



Dear friends

Today many schools will close, while teachers and other staff continue to provide teaching to those studying at home and to children of key worker and certain other families. Bishop Tim has written to headteachers of CofE schools across the diocese to thank them and their colleagues for this vital provision.

The Church of England has published further guidance intended to ensure the continued availability of wedding, baptism and funeral ministry, with information available on the national website and further advice being given to clergy today.

As we enter the first weekend without “church” as we may have previously known it, we are filled with hope as we hear of the many ways in which Christians are reimagining mission and ministry in these difficult times. Our churches are not buildings but communities of people, and we know that as we meet with God in new ways over the coming weeks, we will be united in worship even while we cannot come together in person.

Just as the Archbishops have reminded us, clergy and lay ministers will continue to offer prayers in their homes and churches at the heart of our communities. This daily rhythm of prayer, which is at the heart of a ministry of service goes on, and from wherever we are we can join the constant prayer of the Church, for the world, for others, and for ourselves.

Many churches will be live streaming prayers, worship and preaching this Sunday. Each week Christians will also be able to tune into a Sunday service broadcast across all BBC local radio stations at 8am. The first service this Sunday will be led by Archbishop Justin. This radio service will offer those who may find it more difficult to access services online the opportunity to be a part of a worshipping community, from wherever they are able to tune in.

Don't forget that there is a growing resource of materials for prayer at home [here](#), and that Sunday is not only Mothering Sunday but also a National Day of Prayer and Action. Together with our brothers and sisters from Churches Together in England, we invite you to, “at 7pm this Sunday, light a candle in the windows of your homes as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer.

With our prayers and best wishes

The Bishops and Bishop's Staff Team