



22nd March
2020

Hexham Abbey News

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ABBHEY UPDATE

Coronavirus

In light of government guidance around non-essential contact, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have regrettably advised us that public worship is suspended until further notice. We hope that you will understand that this difficult decision is essential if we are to minimise the risk of transmission among our community.

During this challenging period, you will still hear the Abbey bell toll every morning and evening as the daily offices are said privately inside, and we hope this sign of the continuance of the daily pattern will bring our community some comfort.

The Abbey also remains **open for private prayer** every day between **9.30am and 4.30pm**, when we welcome people of all faiths and none to come here for peace, prayer and reflection. During these hours we encourage you to find a quiet space for your own thoughts within the Abbey, while maintaining a 2-metre distance from others in line with social distancing guidelines.

Whether you are in the Abbey, at home, or still managing to go about your business, we encourage you to explore the many alternatives to public worship which are available.

These include the daily service broadcast each morning on BBC Radio 4, the official Church of England Daily Prayer app, and the Church of England #LiveLent reflections available online. You may wish to choose a book of the Bible and read and reflect upon a chapter each day, or you may take comfort in reading the daily services, prayers and psalms in the Book of Common Prayer.

Obviously, the situation is changing day by day and we refer you to the Church of England website for general updates www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches

In the meantime, our prayers are with you all.

The Churchwardens of Hexham Abbey

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office remains open for the time being, but in order to protect our staff on the ground and those around them, we request you consider whether your visit is strictly necessary and if the communication could be carried out via phone or email on admin@hexhamabbey.org.uk or 01434 602031.

ECUMENICAL DAY OF PRAYER

The Archbishops are calling us to an ecumenical day of prayer on Sunday 22nd March, Mothering Sunday. They ask that wherever we are this Sunday, we join in prayer for the people of this country and place a lighted candle in a window at 7.00p.m. – a sign of solidarity and hope in the light of Christ that can never be extinguished.



Should you wish to make a donation towards the Abbey you are welcome to use the contactless machine near the Welcome Desk or scan the QR code (to the left) with your mobile phone. We kindly suggest a donation of £3.

EUCCHARIST

On Sunday morning at 9.00a.m there will be a very **simple celebration of the Holy Eucharist**, sadly with no congregation. This is heart-breaking but necessary; necessary and right that we continue to offer worship and praise in obedience to Our Lord's command "Do This"; necessary and right that intercession is offered for our town, parish, Abbey community and wider world, offered with and through Our Lord who gave himself "once for all" on the Cross; necessary and right that we recall that all our worship is "with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven"; necessary and right that in these unprecedented times we continue the Abbey's long round of worship while keeping everyone as safe as long as possible.

We hope that on future Sundays this celebration of Eucharist will be live streamed so all can join in from home. It would be good, also, for all who wish to ask for prayer requests that may be offered at the altar on Sunday. These requests can be made through the Abbey Office on admin@hexhamabbey.org.uk

RESOURCES

With more of us staying at home, unable to attend the Abbey or self-isolating, we have compiled a list of resources which may be useful to you at this time. Below are a combination of apps and websites that you might find useful to continue to worship whilst you remain at home.



#LIVE LENT

Care for God's Creation is the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2020. A great resource available to buy in book form from the Church of England website. There is both an adult and a children's paper guide available. Alternatively you can sign up online to receive 40 daily reflections.

www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/living-out-our-faith

TIME TO PRAY: PRAYER DURING THE DAY APP

The Time to Pray app presents everything you need for Prayer During the Day, with variations according to the day of the week and the season of the Church's year. You can use Prayer During the Day on its own, or alongside Night Prayer (also included) in a pattern of prayer at the beginning and end of each day.

This app is compatible with tablets and smartphones and is completely free to use.



DAILY PRAYER: MORNING, EVENING AND NIGHT PRAYER APP



The Daily Prayer app helps you follow Morning, Evening and Night Prayer, wherever you are. It presents the three services in full with NRSV Bible readings, psalms, canticles and seasonal variations, every day of the year. Free to use with an internet connection or £2.99 a year for offline access.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS

Reflections on the Psalms provides insightful commentary on each of the Bible's 150 Psalms from leading writers, including the Archbishop of York John Sentamu, John Pritchard, Paula Gooder and many more. There is one reflection for each of the Psalms, with two or more reflections for the longer Psalms. Each reflection is accompanied by the full text of the psalm from the Common Worship Psalter, plus a refrain and prayer.

The app allows you to follow a simple pattern of Psalms over the course of a month – following the 1662 Book of Common Prayer – or in any order you choose. Compatible with tablets and smartphones for £8.99.



EVENTS

POETRY AND FAITH LENT, POSTPONED

A message from the Poetry and Faith Lent Group:

"It is with much regret that we have decided to postpone the remaining three meetings in this series. I have thought and prayed, considered the opinions of members, and taken information from other sources. **We shall not meet on Tuesdays 24th and 31st March.** 'Postpone' is the positive here - it is my intention that we should resume after Easter on Tuesday 14th April either face to face in Etheldreda or by video conference probably via Skype. More of the practicalities of that as and when."

SILVER SCREEN, POSTPONED

A message from the Silver Screen Team:

We are a sad group of Silver Screen organisers who have been forced to take the decision to put Silver Screen on hold. We shall be back and we hope you will too. Watch this space in the Pewsheet and please take care of yourselves. We hope to see you again in the near future.

PERSPECTIVES MEN'S BREAKFAST, CANCELLED

Unfortunately this event has been cancelled.

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S POSTPONED

In line with government advice, this event has been postponed. Tyne Valley Film Festival are hoping for a reschedule in the autumn. If you have tickets and would like to attend in the autumn, please hold onto them. If you would like a refund on your tickets please contact Jez on events@hexhamabbey.org.uk.

MOTHERING SUNDAY AFTERNOON TEA, CANCELLED

Unfortunately, this event has been cancelled, please contact the shop for refunds.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CLERGY

We would like to provide you with some reassurance from the clergy at this time and they would like to draw your attention to the following, which we hope will help to give you strength and guidance at this difficult time.

Thoughts for Lent 4, Mothering Sunday

In "normal" times this Sunday would be Mothering Sunday. The children would have handed out posies, prayers of thanks would be offered for mums who do so much, after a long wet and weary winter. Spring would be in the air and Easter not so far off.

Going back many years, Mothering Sunday celebrated not only actual mums (and all those many others carers who do so much for our children) but also "Mother Church". The Church is "Mother" because it is through the Church that we hear the Gospel and through the Church that we learn to worship, to pray and to serve others.

Today as we have rapidly to discover how to be Church in a totally unprecedented new way I have been hugely encouraged by all who are determined that somehow the Gospel will be proclaimed, worship and praise will be offered, prayer and intercession made, and care and service available.

So the Church is still "Mother" and we still keep Mothering Sunday. We still give thanks for mums, Spring is almost here and yes, Easter will come for Christ is Risen!

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you. Be not afraid for I am your God.

I will strengthen you I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.



Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Lamentations 3:22-23

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is his faithfulness.

Psalms 5b

Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

Psalms 23:4

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

Psalms 46:1-2a

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea.

SADLY, ALL HOUSE GROUPS ARE SUSPENDED AT THIS TIME. NOTICE WILL GO OUT ONCE THE HOUSE GROUPS REGROUP.