



ANGLICAN PARISH OF KYNETON
*St Paul's Kyneton
& St John's Malmsbury*



The Reverend Ian Howarth

**22 Yaldwyn Street W (P.O. Box 887)
KYNETON VIC 3444**

27 March 2020

PASTORAL LETTER 2 - COVID 19

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I felt the timing is right to provide a further update now on what can happen and what has been happening since meeting for worship last Sunday, even then under quite strict conditions.

As you would all be aware Places of Worship are amongst the growing list of places that need to be closed and must stay closed, bar a wedding with only 5 people present or a funeral with 10 people. Whilst the measures we took to meet in our churches last Sunday were considerable, it is evident in the light of National Cabinet and State Government decisions since that these measures are not great enough. We are being urged and I believe rightly to stay home. To stay home as much as is humanly possible, except for a weekly or bi-weekly shop at the supermarket, the chemist, going to needed medical appointments, or a refreshing walk for exercise. It's becoming increasingly important to plan such outings and even minimise these as much as possible.

I would add my voice to health and government leaders to say that if you have any of the symptoms they describe, seek medical advice by phone and do what you are directed to do. Don't just think you may have a cough, snuffle or sore throat, get professional advice. It may not be a serious illness, but don't self-diagnose. COVID-19 is a dangerous virus. There is no known immunity yet and no cures. The best we can do is practice intensively our safe distancing, good hygiene and social isolation.

However social isolation does not mean we cannot talk with our family, our parish friends and others. I have started doing quite a bit of telephone visiting this week (thankfully germs can't pass through telecommunication network!). I have started using Skype, so if anyone wants to Skype me feel free. I am also opening opportunities for anyone who might like to join in Morning or Evening Prayer. Just working out the best platform for that. On a few occasions this week I used Face Time with Naomi Berry for Evening Prayer which can be accessed from an I-phone, I-pad or a Mac.

This Sunday I plan to run a worship time at home in the Rectory with the family, but we will Live-stream it. It is scheduled to go live on the parish Face book page (Anglican Parish of Kyneton-Malmsbury) at 10.30am on Sunday. We hope to also live-stream to YouTube, but not sure if we can use both platforms for this Sunday. I will send an email if this becomes possible. There will be a Sunday service too available via the Diocesan website by going to

the tab Your Church > Online worship. COVID-19 and our physical social isolation doesn't have to mean we are completely cut off.

However, I do realise there is a percentage of our congregation who do not have or use technology and others who may struggle with it (it takes a great deal of work for me often to get the hang of it). I will ensure to get to those people a pewsheet and this Pastoral Letter, so they can still feel included in some way. I'm sorry this won't be including personal visits for cups of tea, letter boxes will have to do. But, as they are delivered (and I say, if still allowable) I will stop at the letter box and say a short prayer for whichever parish friend lives in that home. Plus the telephone calls with the assistance of a few other people are going to continue.

These methods may need to go on for some time, including Holy Week and Easter. With the addition of some great materials prepared by Revd Mel, I hope to (once again I qualify this by whatever are the restrictions) deliver to your homes a Holy Week/Easter pack that has prayers, liturgy and other activities to use in this most sacred time. Mike Bloxsome is also making some crosses for me that will go up the churchyard that people out walking or coming one at a time could follow a 'Way of the Cross' with prayers and meditation points at each one. Mike is doing near the end of time in self-quarantine at home, after returning from overseas. Welcome back Mike and Gail and it is good to hear you are both well.

There are also some other great online resources available for those who can access them. One such great resource is a short form of Morning and Night Prayer which can be found on the Church of England's 'Common Worship' website. I have attached a copy with the email or you can go to:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>

I have also attached some great intercessions produced by the Lutheran World Federation.

On the ABC 7.30 Report Wednesday evening they delivered some statistics of what it would mean if higher percentages of Australians committed to socially isolate for 3 – 6 weeks. Not only would this see a flattening of the curve (slowing the rate of new infections), but a sharp decrease. I hope that people in our community will commit themselves to do this. To do this not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of all people.

To finish with here is another prayer you might like to use in the coming weeks from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops

For all who have contracted coronavirus,

We pray for care and healing.

For those who are particularly vulnerable,

We pray for safety and protection.

For all who experience fear or anxiety,

We pray for peace of mind and spirit.

For affected families who are facing difficult decisions between food on the table or public safety,

We pray for policies that recognize their plight.

For our brothers and sisters around the world,

We pray for shared solidarity.

For public officials and decisionmakers,

We pray for wisdom and guidance.

Gracious God, during this time may your Church be a sign of hope, comfort and love to all.

Grant peace.

Grant comfort.

Grant healing.

Be with us, Lord.

Amen.

Continually yours on the journey,

Fr Ian

The Revd Canon Ian Howarth
Anglican Parish of Kyneton