



**St Andrew's Whittlesey, St Mary's Whittlesey,
St Thomas' Pondersbridge and Holy Trinity Coates**
Church of England Team Ministry:
www.wpcteam.org.uk
Sunday 3rd May 2020

Pastoral Letter from Bishop Stephen

First published on: 28th April 2020

Dear Friends,
Greetings in this strangest of Eastertides.

It is so good to be communicating with you directly again! I began a staged return to duties last week; but while I have not been visible, I have not been away from you in my heart or my prayers. I have relied on that working the other way around, too. When my GP told me that I had to have a sustained break from public ministry she said that I was not stopping work. Rather, I had other work to do – through effective therapy, reflection and prayer – to be renewed as Stephen, child of God. My vocation to be your bishop has not wavered; but my vocation is dynamic as I pray yours is.

As I said when I wrote to you in January, I've been wading through recent bereavement and associated challenges in my mental health and wellbeing. I rejoice that I have been able to be a loyal son, especially where it has crossed over into a deep commitment to duty and service and kindness. It has also led to a lifetime of extreme over working as self-justification which did not satisfy because I did not believe it could ever be enough.

The last eight years have been especially testing in this regard when I have lived for stretches of time as the only stipendiary bishop in the diocese. At the same time, I have held overlapping and sometimes contested national briefs for the wider Church and a share in governance responsibilities within the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops. I have resigned from all these responsibilities with the kind support of Archbishop Justin. I am thankful for all that I have been able to change, develop and encourage and I have walked away readily. I have had to learn that I am useful but not indiscriminately! I have let go and I rediscovered that Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3.11). It has been tough going, but the great blessing in these months has been my constant sense of the presence of God. Before the lockdown Bishop Dagmar, Hannah my Chaplain, and other clergy colleagues came to pray with me and celebrate the Eucharist for me. We are still zooming away. Thank you for all your loving messages and constant prayers

Many of you are live-streaming worship and, even more importantly, producing Sunday and other resources for prayer, study and reflection. Like you and your families, I have been clapping the staff of the NHS and other care givers on Thursday evenings. This is my first opportunity in these strange times to applaud all of you and your ministry teams. Some people may have thought that closing churches and social distancing would have been a free holiday; but I know that for you it is anything but. You are working even harder to offer pastoral care imaginatively and resolutely, and especially around funeral ministry in these challenging times. Some of you are home-schooling children or caring for a vulnerable adult with no let-up of other responsibilities. You are supporting food bank deliveries and caring both for those who are isolated, and for homeless people who cannot self-isolate. Some of you are vulnerable yourselves and should be self-isolating even if you are not! I thank God for you and express my love for you in all that you are and do.

I would not have put my hand up to volunteer for the anguish I have gone through; but I have experienced profoundly God's grace and compassion. There is nothing good to say about Covid19 itself. The loss and grief now and the future consequences will be huge. But I was encouraged to keep hoping by Sunday's gospel reading from Luke 24.13ff – the Walk to Emmaus. Some of you will remember my writing about this eight years ago in **Imagining the Future**. A few things I said then have come true among us now as we re-discover the importance of faith in the home and in community support. We are seeing the deeper purpose of our schools supporting endangered children and the children of key workers. We are sure that there is a future under God for His Church, but we cannot yet see it clearly. It is my intention in the coming weeks to have up to twenty minutes on the telephone with all the clergy, starting with the most junior in ministry, our curates. My agenda is clear: I am not checking up on people, I want simply to reconnect with you all as my sisters and brothers in Christ. I want to learn from you the specific things you are learning through this crisis that may have a direct bearing on our future way of life together; I am ready to share palpable hopes and fears in prayer. Please be kind to yourselves as well as others. I have confidence in God and in you as we go forward, praying to be visible and generous people of Jesus Christ.

Yours ever in Christ. +Stephen. Bishop of Ely

The Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Easter

**Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:
raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,
that we may seek those things which are above,
where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen**

A Prayer about Coronavirus

***Father God, as people and nations of the world, help us to realise our dependence
upon one another. We pray for healing among the sick, wisdom among our leaders,
protection and effectiveness for health workers, and responsible behaviour by
each of us as individuals. Most of all, Lord, we pray that you dispel our fears, for
you 'did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-
discipline' (2 Tim 1:7).***

For Jesus's sake. Amen

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus for daily use.

***Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.***

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**Our regular services in church may have been suspended,
Our church buildings may be closed.
We are now a church at home united in the Spirit.
Let us pray for each other.
Let us be good neighbours.
May God bless us all.**



VE DAY

75TH ANNIVERSARY

A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION

8 - 10 MAY 2020

Prayers to be used as we reflect on the end of the Second World War in Europe

For those who served and died in World War II

O God of truth and justice,
we hold before you those men and women
who have died in active service, particularly in the
Second World War, whose sacrifice brought
Victory in Europe. As we honour their courage
and cherish their memory, may we put our faith in
your future; for you are the source of life and
hope, now and for ever.

Amen.

For those who serve today

O Lord God of Hosts,
stretch forth, we pray, your almighty arm
to strengthen and protect our service men and
women. Support them in times of conflict,
and in their rest and training keep them safe from
all evil; endue them with courage and loyalty;
and grant that in all things they may serve without
reproach; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For the peace of the world

O God, who would fold both heaven and earth
in a single peace;
that the design of your great love lighten
upon the waste of our wraths and sorrows
and give peace to your church, peace among
nations,
peace in our dwellings and peace in our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Naval Prayer

O Eternal Lord God,
who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest
the raging of the sea; who has compassed the
waters with bounds until day and night come to an
end; be pleased to receive into Thy almighty and
most gracious protection the persons of us Thy
servants, and the Fleet in which we serve.
Preserve us from the dangers of the sea and of
the air, and from the violence of the enemy;
that we may be a safeguard
unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen
Elizabeth,
and her Dominions,

and a security for such as pass upon the seas
upon their lawful occasions;
that the inhabitants of our islands and
Commonwealth
may in peace and quietness
serve Thee our God;
and that we may return in safety
to enjoy the blessings of the land,
with the fruits of our labours,
and with a thankful remembrance of Thy mercies
to praise and glorify Thy Holy Name;

Amen.

An Army Collect

Almighty God, whose command is overall and
whose love never fails,
let us be aware of your presence and obedient to
your will.
Help us to accept our share of responsibility with
strong heart and cheerful mind.
Make us considerate of those with whom we live
and serve,
and faithful to the duties our country has
entrusted to us.
Let our uniform remind us daily of the traditions of
the Army in which we serve.
When we are tempted to sin, let us resist.
When we fail, give us courage to try again.
Guide us with the light of your truth,
and keep before us the example of Jesus
in whose name we pray and in whom we trust.

Amen.

Royal Air Force Collect

Almighty God, who has promised that they who
wait upon thee shall renew their strength and
mount up with wings, as eagles, we commend to
thy fatherly protection all who serve in the Royal
Air Force. Uplift and support us in our endeavour,
that we may be a safeguard unto our most
gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth and a
sure defence to our homeland. Help us to fulfil our
several duties with honour, goodwill and integrity,
and grant that we may prove to be worthy
successors of those who by their valour and
sacrifice did nobly save their day and generation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Our churches pastoral work continues.
Please contact us by phone if you need to or just what a chat.

TEAM RECTOR – REVD NIGEL WHITEHOUSE - 01733-203676.

Email - nigel.whitehouse@hotmail.com

ASSISTANT PARISH PRIEST – REVD MICHAEL JONES. 01733-203588

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS (READERS)

MR JOHN CHRISP – 01733 844336

MR ROGER BROWN – 01733 202884

To support you with your daily prayer and contact with the wider church please make use of the following websites.

For those without internet – Daily HOPE

This is an excellent national Church of England initiative for those who are especially isolated:
A free national phonenumber **Daily HOPE** will be launched this Sunday, aimed particularly at the over 75's who don't have access to the internet.

The line, launched this Sunday, will be available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**.

Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury before being able to choose from a range of options, including Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer updated daily, from Common Worship, and a recording of the Church of England's weekly national online service. A section called Hymn Line will also offer callers a small selection of hymns, updated daily. An option entitled 'Hymns We Love', provides a hymn and reflection and is based on an initiative by Connections, a group focused on this age group.

The launch this Sunday will be covered by an exclusive in The Mail on Sunday, please do all you can to promote this new service to those in your parishes as well as local care homes who will benefit from it.

Church of England. <https://www.churchofengland.org/>

Prayer online. <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

Diocese of Ely. <https://www.elydiocese.org/>

Ely Cathedral. <https://www.elycathedral.org/>

<https://www.elycathedral.org/worship-at-home>

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Ely Cathedral brings you "Worship at Home", regular Reflections with Canon Jessica, and resources for Holy Week and Easter. <https://www.elycathedral.org>

Please make use of the Address prepared by Roger

Please make use of the daily cycle of readings.

Sunday 3rd May – Third Sunday of Easter – White

First reading Acts 2: 42-end
Second reading 1 Peter 2: 19 - end
Gospel John 10: 1-10

Monday – Saturday for Morning Prayer please see attachment to your email.

Monday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 145	Numbers 9:15-end; 10:33-end.	Luke 4:38-end
Tuesday	- Morning Prayer -	Psalm 19, 147: 1-12	Numbers 11: 1-33	Luke 5:1-11
Wednesday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 30, 147: 13-end	Numbers 12	Luke 5:12-26
Thursday	Feast of Matthias the Apostle - Morning Prayer –	Psalm 16, 147:1-12	1 Samuel 2: 27-35	Acts 2: 37-end
Friday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 138, 149	Numbers 14: 1-25	Luke 6: 1-11
Saturday	- Morning Prayer –	Psalm 146, 150	Numbers 14: 26-end	Luke 6:12-26

Sunday 10th May – Fifth Sunday of Easter – White

First reading Acts 7: 55-end
Second reading 1 Peter 2: 2-10
Gospel John 14: 1-14

Please remember in your prayers:

**Those who are in residential homes, hospital or hospice & those known personally to us:
*All NHS staff, care workers and key workers.***

Prayers are requested for Marie Rogers, Deborah Law, Terry Randells, Emma Aindow Gregory, Lizzie Monk, Richard Willows, Joan Kefford.

We give thanks for Bishop Stephen's return to health and ministry

The families and friends of those who have recently died:

Clarence Hurst, George Sansom, Alan Bristow, Mary Joan Davies, Eric Reginald Cole, Kenneth Fear, Arlin Gibson, Ruth Barnes

Anniversaries:

Holy Trinity: May 3rd Charles William Burgundy, 4th Betsy Ena Doughty, 7th John Noel Wells,
St Andrew's: 4th Annie Deal, 5th Kathleen Mary Barker, 8th Rosemary Louise Jarvis,
9th Vera Noble Turner, Colin Walter Wade,
St Mary's: 6th Edith Mary Parker,

Christian Aid Week 10th – 16th May

Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.

Last year 57,000 people took part and raised £8 million. This money is needed now more than ever in the poorest communities of our world. Christian Aid has developed a host of resources from e-envelopes to send out for you to personalize, resources for worship, daily services, a daily quiz and more. Please check it all out here:



<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Christian Aid needs our support. Please send your donation by cheque to Revd Nigel Whitehouse, The Rectory, 9a St Mary's Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1BG and I will bank your donations. Or you can keep it until we meet again in church and we can have a collection. Many thanks.



CAMBRIDGESHIRE
WORKPLACE
CHAPLAINCY

CWC Helpline launched

Cambridgeshire Workplace Chaplaincy has recognised a need for a helpline - to listen and comfort, for those who are finding life difficult at the moment. The day to day adjustments that many are having to make at the moment due to a stressful job or juggling working from home; coupled with responsibilities at home are very stressful for many of us.

Maintaining and enhancing the emotional and mental health of everyone is critical during these turbulent times. The helpline is for anyone in the workplace who needs help with stress and needs emotional support. We urge all to not be too proud or self-reliant and to seek support and help whenever you need it. It's not an admission of weakness.

The CWC Helpline is offering emotional support; a listening ear where we try to help the individual find their own solutions and where this clearly isn't possible, with their permission, we refer to relevant organisations. All calls are anonymous. The service is available during the hours of 9am-5pm Monday to Friday plus an out of hours voicemail if you would like a chaplain to contact you at a later point.

Our multi faith chaplains are a diverse group who are happy to provide support regardless of whether you're spiritual or religious – their aim is to listen and comfort.

Call: 0800 246 5193 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm and outside of these hours you can leave a message)

www.cambsworkplacechaplaincy.org.uk

Email: info@cambsworkplacechaplaincy.org.uk

Tel: 07985 455221

www.facebook.com/cambsworkplacechaplaincy

www.twitter.com/cambschaplains