

Dear Friends

I hope you are all coping with the enhanced lockdown and able to find things that stimulate and bring you hope in difficult days. As you know, we took the decision to close the church for worship and given the rise in cases locally we feel this was the right thing to do. I, as much as anyone, am missing our time together to worship and gather strength from each other, and it is certainly the case that no-one wants to keep a church closed unnecessarily. However, it is quite clear that we are entering what has been described as the 'most dangerous phase' of this epidemic and so our desire to be able to physically worship together has to take second place to keeping each other as safe as possible while we wait for vaccinations and hopefully safer times.

The PCC meets on-line on Monday 18th January and we shall look at where we are regarding case numbers and our ability to safely enter church again. However, I must be honest and say that the short-term picture doesn't look particularly positive just now. We hope and pray.

In the meantime, I continue to provide worship resources, both on-line and in the post to those without internet access. Some of you are joining in with streamed worship from other sources and it has been good to hear your experiences of this. All in all, we need to remind ourselves and each other that God has given us so much and walks with us through this crisis, and the message of the Epiphany, of the shining forth of the Gospel for all people, is still what should drive us forward into this year of unknowns. And as it does, we look to Christ our Light who continues to shine in our lives, even when things are at their darkest. Our faith gives us so much at a time like this and I hope that we will embrace it more and more, taking advantage of what is made available to grow in our relationship with Jesus.

To that end, **Bible Study** continues each Monday afternoon at 2.00pm and anyone is welcome to join us. Just let me know and I will send you the Zoom link and any other information.

Worship

Since the first lockdown last March, my aim has been to keep the people of All Saints as together as possible, which is why I didn't venture down the road of on-line services as it would have excluded half of our congregation. Thankfully many of us were able to come back to church in August and have enjoyed the strength and comfort we have derived from this. However, we are in enhanced lockdown once again and it now feels important to provide something extra to enable our worshipping congregation to share together in addition to the printed resources we've had.

Therefore, from this Sunday 17th, there will be an **Evening Service** at 5.30pm via Zoom. If you would like to join in please let me know and I will send you the link.

Sunday worship sheets are available at:

<https://scraptoftchurch.org.uk/worship-2>

Intercessions

For your prayers, please continue to pray for those on our intercessions list:

The Sick

Jim Tighe	Pam Bayliss	Margaret White	Ila Beverley
Garth Butler	Bryan Harget	Fr Colin Rushforth	
Christopher Hames	Barbara Firban	Jill Duvall	

The Departed

Valerie King Roger Packwood

Anniversary of death

w/b 17th – Percy Madelin; Eileen Lubbock; Lilian Haines; Les Sharp; Kitty Cooper

w/b 24th - Phyllis Johnson; Colin Hill; John Jarrom; Brian Callaghan

w/b 31st – James Fryer; Joyce Law; George Bemrose;

Let us pray that the coming weeks will gradually improve and that the combined efforts of the nation, the NHS and health experts work to bring us together once more.

With every blessing

Fr Martin