

## Lockdown 3 – stay at home!



Filey Parish

St. Oswald's St. John's St. Thomas'

I'd like to start with a statement from the Bishop of London The Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, who chairs the Church of England's Covid Recovery Group:

"The Prime Minister's words underline the severity of the situation for the country, as the virus continues to spread rapidly. At a time like this, the Church is here to offer comfort and spiritual support to everyone. We have a duty to care for each other, but particularly those who are vulnerable or who may be most at risk.

"The Government has chosen not to suspend public worship in England at this time, and we will continue to follow the guidance and ensure that churches remain as safe as possible. The Government guidance on the safe use of places of worship makes clear that those attending a place of worship must not mingle with anyone outside their household or support bubble."

People may wish to continue to stay at home, and churches may choose not to open, she said. She encouraged clergy and others who were shielding to "take particular care and stay at home".

At the moment I am still waiting for Diocesan guidelines but we have to be pragmatic and make our decisions with our heads not with our hearts. Many of the people involved in opening church and taking services are themselves in the bracket of 'vulnerable people' due to age, health or shielding loved ones, myself included!

The Bishop of Hull and indeed regular Diocesan advise is that just because we could open, does not mean that we should. Each situation is going to be different.

Therefore it is my view and that of wardens and worship leaders that we should for the time being at least, endeavour to do all that we can to keep people safe by staying at home! This means that until further notice we are closing our churches once again for public worship.

That does not mean that we are not going to be offering worship. With the help of a number of people, I hope that we can at least offer some virtual worship, reflections, interviews and services by recording short videos and posting onto our new YouTube channel.

We have not done this before, but we now have the technology and a little bit more know how to at least try. With help we can put together worship that will, I hope, enable people to remain and feel 'connected'. This may not be every week, but we will also continue to provide the weekly news sheet and resources for prayer and worship at home.

In the meantime please pray for one another, continue to share with us your own faith stories (send them to Liz in the office) and in these anxious times never feel that you can't call the vicar for a chat! (Leave a message, I'll call you back – 07434 651658).

May our God bless you with His peace  
Nigel