



Abington Pastoral Letter #6 01.04.2020

Dear friends

It seems not possible that it was only 10 days ago when the Prime Minister announced the social distancing measures. Things have changed so much since then. And it appears that all of us now have to adjust to new ways.

The Church is discovering new ways of worshipping which is very encouraging and exciting. I have studied those new attempts and I am pleased to tell you that we are going to launch our Worship Online on this coming Sunday, Palm Sunday on 5th April at 10 am. This is to provide a space where many of us can meet and worship together in a creative way. I am very much aware however that there will be those who won't be able to access this service. So I will continue to write pastoral letters so I can keep in touch with everyone.

I hope that this Worship Online will be a reminder to all of us that although we cannot go to church, we can still BE the Church. We can be the Church by worshipping wherever we are, by serving our community and by loving our neighbours.

You can join this service either via Facebook or Youtube. Let me explain this a bit more.

#### Facebook

- If you are a Facebook user then please click [HERE](#). Please 'like' and 'follow' the page so that you can stay tuned.
- You can access all the contents including videos and live streamings even if you are not a Facebook user.
- The web address for the church's Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/abingtonchurchinthepark/>

## Youtube

- You may want to access our worship via Youtube for whatever reasons. Then please click [HERE](#).
- Please 'subscribe' if you wish so that you can stay tuned. You will need to sign in with your google account to subscribe. Of course you can still access all the video without subscribing or google ID.

Please do let me know if you have any questions or need any assistance.

You may have noticed that I have attached a video message to this letter, introducing our Worship Online (Click [HERE](#)). Please have a look when you have got time and let me know what you think. I hope you enjoy the video!

Please don't worry if you cannot access the video for whatever reasons because I have included everything I said in the video in this letter. You haven't missed anything.

All this new and creative initiatives are exciting. However I know it is just not the same as gathering in the church and share peace, the same bread and wine in Christ. We still miss those time when we could visit our loved ones, sharing a cup of tea with our friends in the afternoon. These are very difficult times to everyone. However I want to remind you, these times won't last forever. But there are some things that will last forever; that God loves us; that Jesus Christ died on the cross for us and rose again for us; that the Sprit of God is dwelling in our hearts; that we still love those whom we cannot visit; that we still care about others. That gives me hope and I hope that it gives you hope too.

In the midst of all the bad news, I see the goodness and grace of God shown by so many people in our communities. Perhaps that is what we can learn from the first chapter of John's Gospel.

*The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not over come it. (John 1.5)*

Friends, you and I are the light of the world that God has chosen for these challenging times. Thank you for being the light in our community by delivering groceries, by volunteering for

Foodbank, by ringing the isolated, by looking after your spouse in your home, by praying for your neighbour, by sending out craft packs for children, by staying at home, by going to work at hospitals, care homes, emergency services. Thank you for sharing the light of Christ with others within this community.

Everything is changing. But we are choosing to trust the one who does not change. As Christians, our most powerful weapon against the darkness is worship and prayer. Please remember in your prayers our NHS, Emergency Services, our leaders, our local authority, and all those who are working day and night on the frontline. Please join us in worship by watching the service on Sunday, by just praying quietly, by using Worship at Home Resources. Worship and Prayer, they have never been confined in a building. Where we worship and pray, there is Church. When we worship and pray, we are the Church.

We will get through this together and we will be stronger on the other side of it. Friends, please be safe. Please take a good care of yourself and others. Let us continue to be the calm presence in our community and let us continue to be light of our community. I will see you again either through Worship Online on Sunday or through the next Pastoral Letter.

May God bless you and your family always. May he give you his peace in your heart.

With love in Christ

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P.S. I would like to make a suggestion for this Palm Sunday if I may (which is originally Fr. Greg's idea from All Saints' Peterborough). I have brought the new palm crosses which I will bless during our worship this Sunday. They will be ready for you to collect when we are allowed to gather in the church. But for this Palm Sunday, may I ask you to find a cross please? It may be a cross on your wall or around your neck or in your drawer. Please find a cross, put it on your palm, take a photo of the cross on your hand and send it to me either by leaving a comment on our Church Facebook Page, or by sending it to me via email. Then I will make collages as a symbol of our faith and unity. I will also share it with you later. I look forward to receiving a response from you.

