

My Dear Friends in the Baptism of Christ,

The New Variant of Covid 19 has brought an increased risk to us all of contracting this virus. The scientific and medical evidence is quite clear; we are in a new and potentially much more dangerous situation. The roll-out of the various vaccines over time may alleviate the problems that flow from the virus. But this will take time; perhaps as much as a quarter of 2021. Therefore, what must we do?

It is clear that we must do all in our power to stop the spread of the virus. The new variant is extremely transmissible. And so we must as individuals and collectively do as much as we can possibly do to avoid transmitting this virus. The advice from the House of Bishops of the CofE is that our churches should not necessarily be closed, but that we as reasonable citizens should do all in our power to avoid the possibility of transmitting the virus. Yet, at the same time as Christians we have a responsibility to Proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and to pray for the world and its needs. The practical question is therefore how do we do this this?

The Government has not asked that the Churches be closed. Therefore St Martin's will not be closed to worship. Yet, we must put in place measures that will stop the virus from infecting each other. Having received advice from the Bishop of Salisbury and having consulted the Bishop of Ebbsfleet the following programme of worship and prayer will apply to Sarum St. Martins as of Sunday 10th January. All are invited to join with this in Church, observing the requirements of Social Distancing.

- 1 Our Church will be open each day from 10:00am to 5:30pm as far as the glass porch
- 2 Each day, Morning Prayer will be said at 9:30am and Evening Prayer will be said at 5:00pm. The Angelus Bell will be rung before each of these Divine Offices
- 3 A Mass will be offered at 10:30am each day including Sunday.

At each act of Divine Worship we will pray for the collective and individual needs of all. I therefore ask that you will email or text me those matters which lie heavy upon you that I may pray for them.

As the Church of God called in Baptism and Confirmation to Proclaim the Good News of Christ and to pray for the needs of the world we have a responsibility before God Most High to make His Love in Jesus known before all humankind.

I hope that you will note the times outlined in this email and join with me in offering the Worship of the Church and her prayer for the world that we may eradicate this virus. Be in Church as you can or join spiritually in what our Church is about.

God Bless you all and keep you safe,

Fr. David Fisher.

Rector-Sarum St. Martin