



Thursday 19th March

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I do hope that you are managing to organise your lives and those things that you need to be doing, and that these updates are helpful!

We have received further comprehensive instruction from the Church of England via Bishop Robert.

- Church buildings should remain open wherever possible for private prayer and reflection.
- Clergy may say daily prayer or celebrate Holy Communion (with one person present) in church. They may wish to tell their congregations that they are doing so at a particular time, so that people can pray at the same time in their own home. **They should actively discourage people from joining them in person in church for that time of prayer.**
- Everyone for whom it is safe to do is welcome to come to open churches for private prayer, while maintaining social distancing and good hygiene practices.

In line with this, St Matthias will be open on Sunday morning from 08:00 to 12:00 and John Becket and myself will be there where we will celebrate Holy Communion on behalf of you, the community of St Matthias.

We urge people not to arrive hoping to join with us in worship, as we are being told that this should not happen.

At the moment we don't have the technology in place to live-stream but a brief Mothering Sunday service with Bishop Jackie will be uploaded on the Exeter Diocese website on Sunday with a copy of the order of service so that you can join with others in the area in worship and prayer.

Further acts of worship will be uploaded in due course.

As SCHOOLS have now been directed to close from tomorrow, our pre-school will not be operational as from Monday, and therefore the planned Holiday Club will not be running. The Pre-school management are determining their actions with regard to the children of any essential workers.

Because almost all those who HIRE the hall have cancelled their forthcoming bookings, we will be altering the hours that the centre will be open.

Whilst the PHONE and the E-MAILS will be covered as normal, the centre – and hence the office – will be open from 10:00am to 12:30pm.

Because the Government are advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures, no one in that group should attend the church of host Open Church as they are to “avoid gatherings with friends and family.”

The full list is published on the Gov.uk website, but includes all over 70 years of age.

TORBAY COMMUNITY LARDER

They need our donations as much as ever, so please do continue to drop off any produce you can when the Church is open – 10:00 to 12:30 Monday to Friday

CONTACT DETAILS

We are very aware that some people are not getting these updates, but we have been trying to address this, and I understand several more people did receive yesterday's message.

Once again, if you are aware of people who are NOT getting them and would like to then please ask them to email me (revpaulbarton@gmail.com) so I can try to get the list updated.

Likewise, if you know of folk who do not have access to email or the internet, please print a copy and give to them!

Please check on the website or Facebook regularly to see what our latest update is.

VOLUNTEERS

We are continuing to work on practical aspects of supporting one another, and are very grateful to those of you who have already offered to serve.

Unfortunately there have not been as many of you offering to help as we would have hoped, and several of those who **have** done so are over 70 and so will be in isolation themselves.

Please email the office (admin@st-matthias-church.org) if you are willing to serve in any way – this might be offering to keep in touch by phone with a few people who are on their own, to collect prescriptions, to do essential shopping,

Our intention is to keep the Church open during the week, although this is dependent on younger people stepping forward to offer an hour or two to be there. We will have a rota so people can offer themselves for a one hour or longer slot.

This from Bishop Robert:

In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples ‘not to worry about your life... but first to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well’ (Matthew 6.33). It is hard not to worry in the current circumstances, but we endeavour to walk by faith, casting all our anxieties upon God, knowing that God cares about us (1 Peter 5.7). As Jesus wisely says, ‘Do not worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will bring worries enough of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today’.

Please keep an eye on the website or Facebook for updates.

<https://st-matthias-church.org/about-us/covid-19-corona-virus/>

There are links to the Exeter Diocese YouTube channel and their Coronavirus page available

Yours in Christ,

Paul Barton