

Dear Friend

As you may already know, we have agreed that there will be no services in church or online for the last two Sundays in August, 23rd and 30th. We all desperately need a break, as, speaking personally, this situation - although easing slightly - is highly stressful, and looks likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Many churches will not be reopening until September, so the Diocese have been producing online services for each Sunday during the month of August.

The easiest way to access these is via the Diocesan YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/southwarkdiocese> or via the Diocesan Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthwarkCofE>. These links will also be on our church website.

There will also be no Wednesday morning services on 19th or 26th August, and no Zoom Coffee Mornings on 22nd or 29th August. Linda, Alison and myself will be taking a break, as will Jon who has been working very hard putting together our online services. If you need to get in touch with any of us, for example in a crisis needing the support of the clergy, please call Rohini Abhayaratne, one of our church wardens, who will be able to contact us in any emergency. Her phone number is: 020 8686 3677.

Uncertainty is a source of stress. Although the number of Covid-19 related deaths is reducing, the number of cases is once again rising, and we have seen localised outbreaks here and in a number of countries around the world. It is impossible to make plans with any degree of certainty. If this pandemic can teach us anything, perhaps the greatest lesson any of us can learn is to live for today, to live each moment we have to the fullest possible extent, as we never know what may happen tomorrow.

This, of course, has always been true, but it's a truth we have often ignored. We all too easily forget to "consider the lilies of the field...and the birds of the air". We need to constantly remind ourselves that we are worth more than many sparrows; that our loving, merciful, and generous God, who clothes the grass of the field and provides food for the birds, will also meet all our needs. Let's take some time today, even right at this moment, to dwell upon Jesus' words afresh:

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." *Matthew 6.34*

In uncertain times, there is only One who never changes, so hold on to the Lord and his wonderful promises, and allow him to take from you whatever is worrying you at this moment; God is with you, holding you, loving you.

And something to help you smile, and keep you smiling:

“Because of your smile, you make life more beautiful.”
– Thich Nhat Hanh

With much love and prayers

Simon