

# Newsletter

April 2020



## Church is Changing!

**The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked.**

John's Gospel Chapter 20 verse 19

Following the Prime Ministers address to the nation, Blackburn Cathedral is now closed. All public services and events have been cancelled or postponed until further notice.

The rhythm of prayer will be continued by the Cathedral clergy in the privacy of their own home. We will aim to pray at 8.30am and 5.00pm each day.

We aim to produce a number of short, prerecorded worship reflections which we will post on our [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#), click on the links to view.

We would still wish to encourage people to donate to the Blackburn with Darwen Foodbank. The current request is for cash donations so that food can be purchased when need. To donate directly click [HERE](#)

So, may the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.

So, may the Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

**The Very Revd. Peter Howell-Jones**  
**Dean of Blackburn**

Contact with the Cathedral remains as normal whether by telephone, social media or email, so please do get in touch by calling 01254 277430 or email [info@blackburncathedral.co.uk](mailto:info@blackburncathedral.co.uk) if you require support or have questions.

Further information can be found at:

[www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/archbishops-call-church-england-become-radically-different-public-worship](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/archbishops-call-church-england-become-radically-different-public-worship)

## God is our Refuge and Our Strength.

The local, national and global situation is changing every day, so even by the time I have written these words, we may have moved on again.

On Monday night, the Prime Minister outlined strict new measures, and we must follow them. For the first time, the Cathedral doors are not open to the public, and although this feels at odds with our commitment to welcome, it is absolutely the right course of action if we are to minimise

the risk to the population. But although the doors are closed, it does not mean that we are not praying. And as we read the Bible in our daily prayers, it often speaks directly into our experiences. Today, many will be anxious, unsettled or afraid. The Psalm set for the Eucharist this morning was Psalm 42, which begins:

- 1 God is our refuge and strength, ◆  
a very present help in trouble;
- 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, ◆  
and though the mountains tremble in the heart of the sea;
- 3 Though the waters rage and swell, ◆  
and though the mountains quake at the towering seas.
- 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, ◆  
the holy place of the dwelling of the Most High.

This is powerful not just because of the strong message of God's enduring care for us in challenging times, but because of what the Psalmist says about a place. Estate agents are not the only ones to focus on 'location, location, location': place is hugely important in our sense of identity as human beings, and in our faith. This is especially so during Lent and Holy Week, when, literally or metaphorically, we make our pilgrimage with Christ through the wilderness, to Jerusalem, the Upper Room, the Garden of Gethsemane, and on the Way of the Cross. And it is especially so when we feel deprived of our familiar place of worship.

So what is the 'holy place' of the dwelling of the Most High? And what does it mean for God to be 'a very present help'? Part of the great mystery of God is that he is revealed at specific times in specific places, and yet he is present to us in all times and all places. Just because we are not living in first century Jerusalem, it does not mean that we cannot meet Jesus Christ. And when, in happier times, we gather for the Eucharist, the Communion which we share is not just with those under the same roof, but with Christians across the world and throughout all generations.

God's presence, his 'indwelling' or 'abiding', as the author of John's Gospel calls it, holds together that mystery. On the one hand it comes from a strong tradition of place-specific worship, but on the other, in John 15 Jesus commands his disciples to 'Abide in me as I abide in you'. He explains that 'If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.'

And so God is a very present help, wherever we are. And our Christian life unites us, simply, in Christ. We can pray together, even if physically we are apart. We can be a community, even if we do not have a geographical focus.

The Dean has suggested a number of practical ways in which we might do this. We are offering resources to help you to pray at home, and to maintain our pastoral care for one another. Please do make use of them, so that we can all abide in one another and in Jesus Christ, and so that we can celebrate the Easter joy together, wherever we are.

**The Rev'd Canon Dr Rowena Pailing**  
**Vice Dean and Canon Missioner**

## Stewardship

A number of people who give to the Cathedral via the envelope scheme have asked how they can continue to do so during the Coronavirus pandemic. There are two ways to do this. The quickest and easiest is to use the 'Love Blackburn Cathedral - donate button' on the Cathedral website. You will find this button at the top left hand corner of each page.

Alternatively you can pay money directly into the stewardship account with online banking. The details you need are as follows:

Bank: Nat West

Account: 04057902

Sort Code: 01-00-85

Thank you to all who continue to enable the ongoing work of the Cathedral through Stewardship. This is much appreciated.

## A Request for Help

The THOMAS project, based at St Anne's in Blackburn, works with THose On the Margins of Society. THOMAS is keen to keep its Drop-In going, providing a hot meal for the homeless every day, albeit now as a take away rather than dining on the premises. The need is more pressing than ever, and likely to increase as hostels struggle and other sources of food close. They need more volunteers to assist in the kitchen, preparing and serving. Volunteers must be in good health and not in the vulnerable or 'at risk' groups. **If you can help, please call Liz on 07971 755810.**

### **WALSINGHAM YOUTH PILGRIMAGE.**

August 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> 2020.

Whilst it is uncertain as to whether or not this pilgrimage will be able to take place, young people from the Cathedral are still invited to express an interest in joining the Diocesan group for the Youth Pilgrimage which is open to those in school years 6 to 13. The cost is £130 (support with this available). Contact Bishop Philip for more information, but please be patient when waiting for a reply at this time.

([bishop.burnley@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:bishop.burnley@blackburn.anglican.org)).

## Blackburn Cathedral Flower Festival News

It was with heavy hearts that the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral announced on 18<sup>th</sup> March that the Cathedral Flower Festival is postponed due to the Covid-19 virus.

The Friends are extremely sad that this has happened but realise that the health and safety of all concerned, from artistic directors, to designers, stewards and sponsors, musicians, is the only priority at this difficult time.

With only 3 months until the Festival was due to fill the Cathedral with thousands of flowers and visitors from all corners, plans were advanced – the team having been working for nearly 12 months on the event. The 60 designers were creating, workshops were undertaken and mechanics have been fabricated. Stewards were signing up to help with the visitors.

The website and social media platforms were buzzing with interest and ticket sales were encouraging. Many groups and coaches had reserved tickets and will be disappointed but will surely appreciate our position.

We thank everyone who has helped in any way.

Please keep up to date with developments on our website:

[blackburncathedralflowerfestival.com](http://blackburncathedralflowerfestival.com)

# Regular services during the Coronavirus Lock-down

All services will be on line where possible. When not, the clergy team will be praying at home, do join them in your own home at the same time.

## Sunday

9.00am Prayer and reflection

## Weekdays

8.30am Morning prayer

5.00pm Evening prayer

## Contacts

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<b>The Dean:</b>	The Very Rev'd Peter Howell-Jones
<b>Vice Dean &amp; Canon Missioner:</b>	The Rev'd Canon Dr Rowena Pailing
<b>Canon Pastor:</b>	The Rev'd Canon Andrew Horsfall
<b>Episcopal Canon</b>	The Right Rev'd Philip North
<b>Dir. of Music:</b>	Mr John Robinson
<b>Catering &amp; Hosp. Manager</b>	Mr Matt Hunter
<b>Commercial Manager:</b>	Mrs Jo Hunter
<b>Events:</b>	Mr Phil Hunwick
<b>Head Virger:</b>	Mr Mark Pickering

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## Friends of Blackburn Cathedral

Email: [secretary@fobc.info](mailto:secretary@fobc.info)

Website: [www.fobc.info](http://www.fobc.info)

## Cathedral Prayers for All

**Cathedral Prayers for All** is a new collection of original collect-like prayers by Ian Stockton, formerly Canon Chancellor at Blackburn Cathedral.

These prayers were produced in the midst of daily life and cathedral ministry, and written on scraps of paper, sometimes at short notice. They cover not only the Church's Year but many issues and concerns of modern life, from climate change to political conflict, from sport to sexuality, from homelessness to care of the elderly, and from Islam to Ireland. The themes of justice, care for others, interdependence, thanksgiving and hope feature strongly throughout this book.

The prayers reflect the author's interests and contexts of ministry but are offered as a resource for others and as an encouragement to prayer. Some additional prayers have been added more recently in order to broaden the range of subjects offered. The book, which is A5 in format, includes a full index to its 336 prayers and illustrations by Foxhat add an extra touch of joy as modern marginalia.

**Cathedral Prayers for All** is published by North Staffordshire Press, which in 2019 received the Small Publisher of the Year Award, and which is now based at Keele University's Business Enterprise Hub.

**Cathedral Prayers for All** is available from bookshops at £10 or may be ordered from the author at [lan.G.Stockton@gmail.com](mailto:lan.G.Stockton@gmail.com) for £12, including postage and packing.