

Diocese of Derby – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance 18 March 2020

The Archbishops have released a letter issuing new guidance for our worshipping communities in light of the most recent Coronavirus measures. [The full letter and guidance can be read here.](#)

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are calling for Church of England worshipping communities to put public worship on hold and become a “different sort of church” in the coming months to face the challenge of coronavirus.

Our desire is that where possible, and in line with the guidelines, our church buildings will remain open and places of prayer. We will continue to be people of hope and confidence as we live a different pattern of prayer and worship.

It is vitally important that we all follow carefully the guidelines we have been given as we care for ourselves and each other.

National guidance is being updated regularly on the Church of England website. Below is set out the most recent key guidance, with some added some extra context, responding to the questions that are being asked –

Public worship *will have to stop with immediate effect. Our usual pattern of Sunday services and other mid-week gatherings must be put on hold. What we hope will continue will be a simple pattern of daily and weekly prayer, which a few people might be able to share with you, observing the physical distance recommendations. In addition, we would encourage you to think of new and creative ways of praying with and for people. Resources can be [found here](#). Please ensure that any ideas you have for sharing worship are sent to the Discipleship, Mission & Ministry Team ideas@derby.anglican.org for review prior to these going ahead. We look forward to hearing your ideas and stories.*

Weddings *can take place, provided you follow all the national guidance and hygiene measures. BUT they can only be attended by a small number of people, who must be able to follow physical distancing guidelines. People need to remain two metres apart from each other. The national Church FAQs highlight that only 5 people need to be present at a church wedding – the couple, the clergy person, and the two witnesses. It is unlikely that guidance about any public events in churches will revert to normal practices prior to August, including weddings.*

Wedding banns: *Please note that you cannot currently read banns as there is no principal service. Details from the registry will be on our website by Friday. Further guidance will be issued surrounding this, including the cost of wedding licences.*

Funerals – *at present the same guidance as with weddings and baptisms applies to funerals. We expect further guidance on this over the next couple of days, including fees, and will update you as soon as possible.*

Baptisms *should be postponed wherever possible, following the national advice. They should not be taking place until guidance has changed and it is considered safe to do so. Further guidance will be issued relating to these over the next couple of days. If you believe that there is a genuine reason to go ahead with a baptism, please contact the Bishop’s Office office.manager@bishopofderby.org*

Non-essential face to face pastoral visits *should be cancelled and changed to conversations over the phone/Skype etc. It is perfectly possible to pray with people over the phone.*

All non-essential meetings, committees and boards *should be cancelled. That includes PCCs, Chapters, Synods, and staff meetings. We will be sharing further guidance and ideas around how good governance is continued during the coming weeks.*

APCMs *advice will be coming out in the next few days. We expect these to be postponed, but we will keep you updated. If yours is this weekend we suggest you postpone it.*

Home groups etc – *should be cancelled and could be done in a different way, using Facebook or Zoom etc. Please ensure any ideas for these are sent to the Discipleship, Mission & Ministry Team*
ideas@derby.anglican.org

Social action & wider community care *are important in these times, but it is also vital to ensure they remain within government guidelines. If you are creating or adapting practices to assist the community, please ensure that you communicate your plans to the Discipleship, Mission & Ministry Team*
ideas@derby.anglican.org *along with their safeguarding and hygiene protocols.*

Easter – *The clergy will not gather for the Chrism Eucharist at the Cathedral. However, we are looking into the possibility of live streaming a simple act of worship. Oils will still be made available. Further information about all of this will be communicated soon.*

Whilst no public services will happen this Mothering Sunday (22 March), we ask that you join in with the Archbishops' National Day of Prayer. Please light a candle at 7pm and put it in your window, ring someone who is isolated and vulnerable, stay in touch with one another, buy an extra item and place it in your local food bank. [Read more here](#)

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