



St Peter  
& St Paul  
ABINGTON



13.03.2020

## Abington Pastoral Letter #1

Dear friends

In these challenging times, it would be important that we keep our communication going more regularly, sharing encouragements and prayers. You will receive a letter like this regularly from the Church while the situation continues.

It might be necessary in the near future to close Sunday services. We are not in that stage but we are already seeing falling numbers that is likely to continue. The Ministry Team is developing plans to maintain the communication within the community and to assure those who are vulnerable that they are still cared for and not forgotten. We will be producing materials for people to continue their life of worship in their homes which will be circulated via email. The Pastoral Visiting Team will phone those who haven't got email addresses to provide pastoral care for them and to assist them to worship with them over the phone.

We are facing a crisis which many of us have never faced in our life time. We are already seeing levels of stress and anxiety in our population. In the midst of this, our calling as Christians, as Disciples of Christ is to be the calm presence in our community, showing kindness and compassion to others. It is most likely that the vulnerable and the marginalised will get hit the hardest. The Church will seek ways to help them and care for them. Please do let me know if

you would be willing to help the more vulnerable or elderly in our community with things like shopping etc. It will help us to be prepared when the situation gets worse.

The Bible tells us this:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.*

*(2Corinthians 1.3-7)*

It is easy to feel helpless or powerless when we face a crisis of this scale. We may not invent the vaccine for the virus but we can bring out courage and faith from our hearts to console those who are in any affliction. Perhaps the fight that we are facing is not just the fight against the virus but the fight against fear and any kind of phobia.

If you feel stressed or anxious right now, how about turn off the news on the screen for a moment? Take a deep breath, close your eyes and say the prayer that we have been learning over the last three weeks? Our Pocket Prayer. Let each phrase sink deep in your heart. Here it is.

*God, you are good.*

*I need help.*

*So do they.*

*Thank you.*

*In Jesus name, Amen.*

Please take a good care of yourself. Please remember those who are suffering from this outbreak,

our NHS and those who are in authorities. May God bless you and your family.

With love in Christ

Revd. Jun

Parish Priest