

St John's, Levens | St Peter's, Heversham | St Thomas', Milnthorpe

In line with official guidance, all public acts of worship are suspended, but the churches are to remain open during the week for personal prayer on an individual basis. We are working to ensure that our fellowship and care in the church family continues to everyone, and we are providing resources and encouragement to continue in prayer, learning and devotion even though we cannot be together in one place at this time.

A number of resources are already available from the Church of England, including the LiveLent initiative:

https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches?fbclid=IwAR28hDJKTCXRW5G_LzQ9DiOgbhIXYyfcVCUA_vS4URHk89k3EPhfCtDSvhw#digital-resources

A couple of apps for your phone that are useful in daily prayer:

- Common Worship Daily Prayer: the daily prayer book of the Church of England <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>
- Prayermate app <https://www.prayermate.net> This provides an informal timetable of prayer and devotion. It allows you to gather all your prayer points together.

Enclosed with this email are a couple of documents: a set of prayers for use at this time and a short service for prayers in the home. You might wish to print a copy also and post it through the letterbox of someone who would appreciate it, especially if they are not on email. Copies shall be available to take from the church buildings also.

Resources will shortly be made available for you to use for worship in your home at service times, so that we as a Church will still worship together, albeit in our own homes. A weekly sermon will also be issued for Sunday.

It is my intention to say Morning or Evening Prayer in each of the three church buildings every Sunday. This is not a public act of worship but it maintains the principle of a weekly service according to the rites of the Church of England being said in each church. The Bible will be read and prayers offered for and in each parish this Sunday as follows: 10 am St Peter's, 11 am St Thomas', 7 pm St John's. The 7pm Evening Prayer coincides with the National Call to Prayer issued by Churches Together in England which I bring to your attention: <http://www.cte.org.uk/calltoprayer>

A friend reminded me of the words in Psalm 91. It encourages us to live wisely and confidently in the light of God's goodness and care. Here are the first six verses:

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.

He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.

These are uncertain days, yet with God's help we will get through this. Let us continue to pray for each other and to take care of each other. Here is one of the prayers produced by the Church of England:

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**