CHRIST CHURCH BARNSTON ST MICHAEL'S PENSBY

To make Jesus known and grow together in Him

Dear friends,

"Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me from my anguish." Psalm 25: 16

Some are experiencing this lockdown as a time of great loneliness. They are glad to have phone calls and mailings and even, for some, the chance to see family and friends online But still there is an ache that comes from missing other people. Loneliness is a lot like hunger. It is the feeling that comes when we do not have something we long for: not food but relationships, companionship. Here are three things to hold onto as you feel this hunger to be close to others.

1. **Thank God for his blessings** and for the people who are in our lives. We may feel painfully alone, but we are not entirely alone. We may not have all that we want, but God will provide all that we need. Just as the hungry person savours each mouthful, so we might enjoy with particular gratitude each human contact that we have. God is good, he does care for you, he does provide for you. Take time to appreciate the ways in which he is doing this. Perhaps you have reached out to someone else and been blessed as you helped them.

2. **Thank God for his presence**. God promises that he will be with his people, to the very end of the age. "When I awake, I am still with you." says the Psalmist (Ps 139: 18). When you pray, he hears; when you read the Bible, you are hearing from the living God. Perhaps this enforced fast of human relationships will enable us to grow more aware of the continuing presence and favour of our Father God.

3. **Thank God for the certain and wonderful future that he holds out**. One day these restrictions will ease. Be encouraged that as we complete each day, we are a day closer to seeing in person our friends and family. But this is more wonderfully true of the eternal future that God promises to all of his children, the day when all of our human restrictions are removed. "Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known." writes Paul (1 Corinthians 13: 12) This is the great liberation that the human heart longs for, and finds in Jesus Christ.

Much love in Christ to you all.

Coming up…

Pray at Home
Do join us as we pray on Thursday evenings at 7.00. Many have appreciated the chance to see others and to pray in small groups. Please don't worry if this is something unusual for you - you are welcome to come and pray silently. Click on the link below to join us.
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89276465005

The Hub
Our Hub series continues on Thursday May 7th, running from 7.45 - 9.00. We are thinking about questions that people ask about church life, and on Thursday we will be thinking about infant baptism. Why do we do it? Join us at:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89276465005

There will be a chance to ask questions - text them to our phone line, before or during the meeting: 07520 649440.
In future weeks we will look at: What are vicars? Is Sunday special? Do join in and have your mind stimulated and your confidence in God strengthened.

Morning Prayers
Would you like to join us for morning prayers in the morning? There will be a thought for the day and prayers led by one of the staff team from 9.00 to 9.20, from Tuesday to Friday. You can text prayer requests to our phone line: 07520 649440.
The link for the coming week will be sent out on
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82405825650

Pastoral Team
Our enormous thanks go to all, our pastoral workers and others, who have been keeping in touch with members of the church family by ringing them up. The conversation and the chance to pray have been greatly appreciated.

The **sewing group** has been working hard, and produced over 70 scrub bags for the NHS, to be delivered through the Co-op collection scheme. Well done all of you!

For your **prayers**...
Please remember the family and friends of John Williams, John Smith, Ernest Merry and Eleanor Jones.

Elsewhere...
Daily Hope
The Church of England has set up a free phone line offering daily hope - 0800 804 8044.
People calling the 0800 number will hear a greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury and can then choose from a range of options including hymns, prayers, reflections and advice on Covid-19.

VE Day
Friday 8th May is the 75th Anniversary of VE Day.
If you would like a short VE Day service, led by Padre Phil Burrows, go to

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZKWZxMUADPbhQE2PhauKRTBKe-nMdin8/view?usp=sharing

A prayer that might be used for this commemoration:
Lord of the nations
we honour the bravery and sacrifice of those who served.
grant us similar courage to recognise and restrain evil in our own day
and may those who lead the nations of the world
work together to defend human liberty
that we may live peaceably with one another
This we ask in the name of the Prince of Peace
Our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen