



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

As I write this letter the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is taking a hold across much of the UK. The St Laurence in Thanet Shared Leadership Team (SLT) are monitoring and responding to Government and Church of England advice as the situation unfolds.

On 17th March 2020 the Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued the following statement¹:

'In light of the Government guidance around non-essential contact, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued advice that public worship is suspended until further notice.

Churches should be open where possible but with no public worship services taking place. Prayers can be said by clergy and ministers on behalf of everyone and churches should consider ways of sharing this with the wider community.'

Based on this advice all public worship services and meetings of associated church groups within the Benefice of St Laurence in Thanet have therefore been suspended until further notice.

The St Laurence Parish Office will continue to be the focal point for communication and will disseminate information via Pew News, the Beacon, the parish website, social media and special news bulletins. If you are on Facebook, we have two groups: *The Parish of St Laurence in Thanet* and *St Laurence Church*. If you have not done so already can I encourage you to join one or both of these groups. We are also exploring live-streaming prayer and worship via Facebook.

I am conscious that some church members do not have Internet access. Can I suggest that you contact the Parish Office. If you call out of working hours a brief daily update will also be available on the

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19->

parish answerphone. We will also ensure that news bulletins are posted on our external church notice boards.

Members of the clergy will be saying Morning Prayer at 8am and Evening Prayer at 7pm everyday. Please let the Parish Office have any specific items for prayer. Can I encourage all of you to likewise maintain a daily rhythm of prayer. If you don't have a prayer book, the Church of England offers resources on its website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

As the family of God and the body of Christ let us strive to love and care each other particularly our most vulnerable members of the community. The Parish Ministry Team is always available to offer pastoral and prayer support as are our Pastoral & Bereavement Team (headed by Marcia Neve). If you would like to speak to someone or if you are required to self-isolate please contact the Parish Office so that we can pray for you and keep in touch. 01843 592478 Email: office@stlaurenceparish-ramsgate.org.uk You may wish to use the prayer printed below each day:

Finally, can I encourage you all to continue your regular giving even if you can't get to church on Sunday as we rely on your generosity to pay our monthly overheads and annual Parish Share. The process should be straightforward if you give by standing order. If you use the envelope scheme either save the envelopes until you are next able to attend church or if you are able, arrange for someone to bring them to the Parish Office. Alternatively you can also send a cheque or pay electronically on-line. Our parish bank details are as follows:

St Laurence in Thanet Team Ministry (CAF Cash Account).
SORT CODE: 405240 Account number: 00028720

I will be providing regular updates such as this. Please confirm that you are willing to remain on this email distribution list.

With my love and prayers

Andrew

Rev I Andrew Jacobson Priest in Charge
18th March 2020



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 that nothing can separate us
from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.