



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PARISH CONTINUITY PLAN

Updated: 18/3/2020

The Diocese of Sheffield requests that each parish/benefice/mission community or alternative now puts in place a continuity plan in preparedness for further development of the Coronavirus situation.

The list below is not exhaustive, neither is this a 'one size to fit all' plan. There is also guidance available from the National Church of England:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/coronavirus>.

There are many unknowns about the development of this virus over the coming weeks and months; this plan will be revisited and kept under review as circumstances change.

1. Infrastructure

The aim of this plan is to ensure as far as possible the continued mission and ministry of parishes, and the maintenance of the critical ongoing life and mission of the parish.

The Incumbent, Rick Stordy, with the support of the Church Wardens, will now take steps outlined in this continuity plan.

The Incumbent's nominated deputy is the Youth & Families Minister, Carl Brooks-Plunkett. The Curate, David Whitehead, will fulfil this role should Rick or Carl be unwell or otherwise absent.

The Incumbent, or his nominated deputy, will provide a channel for regular communication, by email or phone, with the Area Dean, Pip Salmon, and Archdeacon, Malcolm Chamberlain, as requested.

1.1 We have identified critical leadership roles and essential parish and benefice functions in Appendix 2.

1.2 Essential meetings such as PCC and Development Team will take place by email or Skype so far as possible. We will offer support with those new to Skype.

1.3 Wherever possible, we will cross-train people for essential tasks in the parish so that if a person needs to self-isolate or becomes ill, tasks can still be undertaken.

1.4 The Parish Centre will be closed to the public and for church gatherings until further notice.

2. Communication

2.1 The Incumbent, the Parish Office and the Churchwardens have contact details of:

- a. Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers who are available for ministry, occasional offices and pastoral care,
- b. those involved in services and other church activities.

2.2 Information about the outbreak and any appropriate advice will be communicated

- by email from the Parish Office and telephone calls to those who do not receive emails, either from the Parish Office or the Incumbent; or
- on the dedicated Coronavirus page on the church website.

3. Worship, teaching & encouragement

As long as Government and national Church of England advice is that for the sake of public safety, all social gatherings are to be avoided, we will do our utmost to provide the opportunity for members of church and of the wider parish to be able to pray, hear God's word and join in praise of the Lord. In particular:

3.1 On Sunday mornings at 10.30am, on a dedicated page on our website, we will provide an act of worship which will include prayers, songs and hymns and a sermon. The sermon and some discussion questions relating to it will be emailed out to all church members who are on email or delivered to those who are not. Audio recordings of sermons will continue to be available on the church website.

3.2 We will prepare appropriate materials for children and families to use together in Sunday worship and learning together and make these available as soon as possible.

3.3 On weekdays, at 9am from Monday to Thursday, as soon as practicable we will provide a live stream or similar means of access to Morning Prayer, following a form of *Common Worship: Daily Prayer*, again available on the church website.

3.3 Cells will be encouraged to meet remotely at their normal time, either by telephone or Skype or similar, using the discussion questions relating to the sermon, and having times of discussion and worship.

3.4 We will encourage the continuance or the beginning of 1-2-1 partnerships for Bible reading, friendship and prayer, so individuals can pair up with other church members and meet via telephone or Skype or similar, and as soon as possible will make resources available to help with this on our website.

3.5 Where possible, copies of prayers for the sick and the dying and also a copy of the funeral service will sent by the Parish Administrator to those unable to attend the funeral of a friend or relative.

3.6 We will encourage continued use of the Prayer Chain to establish a sense of corporate prayer and the strengthening of the praying community.

4. Pastoral & evangelistic

Clergy can offer an important public reassurance through being seen to be “present” and available. *This will not include physically visiting those diagnosed with COVID-19 or those who are self-isolating*: clergy need to protect themselves and others, making sure they adhere to hygiene precautions

They can also be a trusted voice in a community and help with the distribution of government advice ensuring isolated members of the community are aware of the precautions they can take.

4.1 We will offer pastoral and practical support of those who are vulnerable or housebound in the parish as follows:

- *if they are in Cell groups*, Cell leaders will be asked to stay in weekly contact with every one of their members;
- *if they are not in Cell groups*, they will be invited to be ‘buddied up’ with someone who is in a Cell group, who will report to their Cell leader how that person is doing;
- *if they are not in Cell group and not willing to be ‘buddied up’* for any reason, the Incumbent or Pastoral Worker will telephone them at least weekly to check all is well;
- *if they are a Cell leader*, they will contact the Incumbent by email or telephone each week to report how their group members or buddies are doing.

4.2 For those who need to self-isolate, we will support them with phone calls and via social media, and help them with the delivery of shopping and / or medication, using the same system as outlined at 4.1, in other words: Cell members will offer this support to each other and to their buddies; if for any reason they are not in a Cell group and not buddied up, they will be invited to contact the Incumbent with any need of help.

4.3 All church members involved in such support will be very clear on and committed to adhering to the Government’s isolation and general hygiene advice.

4.4 The Incumbent and Pastoral Worker will provide telephone support and prayer for those who are fearful or otherwise distressed.

4.5. All church members will be encouraged to see this epidemic as an opportunity to show the love of Christ to others in our community, in particular by

- offering appropriate friendship and support, in practical ways such as telephone or email contact, offers of prayer, a listening ear, or collecting and delivering food or other essential items;
- providing food and other items that may be needed at the St. Saviour’s Foodbank (using the Parish Centre as a point for delivery and collection by prior arrangement with the Parish Office);

- where appropriate, sharing the good news of hope in Christ, perhaps through use of suitable literature or websites.

5. Groups & activities

5.1 The leader of each church group or activity will consider what action now that all our public gatherings are suspended. The following should be considered:

- maintaining an up to date list of contact details for the group
- keeping in touch with those who attend and offering help where appropriate
- notify the Incumbent, Youth & Families Minister or Churchwardens of decisions made in this context or of particular individuals in need of assistance.

5.2 Youth & children's work, both Sundays and midweek: please see the separation Action Plan set out in Appendix 1.

6. Employees

6.1 All church staff will work from home until further notice, with the exception of the Parish Administrator who will work from the Parish Office.

6.2 In view of the closure of the Parish Centre, the Parish Centre cleaner will be consulted and may be asked to reduce her hours until further notice.

7. Finance

7.1 There will be at least one other person, as well as the Treasurer, who is familiar with the church accounts, gift aid and regular giving and is able to administer them appropriately - this may include banking authorisation.

7.2 Anyone handling cash will protect themselves from virus transmission by washing hands or using hand gel beforehand and afterwards, or by wearing appropriate gloves.

7.3 Church members whose giving is done in cash will be invited to consider switching their donations to standing orders with their bank and to do so wherever possible.

The Reverend Rick Stordy

Incumbent

Tony Gardiner, Barbara Rodgers

Church Wardens

18 March 2020

APPENDIX 1

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Youth and Families Action Plan

Updated 18 March 2020

1. All groups to be cancelled until further notice, in line with current UK Government and Public Health England Guidance. Groups include – ‘Bumps and Babies’, ‘St John’s Tots’, ‘Sunday Club’ (inclusive of Crèche and Rooted Sundays), ‘Rooted’, ‘Element’, ‘D-Group’.
2. We will seek to continue with some form of communal meeting, most likely through “live streaming” on Social Media. We will work out what this looks like in the coming weeks as we try to make this as accessible for as many people as possible.
3. Each group may look something like this –
 - **Bumps and Babies and St John’s Tots**
Discontinue meeting – where possible, leaders of groups may want to be in contact with the families involved in the groups, via text message or phone call.
 - **Sunday Club**
In line with church, Sunday Club will not be meeting for the foreseeable future. Over the coming weeks we will seek to put together a resource document for families to use with their children.
Our Church services will be “streamed” on the St. John’s Website each Sunday Morning, we encourage all church family to make use of this service as best we can.
 - **Rooted**
Discontinue meeting – we will explore in the coming days how we might best “live stream” a Rooted meeting (which will be shorter than a standard week), to enable us to keep in touch, and encourage one another. This will most likely be through Instagram.
 - **Element**
Discontinue meeting – as above, we will explore in the coming days how we might best “live stream” an Element meeting, to enable us to keep in touch and encourage one another. This will most likely be through Instagram.
 - **D-Group**
Discontinue meeting – D-Group leaders will be asked to explore the possibility of “live streaming” a short D-Group gathering. Communication through the D-Group Instagram group is encouraged, we aim to increase this communication to more regularly than once per week.
4. If the Youth and Families Minister were to become unwell and need to “self-isolate” this should not impact too heavily the “live streaming” of youth group events.
5. All attendees of all groups are encouraged to stay safe and to implement the advice set by the UK Government to help delay the spread of Covid-19. There are to include –

- If you are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms: Persistent Cough, Temperature above 37.8, or Shortness of Breath. You must self-isolate for 7 days.
- If someone in your household is experiencing Covid-19 symptoms then your whole household must self-isolate for 14 days.
- You can find medical advice on 111.nhs.uk, up to date advice can be found on our church website coronavirus page.

6. Help for families.

- We recognise that “self-isolating” can be a difficult thing to do, especially when this leads to the “self-isolation” of whole families. In the event that a family is “self-isolating” and are finding it difficult to source necessary items (e.g. painkillers, Calpol, food), please contact Carl Brooks-Plunkett (Youth and Families Minister) and we will try to assist in the sourcing and delivery of these items to you.

7. One-to-one meetings.

- At this time, we believe that one-to-one meetings, where due regard is paid to the above advice, can still go ahead. However, this will be kept under strict review, and will be changed if the UK Government change advice on social distancing.
 - Anyone experiencing Covid-19 symptoms must “self-isolate” and not attend such meetings.
 - Anyone who shares a household with someone “self-isolating” is asked not to attend such 1-2-1 or small group meetings.

8. One off and social events.

- All one off-events in the immediate and near future will be cancelled/rescheduled for a later date.

This information and guidance will be updated in line with the updates from Public Health England, the UK Government, and the Church of England.

APPENDIX 2

