

Light a candle of hope: A national call to prayer

(This Call to Prayer has come in from the Prayer Convener – due to lack of space and local necessary information it is edited a little from the original to include less and extra.) Maudeen

The measures to contain the spread of the virus, and most importantly to limit the number of deaths, are ramped up significantly. Normal routine grinds to a halt as our streets (and supermarket shelves) are emptied. Sporting activities of all kinds are postponed or cancelled, and now church events and services are falling victim to the need to limit social interaction, even as we approach Easter, probably the most significant celebration in the Christian calendar.

But never doubt that the Church in Scone and St Martins is here for you and though our doors on a Sunday morning are closed at the moment for worship, we continue to be here for you all, pastorally and spiritually. It is our intention to have **our doors open for prayer and meditation. You are welcome in the month of March to pop in on a Sunday afternoon from 1 - 4pm to light a candle and to say a prayer. We will also be open on a Wednesday evening from 5 – 8pm. It is essential that you space yourselves out in the Church. Come and go as you please.** Note also that this is the season when annually we highlight “Try Praying”. On the gates of both Church buildings in Scone, you will find in addition to the banners, booklets for prayer.

These texts are highlighted this week: “Do not fear, for I am with you.” [Is 41:10] “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust.’” [Ps 91:1-2]

“Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.” [1 Pet 5:7]

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” [Jn 14:27]

These are great words to hold on to.

As we follow the guidance that we are given in these times, as we demonstrate the love of God in acts of compassion and kindness to our

neighbours and community, God reminds us to “... fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.” As we do so, he calls us to **pray!**

Churches Together has issued a call to all Christians to pray at any time on Sunday 22nd March. You may like to do so at 7pm and place a candle in your window. No risk, though!

Some prayer points are below, remembering that there are more things in heaven and on earth than this world dreams:

“Start with praise and worship - sing a hymn or psalm that speaks of God’s goodness. Be upbeat, positive and thankful in spirit. And why not read one of these Psalms: 145 – 150. Thank God for God’s love, goodness, kindness, compassion, patience, grace and mercy to you, this nation and the world.

Pray the virus would slow and the spread and impact of the virus be limited, with fewer cases, and far fewer deaths, than expected. Pray for the protection of the elderly, frail and vulnerable, **and as we pray help us be a practical answer to these prayers. Pray for the NHS and Social Care staff on the front line** – for their safety, health, energy and protection. that they would have all the resources they need to treat and care **for those needing special care – whether in hospital, in care home, or at home.** Pray especially for any frontline staff you know by name.

Pray for the continued enlightenment of Medical Directors and Scientists seeking to understand this new virus. Pray for UK and National Governments as they have to make decisions affecting every citizen – that they would have the wisdom and courage to make the right decisions and ‘do what it takes’ to deal with the impact of the virus both on society and the economy. **Pray for business leaders, owners and employees** rapidly facing a very uncertain future. **Pray for our society** – that we may be a caring, compassionate community loving our neighbour as we love ourselves. **Pray for Foodbanks** - that the level of donations would rise again so they can continue to serve the neediest in society, and for the health of volunteers and staff. **Pray that our social fabric would be maintained** with no breakdown of law and order. **Pray for the Church** – that we would grasp this unique opportunity to be ‘salt and light’ in our communities, drawing many to Jesus, to the Cross, to wholeness and to life in its fulness, to the Kingdom of light, not the dominion of darkness”. **With thanks to the Prayer Convener.**

REMEMBER ROBIN

Dear Friends, I am working with the study and manse doors wide open this morning the bird song is splendid. Now a faithful friend in all our gardens is the **European Robin** (*Erithacus rubecula*), known simply as the **robin** or **robin redbreast** in the [British Isles](#). It is a small [insectivorous passerine bird](#), specifically a [chat](#), that was formerly classified as a member of the [thrush](#) family (Turdidae) but is now considered to be an [Old World flycatcher](#). You can read all about this for yourself by opening a bird book or going on to the web.

Well now, just as we do not forget our faithful friends in our gardens neither can we forget our faithful friend in the Church of the name Robin. Perish the thought that I would dare draw a similarity between the European Robin and him save their faithfulness. However as the birds require feeding, so do the church finances locally and nationally. I'm sure Robin will be in touch via the magazine and I just know that given the good heartedness of Scone and St Martins you will not neglect him. (Psalm 100 All People that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice, him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell. Come ye before him, and rejoice!) MMacD.