**Coronavirus Update, 2.   11th March.**

You will be aware that the national situation is changing daily, and we are receiving regular updates and guidance from the diocese and national Church.

We will keep you fully appraised of all of these by numbered and dated updates.

This update comes as a result of communications from Bishop Colin on Monday, and the Archbishops last evening.

Please do take time to read and digest this information carefully, and to comply with the guidance given.  Thank you.

**Common cup and physical contact**

As of now, we are asked to cease using the common cup (chalice) at communion, and refrain from ALL physical contact.

The Archbishops have written to all clergy:

It is our view, in light of the continued increase of Covid-19 cases in the United Kingdom, that it is now necessary to suspend the administration of the chalice as well as physical contact during the sharing of the peace, blessing or "laying on of hands". We therefore advise that all priests should:

- • Offer Communion in one kind only to all communicants i.e. the consecrated bread/wafer/host, with the priest alone taking the wine;

• suspend handshaking or other direct physical contact during the sharing of the peace;

• suspend direct physical contact as part of a blessing or ‘laying on of hands’.

**Continuity Plan**

Every parish in the diocese has been asked to draw up a continuity plan, using a template provided. I have met with John, our first churchwarden, and Ruth, our administrator, and we have drawn up our plan (which will be constantly updated as necessary) and am in the process of typing it up and finalising it to log with the diocese.  I will share the details as appropriate with the relevant people and provide a paper copy in church (without personal details for GDPR).  This is a previously unknown situation, hence the precautions being taken.  The plan is:

             ‘… to ensure as far as possible the continued mission and ministry of parishes, and the maintenance of the critical ongoing business of the parish’.

**In summary:**

•             We have identified key people for key roles / tasks in church and nominated deputies

•             We have identified that we will communicate with you by: the email update, pew sheet and church noticeboard.  We will establish a phone chain for pastoral and other support.  We are clear that we will NOT use Facebook to communicate information.

•             We will provide hand gel at the church door (though if you have your own to bring it will save a scare resource!) and ensure there is soap in all toilets, kitchen and servery.

•             The duty warden will be responsible for ensuring that doors handles, surfaces are wiped before and after services and activities.

•             We will use only paper towels in toilets and kitchen /servery (a clean tea towel each time for washing up and paper towel for washing the silverware).

•             We will maintain public worship for as long as possible and offer prayer and other resources for use at home.

•             We will continue with after service coffee and Lent lunches at the moment (servers using gloves).

o             The Tuesday community meal is now suspended till further notice

o             We have identified on a risk assessment all activities within the church and are monitoring this daily – so far all will continue, except above.

•             We have established systems for the continuity of our finances and building care.

**Your part is crucial:**

**•             Please do not attend church or church activities if you have a cough, cold or other symptoms.**

**•             Please do notify myself if you are self-isolating or unwell – I will arrange pastoral and spiritual support as appropriate(by phone etc).  No one will be visiting those who are sick, for obvious reasons!**

**•             If you would like me to have your next of kin details (especially if you are alone) then please do get them to me in any form.  You may like to let them, have my church contact details too.**

**In the first instance please use ME and my phone / email as first port of call – the office is not staffed daily:**

**01628 783033 (I can access this remotely)**

**Sally514@btinternet.com**

Bishop Colin, helpfully, writes this to clergy and wardens:

While thinking about what we should do (or not do), here are some thoughts from +Olivia about how we should be:

•          Calm: the opposite will lead us to do things which might impact seriously on others – like panic buying.

•          Caring: those who self-isolate, (those in high-risk groups, or who have been in contact with the virus) need to know that we care about them. Phone calls, messages, letters, cards, food left on the doorstep are all signs that we care.

•          Considerate: let’s look out for one another, and act collectively to prevent the spread. It isn’t just about me, it’s about us

•          And of course, Christ-like: let’s live hopefully, love generously and pray earnestly – and let’s bless each other by the way we behave.

Thank you all for your courage and faith as we go through this difficult time, caring for each other and our parish (and wider world).  God’s blessing be upon us all.

Sally