

St Nicholas & Christ Church – worship whilst our buildings are closed for public worship and we cannot gather together

Regular worship

The Archbishop of Canterbury said: “the term ‘Spiritual Communion’ has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist.” (20th March 2020)

We all know that, at this time of extreme uncertainty, anxiety and unprecedented changes to our way of life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Church of England has suspended all regular worship in our churches and also outside gatherings for the foreseeable future. For some Christians this is particularly distressing as we approach Easter (and possibly Pentecost). However, the Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, ‘I am the Bread of Life’.

In making a Spiritual Communion, you may wish to pray all or part of the act of worship below, as you are able.

Weddings and funerals

Rites of passage (apart from baptism) can still go ahead in the church BUT with restrictions in line with government guidelines. In other words: no more than 5 people attending, maintaining hygiene and social distancing etc. Following the guidance issued by the Church of England, all pastoral visiting in person has been curtailed. However, we are still contactable by phone or email. If you need prayer support, have a question or just need to talk to someone, please call the vicar or the wardens.

An act of Spiritual Communion

You may wish to find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, or a special place. You might choose to make your Spiritual Communion at a particular time of day (maybe when you know others will be doing the same).

Reflect on the day and on your relationships:

- What good things have come from God today?
- Where have I fallen short?
- What might I do tomorrow?

As you reflect on your day, say or pray the Kyries:

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

If you have access to today's readings for Holy Communion read and reflect on them; otherwise read and reflect on the following:

“Jesus said, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’” John 6.35

Pray for the needs of the world, for your local community, and for those close to you.

End with the Lord's Prayer.

Give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus and ask him to be with you now: Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

Conclude with the following:

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life. Amen.