



Dear Friends

Isn't it strange how the simplest of things often seem to be the most difficult, especially now? Every day I find myself thinking "I will just do that" and then realise that "that" is not going to be quite the easy job it used to be. Thankfully, I often also realise that either it is not quite the major problem I imagined or that it is not actually that important at all.

We are all having to adapt and change our ways of doing things, some things though, are proving more of a challenge than others. For me, and I suspect most clergy, funeral ministry has become particularly challenging. We are now working within the undoubtedly sensible restrictions of the Church of England and crematoria and cemeteries etc. A funeral service is now limited to 15 minutes with only a few people in attendance. The first time I went to Radcliffe Crematorium to do such a funeral I burst into tears when I saw 10 chairs spread out at a 'safe distance' for the mourners. We also must deal with families on the phone, trying to explain that we cannot do eulogies, family tributes and the like. However, I think that the most difficult thing to bear is that no one can touch either the other mourners or the coffin itself.

On the other side of this sheet are the names of the people whose funerals I have either just taken or am about to do. Please pray for the family and friends who are having to go through a very painful process. Please also remember the funeral directors, cemetery, and crematorium staff especially the wonderful people at Silletts who, as always, have gone above and beyond in their care and service.

One of the important things we - as churches - and as individuals can do is to be there for bereaved families at the end of this terrible time. I really want us to offer both ourselves and our buildings freely to these families to help them (finally) give their loved ones the send-off they would want them to have. And really, I do not think it matters about how religious or not such a service will be. We know God is with these families and that he would want us to be with them as well. To help all of us here is a prayer that I often use at funerals and which never fails to help.

**And now to him who is able to keep us from falling,
and lift us from the dark valley of despair
to the bright mountain of hope,
from the midnight of desperation
to the daybreak of joy;
to him be power and authority, for ever and ever. Amen**

Yours in Christ ~ Elizabeth

RADCLIFFE TEAM MINISTRY

Update 3

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Gathered and scattered
God is with us
Iona Community



The church that prays together, stays together

This week, why not pray for the people few are thinking about when they stand and clap on a Thursday evening? The people in government offices (like our very own Debs Tokaryk) who are working so hard to get benefits and support to people. The council staff trying to keep basic services going. The people on the other end of the phone when you have forgotten your mobile banking password. There are lots of people out there working for ...

Our prayers are asked for:

Tom Hurst

Sue Harding

Carol Boote

The families and friends of:

Lynne Male

Lynne Strahand

Lena Hill

Barrie Dixon

Dilys Adjajian

Raymond Kay

If you want prayers said for yourself, family, friends, specific groups or situation please contact **Margaret Lloyd** who is keeping our **Team Prayer Diary** for the "duration".

WHEN IS EASTER?

It was the strangest of Easter Days, but it was still wonderful, how could it be otherwise? Our brothers and sisters in the Orthodox Church have, of course, only just celebrated Easter Day (it's a long story - and so is how we arrive at the date). But however, or whenever, we celebrate and despite the worst efforts of a virus this year we will still have our Easter Day service, even it is in October! **Our first Sunday back in church will be our Easter Day** and that, really is something to look forward to.

Les and Kathleen have found a wonderful poem about Easter which I urge to you read. It can be found at:

<https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2020/04/12/easter-2020-a-new-poem/>

FOR THOSE WHO GET UPDATE BY MAIL I WILL INCLUDE A COPY

PCC MEMBERS ~ The very grand sounding Provincial Vicars-General, Provincial Registrars and the Joint Registrar of the Provinces Canterbury and York have issued guidance concerning virtual PCC meetings (should they be needed). Basically, these are acceptable e.g. we could meet via Zoom or similar services, but we must ensure all non-tech owning members are consulted as well. Please ensure that we have your current contact details including all phone numbers, email details and addresses.

IF IT SEEMS TO GOOD TO BE TRUE ...

Then it probably is a scam!

We are living in worrying times and unfortunately there are a lot of people out there all too ready to take advantage of our fears. Be very wary if you receive a phone call, email or letter claiming to offer goods or services or asking for charitable donations to help the fight against the virus. If you get something you are not sure about check it carefully, if possible seek advice or look at a reputable website such as www.which.co.uk

If you are wondering about someone the chances are, they are doing the same about you - why not give them a call?

Happy Birthday to Vera Beal and anyone else celebrating either recently or soon

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