



The Parish of
**ST NICHOLAS,
SUTTON**

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd Frances Arnold

The Rectory,
34 Robin Hood Lane,
SUTTON
SM1 2RG

stnicholas.suttonteam.org.uk
Reg Charity No: 1134049

28 March 2020

St Nicholas Church and Coronavirus

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am sitting down to write having just completed Sunday worship for our website. I am glad to think of us worshipping and praying together, albeit each in our own homes, tomorrow. Now, more than ever, we need to sustain ourselves as a worshipping community, as well as caring for each other and our neighbours in whatever way we can.

There have been more changes to our lives and the life of St Nicholas Church this week.

Staying at home, closing church buildings and worship

You will know that all churches in Britain are closed for the foreseeable future as we follow government measures to reduce the effects of coronavirus (and none of our regular groups are meeting in church or in the Community Hall). St Nicholas is now closed, even for private prayer, and I have been offering my prayers at home since Tuesday. I will be leading our Sunday morning worship from The Rectory tomorrow morning. Please join me by following the Order of Service (which has been sent to you) and singing confidently in your own homes. I think of you all and pray for you each day. Let us put our trust in the living God who has revealed himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and maintain 'a praying presence for our community from our hearts and from our homes.'

Bishop Christopher is encouraging everyone to say the Lord's Prayer daily and suggests either 1 or 7 pm.

You can find national online resources including weekly streamed services and daily audio at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

as well as additional worship provision on the BBC, for example Radio 4 Sunday morning worship at 8.10am (or later using BBC Sounds).

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday and the gospel reading is Matthew 21.1-11
Please read and reflect on this during the week.
You might wish to respond for yourself and family at home by writing a poem, drawing a picture
or composing a prayer based on the gospel scene.

Other gatherings

Although groups like the Lent groups (of the Local Ecumenical Partnership) and Confirmation class (of Sutton Team Ministry) have been postponed, we are trying to stay in touch by telephone, email, text and WhatsApp.

Olwen Edwards of Trinity is putting together an electronic version of the final united Lent session which was to take place at Sutton Baptist Church this Tuesday March 31st. It will take the form of a simple service/meditation based on contributions from the group leaders. We hope that nearly fifty members of Churches Uniting in Central Sutton will be sharing some quiet time together on Tuesday evening.

Pastoral Network

We continue to be thankful for telephones and modern technology enabling us to keep in touch and helping us to ensure that no one is left isolated or in need.

A big thank you on behalf of all of us to the Mothers' Union/Lunch Team joint initiative who are co-ordinating telephone/WhatsApp support and supply of provisions to those self-isolating. A particular thank you to Nicki Richards, Jeff Richards, Emma Cann, Lily Bande, Paul Butler and Diane Young for extending this 'ministry of love remotely' (as Bishop Christopher describes it).

I also want to thank the Lunch Team, especially Jeff for his unflappable hosting, for the wonderful Big Church Quiz night (for Sutton Schools Work) on 7 March, one of the happiest evenings and a wonderful memory for us to cherish with hopeful hearts (and we won!).

Staying in touch

Stay in touch about ways that we can care for you and pray for you. I'd be glad to hear from you. My contact details are:

rector.stnicholassutton@gmail.com

020 8642 3499

Love one another

Please continue to watch out for each other and contact me or the wardens if you are concerned for someone.

And please pray for those coming to terms with the changed circumstances for funerals, including John Canty's family and friends, and those whose baptisms, confirmations and weddings have been postponed.

And do be assured of my prayers for you. May almighty God keep us safe in body, mind and spirit as we ask him in Jesus' name.

There will be more changes to adapt to in the days and weeks ahead. With renewed thanks to John and Geoff as wardens, Ginny and Stephen and Mary as SPA for their support. Also clergy colleagues, especially Revd Beverly, Revd Phil and Revd Dave (Sutton Team), Revd Dave and Revd Pam (LEP) and Revd Nick (Cheam). Thank you too for your continued prayers and support.

Take good care of yourselves, stay at home wherever possible and share any concerns or needs.

These are testing times but let us be of good courage. With my prayers and love in Christ for you

With love and blessings,

Frances

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;
that with you as our ruler and guide,
we may so pass through things temporal
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH SUTTON

29 MARCH 2020 LENT 5, PASSIONTIDE

IN THE PAST WEEK...

BLESSINGS...

- MU/Lunch Club Team
- Roger Barnes spreading the word about worship
- Arja's calls to prayer
- final United Lent session together in our own homes
- Phone conversations
- 'Ministry of love' by members of the congregation
- Clap for Carers
- NHS staff
- Pre-schools (including our Montessori) providing childcare for key workers
- Retail staff
- Sutton Police

WE MISS...

- Worshipping together
- Hearing from JAM & Spectrum
- Coffee on Sundays and soup on Thursdays
- Passion Sunday Choral Service at Trinity

AMONGST OTHER THINGS, THIS WEEK I...

- contributed a reflection to the final united Lent session service
- joined the Sutton Street Pastors management board as an observer (by Zoom)

Worship

There will be an Order of Service for the 10.30am service on Sunday each week. It will be sent to those on the contact list and can be found on the website.

Sunday 5 April is **Palm Sunday**.

Prayer List – Barbara, Vere, Stan

Departed – Phyllis Taylor (MU member), Revd Martin Goodlad, John Canty, Yves

NOTICES

Bishop of Southwark's LENT CALL 2020 (theme, Matthew 19.14)

As we prepare for Lent and begin to look forward to Easter, Bishop Christopher encourages us to pray and reflect on all that God has done for us in sending his Son into our world to bring the Good News.

During Lent we will also be focussing on Zimbabwe: 'it has been devastating to see how much the effects of global warming have affected our brother and sisters (there).'

Please pray too for the people of the Holy Land (L'Arche community in Bethlehem); the Diocesan Ecumenical Pilgrimage in February; and the Kaduna Centre in Nigeria.

Diary dates

The APCM will not take place on 3 May. More information to follow.

John Canty's funeral will now take place at North East Surrey Crematorium at 4pm on Wednesday 1 April. Only immediate family and I will be attending. We hope there will be a memorial service at some point in the future. Please remember John and all that he meant to St Nicholas and keep us all in prayer.

www.stnicholas.suttonteam.org.uk

Contact details:

Rev Frances Arnold (Priest in charge – Rector designate), email: rector.stnicholassutton@gmail.com Tel: 020 8642 3499
PCCSecretary.StNicholas@suttonteamministry.org