

Dear Friends,

The shocking news of Boris Johnson's admission into intensive care has strongly emphasised the danger that COVID-19 – a disease with no cure – poses to the population at large. It also dispels the myth that it is only older people who are at risk. We are sure that he and his close friends and family are very much in our prayers. Please continue to adhere to and reinforce the advice that we stay at home as much as possible.

In general terms Lancashire remains behind the national curve in terms of the spread of COVID-19. There appears to be a particular cluster of cases in the Lancaster area, and we are hearing of one or two clergy who have now taken the funerals of people who have died with COVID-19. This shows the importance of forming Local Networks and of paying attention to plans within Deaneries to ensure that we have cover to cope with a wave of cases.

A particular concern is vulnerable children now that the schools are closed and there is a huge increase in domestic violence cases in Lancashire. The work that many of you are doing in feeding families is invaluable, and don't forget that if you have concerns about the wellbeing of a child our Diocesan safeguarding team remain available.

Any question or queries, please email: coronavirus@blackburn.anglican.org.
Please also email if you are unwell or self-isolating.

Holy Week. The annual Easter messages from all our Bishops have been released. They are available in video and written formats via the news section of the Diocesan website - including downloadable Word or pdf versions for printing locally, as promised in one of our previous briefings.

For everything you need, [click here](#) for Bishop Julian's message; [click here](#) for Bishop Philip and [click here](#) for Bishop Jill. The messages are also available to watch and share with family and friends on the Diocesan [YouTube channel](#); (don't forget to subscribe for alerts about future videos).

Closed Church Buildings. Closed Church Buildings. The Church of England has again updated its advice on church buildings, this time in a helpful question and answer format.
[This can be found here](#)

With regards to this advice please note the following:

- Please use wisdom and intelligence to make sensible, local decisions on how you apply advice on the management of your buildings. It is not possible to answer every detailed question and you know your own circumstances best. Trust your judgement!
- Advice in especially tricky situations can be sought from the DAC via the Secretary, Christine Ellis (christine.ellis@Blackburn.Anglican.Org). The Archdeacons also remain available.
- In this Diocese we are recommending regular checks on church buildings by a designated person. This can always take place in the context of your daily exercise.

Thank you once again for your faithfulness in prayer and ministry in this challenging time in our national life.

*Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing the nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Amen.

Yours,

The Coronavirus Task Group