



4favershamchurches@gmail.com

01795 532592

18th March 2020

Dear Parishioners,

We live through unprecedented times as together we face the challenge of the virus affecting our nation and around the world. As many of you will have heard through the media the Archbishop has asked that we stop all public worship in our churches with immediate effect. This does not stop us praying together and using other ways to connect with one another.

I want to ensure that we can continue to communicate with each other. In the first instance I am sending this pastoral letter to everyone on our four churches electoral role in the Faversham Benefice. If you have received this as a paper copy through your door can you email 4favershamchurches@gmail.com and share your email address with us so that in future communications can go out via email. If you don't have email, we will continue to send out a paper version to you but for ease of communication email is preferred.

We do want to stay in touch with all our parishioners so if you are taken ill or are in urgent need do please let us know either by email or telephone (01795 532592). These are the very early days of the situation we now face but as a first act of worship together Bishop Rose has invited us this coming Sunday at 7pm to put a candle in a front window to represent the Light of Christ and His hope in the world. As you light your candle can I invite you to pray the Lord's Prayer as we join in prayer together.

I am working on ways we can develop to worship together either online or simply joining in together sharing prayer with one another. Together with Church Wardens it would be good to keep churches open for private prayer where possible. People have also sought to volunteer to help and in the first instance I would ask you offer your time to your Wardens to keep churches open as symbols of hope in our community.

For those who wish to join with me in daily prayer the Church of England web site has Morning and Evening Prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer> this link will be shared on each of the Churches websites. If you do not have access to the internet this prayer is being shared by the Diocese which we can share in together.

PRAYER FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY CORONAVIRUS

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

Our hope is in the Risen Christ, together in prayer we can hold with one another across Faversham. I am sure in the coming weeks we will be tested but through our faith in him we can weather this storm.

May God in his infinite love and mercy bless and guard each one of you and your families. In Jesus Christ's name, Amen.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Revd Simon Rowlands

Vicar to the Faversham Benefice