

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November**

**All Saints Day**

Dear Friends

As I am sure you are all aware by now, public worship in church will be suspended again from this coming Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> November. Services from next Sunday will resume exclusively on zoom until further notice. Unless advised otherwise, please assume that there will be no wreath laying at the Aston Fields war memorial on 8<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> November. As always, I await advice!

This lockdown already feels harder than the last one. I think that partly reflects the time of year; partly because lockdown has felt inevitable for some weeks; partly because this time the cost on lives and jobs could be so much higher.

Into this crisis, the Christian Church brings the hope of Christ; not blind optimism or wishful thinking, but the certainty that comes from faith in a God who has delivered his people before, and will do so again. Our faith speaks with confidence of eternal joy and love won by Christ for the whole of humanity. As scripture is so fond of reminding us: there is nothing to fear.

That this lockdown news falls on All Saints Day is helpful, for All Saints Day was deliberately created to cater for all those saints for whom there was not a special day assigned to them in the liturgical calendar. Many suffered so many worse trials than we will ever know. All Saints Day provides us with an opportunity to think of saints of previous ages, but also about those who have been saints for us in our own lives. You know who they are and I don't think it will take you long to think of their names. Take time today to remember them, thank God for them, and pray for them.

We might be locked down again but that does not mean we are idle. There is plenty to do. Especially keep an eye open for one another; please, pray.

Keep strong in the faith; all will be well:

David Ford, Rector