



Pastoral Letter

06 April 2020



Dear friends,

This strange time of “**staying at home to protect the NHS and save lives**” continues. While we cannot get out to visit one another and go to our church building we are still very much in each other’s thoughts and prayers.

It is Palm Sunday and so we are remembering that happy day which was also tinged with sadness when Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time. We can recognise that life is a mixture of joy and pain. When we do rejoice at God’s presence it can help us to face and come through the pain. I hope you find the worship sheets helpful. This week I am grateful to David Gouldesbrough who has prepared the 9:00am interactive service sheet and I have prepared the 10:45am preacher led service sheet. Can I ask you to continue to remember in prayer our health workers and carers who we know and others around the country? And we might also think of Christchurch member Fiona Kendall. Fiona, who is working with refugees in Italy as part of the *Mediterranean Hope* team was meant to be with us this Sunday. Sadly, again due to the coronavirus that could not happen. I am sure you will join me in keeping Fiona in prayer as she goes through lock-down in Italy.

We now have our own Christchurch Ilkley YouTube channel. You can find this at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2egtggEyOjxeu60p5PcGDA/videos>

I have recorded a short talk for Palm Sunday and that should be available from Sunday morning. Very soon we will find ways of hearing from other preachers and worship leaders of our congregation.

Thank you for your ongoing financial support of the church. May God continue to bless your gifts and your generosity. If you normally give a financial contribution to Christchurch by the stewardship envelopes then I shall be posting the new ones out to you soon.

The restrictions in response to the virus will cause great financial difficulties for many people who will lose their work, or earn less through this time. We are re-opening a church **benevolence** fund so that, if approached, we can give small amounts of money to individuals who find themselves in particular hardship. Cheques for this can be sent to Jenny Freeman 15, Scalebor Square, Burley-in-Wharfedale, LS29 7SP, made payable to Christchurch. Bank details for a BACs transfer can also be provided. Should we accrue any surplus monies in the benevolence fund then the monies will go to the Ilkley Food Bank.

This will be a very different Holy Week and Easter to the one we had planned and were looking forward to sharing. I am hoping that we can continue to find new ways to connect with God and each other in the coming days.

Wishing you the peace and even the joy of Christ

Roberta