

## Prayer sheet 4

07 April 2020

***You may wish to pass this prayer briefing on to members of your parish so they can use these requests in their prayers:***

Let us pray for those who are working on the frontline and their families:

**Health and social care:** Health and social care staff including support and specialist staff in the health and social care sector. Also, those working in supply chains including producers and distributors of medicines and personal protective equipment.

**Education and childcare:** Nursery and teaching staff and social workers who are caring for the children of key workers and children from vulnerable situations.

**Public services:** Those required to run the justice system, our clergy and church workers, as well as funeral directors and journalists providing public service broadcasting.

**Local and national government:** Those in administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response or delivering essential public services, including payment of benefits and handling the large number of new applications for Universal Credit.

**Food and other necessary goods:** Those involved in production including our farmers, and those working to process, distribute and sell essential goods.

**Public safety and national security:** Police, support staff, Ministry of Defence civilian staff and armed forces personnel, fire and rescue staff, and those responsible for border security, prisons and probation.

**Transport:** Those who will keep air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport operational during the Covid-19 response.

**Utilities, communication and financial services:** For the staff required to keep oil, gas, electricity, water and sewerage operations running. Staff in the civil nuclear, chemical and telecommunications sectors. Those in postal services and those working to provide essential financial services.

***If you know of a person who is working on the frontline and would like specific prayer, we can forward them to our confidential intercessors, please let us know by email to: [foxhill@chester.anglican.org](mailto:foxhill@chester.anglican.org)***

**Prisons:** Pray for our Chaplaincy teams at Thorn Cross and Styal prisons. They have asked for prayer that they will be able to do something special for our those in prison for Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Please pray for the governors, staff, chaplaincy volunteers (they have a huge team of volunteers) and residents.

**Appointment of the next Bishop of Chester:** We ask your prayers for the next Bishop of Chester in this time of waiting, that God might be preparing, blessing and keeping them in these extraordinary days in every part of the country.

### **Our link dioceses:**

#### **Melanesia**

Cyclone Harold first hit the Solomon Islands last Thursday, 30 March. The Melanesian Brothers at their HQ at Tabalia about 25 miles west of Honiara on Guadalcanal have, along with the Sisters of Melanesia and Franciscan Brothers and Selwyn College School, and residents been cut off from Honiara on the collapse of a bridge over a fast-moving river - this has happened before. Trees have fallen at Tabalia and an office by the graves of the seven martyrs has been damaged by the cyclone but no injuries to the Brothers. In the early hours of Friday morning 27 people were washed overboard from a ferry travelling from Honiara to the island of Malaita, which had set off despite warnings. The ferry was taking families who were leaving Honiara for safety in their villages as the prospect of COVID-19 looms.

No cases of COVID-19 have been reported from the Solomon Islands or Vanuatu but both countries are in lock down situation, flights cancelled, cruise lines turned away. Samples have to be sent to Australia so there is a delay and both countries are very aware of their lack of hospital facilities and the fact that people live in crowded homes with poor hygiene facilities.

***We received an update on Monday 06 April*** that Cyclone Harold, now ranked a category 5 cyclone, has made landfall on the island of **Espiritu Santo in Vanuatu**, where the headquarters of the Anglican Church are situated. Vanuatu is home to around 300,000 people and was already in a state of emergency because of the coronavirus. It is awaiting general election results. Although there have been no injuries reported, photos showed roofs blown off buildings and power lines brought down. Some people took shelter in caves.

Regular updates can be found on: | [www.mmuk.net](http://www.mmuk.net) | Twitter: [@MelanesianM](https://twitter.com/MelanesianM)

### **Democratic Republic of Congo**

Please continue to pray for local people, that they would not lose their faith while churches are closed and for pastors who depend on parish income. Pray for faithfulness and good health. There have been 154 confirmed cases in DRC and 18 deaths. Also, for those in economic hardship as a result of border closures. And that the spread of Covid-19 would be limited.

### **Our rural communities**

Please pray for businesses in the rural areas of Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East many of which are in the services industry. Some are very busy but others, such as printing, event management and interior design, have found their businesses drying up completely. Pray for those who find themselves over faced with work and others whose business has ceased.

Give thanks for local independent businesses who have turned to home delivery and take-away services to serve the local community and to keep their businesses afloat, as well as village shops providing essential services and community hubs for rural communities. And for the many volunteers in rural communities helping neighbours who are self-isolating and shielding. Please pray for those living in remote rural areas, especially the vulnerable self-isolating and shielding who may not have neighbours within sight to keep an eye out for them.

Our rural clergy with multiple parishes where current restrictions make it difficult to be visible in the parishes in which they do not reside.

The Royal Cheshire Show and Nantwich International Cheese Show and Nantwich Show have been cancelled, along with smaller local shows. These shows are an important part of the economy. Royal Cheshire Show was calculated to have an economic impact of more than £4.6 million in 2017 according to research carried out by [redresearch.co.uk](http://redresearch.co.uk). Cancellation not only impacts on the economy of the area, but also deprives rural communities of important meeting places. Please pray for all affected by cancellations, especially as some shows were also cancelled in 2019 due to poor weather.

Pray for the many tourism and leisure businesses in the countryside which will be especially hard hit by the travel restrictions.

A prayer for rural areas from the Arthur Rank Centre:

*God of healing,*

*Surround us with your love as together we negotiate the complexities of coronavirus.*

*Guide us all as we seek to support one another. Help us to be attentive to the lonely,  
the isolated, the fearful and those who are ill.*

*Mindful of the geographical isolation of many rural, towns, cities and communities,  
we pray for everyone involved in the effective provision of food, medical supplies and  
pastoral care.*

*In the name of Jesus Christ, who walks alongside us in our difficulties.*

*Amen.*

Thank you for joining us in prayer,

Jonathon and the Foxhill Team.