



18th March 2020

Dear friends,

I am aware that these are strange and unsettling times and I wanted to write to you all personally to reassure you of the steps that we are taking with regard to the guidance and how we will continue to be a prayerful presence in our communities.

I've received a number of queries about yesterday's pastoral declaration and I am sure there will be many more questions. It seems appropriate at this point to clarify some of the points raised.

As we enter an unprecedented time for pastoral ministry, it is important to emphasise that we have not closed down operations, but that we will be operating very differently as a church. In line with our Diocesan Vision, Where Faith Matters, the life of God's church goes on and we have to find new ways to approach the needs of His people both pastorally and liturgically.

Although there will be no gatherings for public worship or other activities, it is important that we remain a visible presence in our communities. I would therefore like to encourage you to commit to the following.

- Wherever possible, remain open for private prayer. Many churches already provide resources for prayer such as candles and prayer cards. It is likely that many in our communities will find our churches a place of comfort in these unsettling times.
- We appreciate that many of our volunteers are older and we would therefore encourage you to seek out younger volunteers, perhaps by engaging with local community groups. In many parts of the diocese 'Covid Mutual Aid' networks are springing up on social media.
- During this time when we cannot gather together as worshipping communities we are encouraging the prayer life of the Diocese to continue in different ways. Throughout this time it would be wonderful if we could all set aside some time at 7pm each day to join together in prayer across the diocese. There will also be a number of prayer resources available online, which we would encourage you to share with your fellow parishioners.
- As this coming Sunday which is Mothering Sunday is the first Sunday when we will be unable to gather together, Cytun have organised a Covid-19 call to prayer and

action at 7pm, when you are all encouraged to light a candle and place it in your window.

Easter and Holy Week

I share your concerns and anxieties of having no public worship during Holy Week and Easter. However, we are embracing a new way of being church and during each day of Holy Week there will either be a live stream or a recorded message from me to you each day on social media.

On Easter Day there will be a recorded short act of worship during which we would encourage you to light a candle and place it in your window as a sign of the resurrection. We are also encouraging churches to ring out their bells at 10.30am on Easter Day as an expression of hope and resurrection.

We will continue to update you on any changes to policy. In all respects we continue to follow public health advice, and guidelines may change. We are not above the public health guidelines and we will continue to move in step with them.

We are having a very different Lenten experience this year and I ask that you embrace this new experience for the good of our communities.

As we continue to journey through this year of pilgrimage together let us take care of one another and hold one another together in prayer.

With God's blessing,
+ June

O Dduw,
gwyddost i ni gael ein gosod
mewn cynifer o beryglon,
fel na allwn, oherwydd gwendid ein natur,
sefyll bob amser yn uniawn:
caniatâ i ni y fath nerth a nodded
ag a'n cynorthwya ym mhob rhyw berygl
a'n cynnal trwy bob profedigaeth;
trwy Iesu Grist ein Harglwydd,
sy'n fyw ac yn teyrnasu gyda thi
a'r Ysbryd Glân,
yn un Duw, yn awr ac am byth. Amen.

O God,
you know us to be set
in the midst of so many and great dangers,
that by reason of the frailty of our nature
we cannot always stand upright:
grant to us such strength and protection
as may support us in all dangers
and carry us through all temptations;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

Telling a joyful story
Building the kingdom of God
Growing our capacity for good

