

Dear Friends,

It has been deeply inspiring to hear stories of Holy Week and Easter from around the Diocese. Almost every church in the Diocese was open for public worship with many also offering worship online, a marked contrast to the picture in other parts of the country. And whilst numbers attending are inevitably lower than before the pandemic with our ministry to families especially impacted, we were still able to proclaim the resurrection with joy and hope in our hearts. Thank you to you all for your outstanding faithfulness and dedication.

As we look to the summer, now is the time to think about how we continue to unlock our churches and invite a bruised and battered nation to find hope and belonging in the Christian family.

At the same time it is too soon to relax. It is clear that social distancing and face masks will be part of our lives for some time to come and there is still no word about when we will be able to re-commence communal singing. A 'mixed mode' pattern combining online and public worship has become the norm in many of our parishes. Others have gone down the line of multiple congregations. The right way ahead for each church will depend on a variety of factors, but what matters is the kind, confident witness that you have modelled so wonderfully over the past year.

Death of the Duke of Edinburgh

There is a special page on our Diocesan website to mark the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh featuring statements and other coverage plus resources and information for parishes. [You can find it here.](#)

That same page also features online **condolence books** set up on the websites of Blackburn Cathedral, The Church of England and The Royal Family. Go straight to this section [here](#) for the condolence book links.

Following the funeral of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh on Saturday, the regular Choral Evensong at the Cathedral on Sunday at 4pm will include Prayers of Thanksgiving for the Duke's life. Numbers are limited due to pandemic restrictions but the service will be livestreamed on the Diocesan YouTube channel [via this preset livestream link](#); or you can visit the special page on the Diocesan website [marking the death of Prince Philip](#) where the livestream link will be embedded.

A letter from **Bishop Sarah**, chair of the National Recovery Group, has reminded us that any memorial services being organised by Parishes should remain local events for your own community.

Weekly Message

The weekly message this week comes from Archdeacon Mark and you can [find it here](#) on the Diocesan YouTube channel.

Sunday Worship

Meanwhile the regular online Diocesan Sunday Service this week comes from All Saints Clayton-le-Moors and is led by the Revd Toby Webber. It will be livestreamed at 11am on their Facebook site which is [here](#) and will also include prayers for HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The service will also be mirrored live [to this livestream link](#) on Diocesan YouTube channel, remaining on the channel as a recording after the live broadcast to watch later if you prefer.

APCMs

Every Parish must have held an APCM by the end of May. Our advice is to hold these later on in May as face to face meetings will be possible after May 17 - assuming the government's roadmap continues as planned. If you need to meet before that date then an online meeting platform is advised.

Second Vaccinations

Many clergy who had first vaccinations in February will be due their second in the next few weeks. In many cases these have been delayed by a week (you will have been informed by email) so please be sure to get the right date. It is also worth keeping the following day as clear as possible in case of side effects.

Coronavirus Advice Compendium

Don't forget that the Coronavirus Advice Compendium continues to feature the most up to date advice we can share with parishes and you can [find it here](#).

Coronavirus Email Address

If you have questions or problems and can't find answers on the compendium please email: coronavirus@blackburn.anglican.org.

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Yours

Coronavirus Task Group