

Dear Friends,

Greetings in these challenging times. Please read this rather long message, about how we can respond to yesterday's letter from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, calling for Church of England churches to put public worship on hold and become a "*different sort of church*" to face the challenge of coronavirus. Rather than "*shutting up shop*", they encourage us to face the challenge by "*becoming a radically different kind of church rooted in prayer and serving others*". In the light of this we need to rethink how we are going to express church in the coming weeks and months.

(see <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/archbishops-call-church-england-become-radically-different-public-worship> )

### What needs to STOP

As from today, public church services and church activities at or associated with Mayfield Church will ease until further notice. This includes -

- Sunday services and Sunday School;
- Midweek groups such as Wendy Club, Over 60's, Lent Lunches, Food & Faith;
- Organisational meetings - including the PCC, the Church AGM, and the Worship Planning and Advisory Group.

### GETTING READY for these new circumstances

An augmented Standing Committee will retain its planned meeting this Friday to look at creative ways of remaining and even growing as a worshiping, caring, and outward-facing community.

We will look at ways of using different media help us all keep in touch with one another in an environment of face-to-face social distancing, and bearing in mind, especially, those in self-isolation.

In the absence of Sunday services, which would help us journey towards Good Friday and Easter, we will look at ways of keeping that momentum, perhaps through emails, the website, and more traditional means of communication for those not geared up with IT or 'on line'.

### GOing ahead

- We need to be **alive in prayer**, and we will be providing prayer resources on a regular basis to help us all to pray.
- We are planning for **Mayfield church to be open** on, probably, two mornings each week for an hour, so that anyone in church or the wider community can come in and pray. One of these will be on Sunday mornings. We will email out ASAP to let you know precisely when the church will be open. There will be no refreshments, and we will need to keep our distance from others, but resources for prayer and reflection will be available. PLEASE FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SAFE AND PROTECTED, DISPLAYED IN CHURCH.
- The Archbishops have called for **this Sunday to be a Day of Prayer & Action**. They write, "We have called, along with our fellow church leaders, for a day of prayer and action this coming Sunday - Mothing Sunday (22nd March). Mothing 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 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".

**I will send out some further suggestions on how to make the most of this, tailored to our own situations, later in the week.**

### **Above all, "Love our neighbours"!**

I know we are already looking out for one another - family friends and neighbours - in practical ways. Protecting ourselves is an important part of this.

*If you have concerns of any kind, perhaps about practical or personal aspects of self-isolation, please be in touch. We will do our very best to ensure that being alone is not the same as being lonely.*

With kind regards,

Martin Soar (Vicar) 07952 610677  
msoar54@gmail.com

Charles Wimbush (Churchwarden) 01335 324083  
charles.wimbush382@btinternet.com

Gill Brewer (Churchwarden) 01335 664526  
gill.brewer@incidium.net