is suspended I, and members of the team, will endeavour to provide pastoral support by phone. Please contact me or the Parish Office (028 4062 2744/info@bchurch.co.uk) if you, or someone you know, need help or support, (including collecting/delivering essential supplies or prescriptions), or phone me (028 4062 2612 or 07933096720) if you would like to talk or would like someone to pray with you.

May you know the presence, peace and power of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. May He draw you into a deeper and more meaningful relationship with Him. May He encircle and encourage you, guard and guide you, renew and restore you, strengthen and sustain you.

Yours for the sake of Christ

Roderc

(Please see overleaf)

Please pray ...

We pray for all who are ill, and for their families and friends,
for those who have contracted the coronavirus,
for those whose surgery, treatments or procedures have been postponed,
for those who are in hospital, nursing homes or in their own homes,
for those who cannot visit family and friends
for those who have been bereaved
for people's physical, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

Please take a few moments to pray for people you know who are ill, who are grieving and for their families.

Lord, we pray for an awareness of your presence, that they will know your healing presence and power, your love and care, your comfort and strength and the support of others.

We pray for all health care professionals, and for their families and friends,
for those who work in hospitals, surgeries, hospices, nursing homes, and in the community,
for all who co-ordinate and all who provide assistance and support,
for the provision of the necessary protective equipment and resources,
for effective policies and procedures in caring for those who are ill.

Please take a few moments to pray for people you know who provide care and support and for their families

Lord, we pray for an awareness of your presence, that you will guide, sustain, strengthen and protect, those who provide care and support to others.

We pray for all who are self-isolating, for all who are working from home,
for those who are home schooling, for those who have been furloughed,
for those who have been made redundant, for those who are uncertain about the future,
for those who are anxious or apprehensive, for those who are struggling with temptation,
for those who are experiencing financial difficulties, for those living with other pressures and challenges,
for those who are contending with physical or emotional abuse or mistreatment.

Please take a few moments to pray for people you know who have particular needs and for their families.

Lord, we pray for an awareness of your presence, your love and care, for the support of others, and for the developing and deepening of faith, for wisdom, for strength and for support.

We pray for the PM, for government ministers and the NI executive,
for all who advise and assist them,
for all who make decisions about national policies,
for researchers analysing data and identifying trends,
for scientists working on a vaccine,
for those involved in providing essential services, supplies and support.

Please take a few moments to pray for people you know who have particular roles and responsibilities and for their families.

Lord, we pray for an awareness of your presence, for wisdom, insight and understanding.

Lord, we pray that you will deliver us from this pandemic, protect us and provide for us in these days, draw us closer to yourself, and develop and deepen our relationship with you. Amen

A prayer for our land

Almighty and merciful God, who in days of old didst give to this land the benediction of thy holy Church; withdraw not, we pray thee, thy favour from us, but so correct what is amiss, and supply what is lacking, that we may more and more bring forth fruit to thy glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

May the Lord bless us and keep us; may the Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us; may the Lord lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace. Amen