

LOCKDOWN NUMBER 2

I've been rather quiet postwise since the easing of the spring lockdown, but now at the start of another one I feel I should start up again.

There's a sense of déjà vu about all this, we've all been here before and maybe have very mixed feelings about it this time round, plus of course the days are getting shorter, rather than longer. Some things feel very similar, but there are also a few significant differences. One that gives me hope, is that despite continuing high levels of Covid infection, the death rate is relatively lower. Our skilled medics are getting better at treating this virus, and while I personally don't think it's just round the corner yet, it looks as if there may be an effective Vaccine in the next few months. So there are grounds for hope

Sadly churches and other places of worship have to close for services again, though this time we can open for private prayer and for streaming services. Our two Archbishops and other faith leaders have asked questions this time, and would like to know the science behind closing places of worship who have carefully observed and taken on board all possible safety measures and cleaning. There is an obvious discrepancy between being permitted to hold a funeral in church with up to 30 in attendance, but not a normal Sunday service or other act of worship.

Something that has caught my eye and maybe would be of help to many of us is the suggestion from the Archbishops, though not just for Anglicans, that we use November as a month for prayer. They suggest we all put aside a time 6.00 every evening to pray every day. How we do this is open to us. We might choose to sit quietly, with a lighted candle, we may put on some suitably meditative and calming music, maybe a cross or other significant object to focus on. The great thing would be if we all try to do it! Imagine that great wave of prayer every day. Each day could have a different focus, and a simple pattern goes like this:-

Sunday – Family, friends and loved ones

Monday – Schools, colleges, children and young people, universities

Tuesday – The elderly, the isolated and the vulnerable

Wednesday – Businesses, workplaces, economic wellbeing, our community

Thursday – The NHS and keyworkers, hospitals, hospices and care homes

Friday – National and local governments

Saturday – The grieving, those suffering with physical and mental health issues

There are also ideas to be found on the C of E website at [prayerforthenation](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation)

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Times will improve and we all long for the day when we can live in happier and safer times.

May God bless you and all for whom you pray.

Alice

