

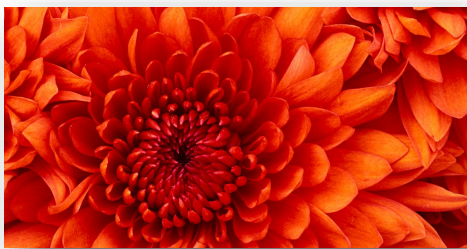
Benefice of Ruscombe & Twyford with Hurst

Loved by Christ, Challenged to grow

Sunday 22nd March—Mothering Sunday

For the time being, our churches are going to be open on Sundays for private prayer and reflection—with social distancing measures in place.

St Mary's Twyford	St Nicholas Hurst
Open: Sunday 9.30am to 12.30pm	Open: Sunday 10.00am to 2.00pm
St James' Ruscombe	Twyford URC
Open: Sunday 10.00am to 4.00pm	Open: Sunday 10.30am to 12.00pm



Collects

God of compassion,
Whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself:

Strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

or

God of love, passionate and strong, tender and careful: watch over us and hold us all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Church Family News

Our new buddy system

We would like to encourage each of you to create an informal "buddy group", with 3 or 4 households in it. You might do this within your home group if you are in one, or simply link up with people from church living near you. Do agree how you will communicate with one another and how you could support one another should any of you need to socially distance / self-isolate as per government guidelines. For e.g., could you pick up a prescription and pop it through their letterbox? Drop some essentials on their doorstep?

Our plans over the next few weeks

We are keeping our church doors open on a Sunday for private prayer and reflection which respects social distancing rules—see above for church's opening times. Each week, the church office will send out a reflection from one of our ministers or lay preachers, as well as church news in this format, which we hope is printer-friendly. Do continue to share notices with the church office. Linda and Gordon Jackson are also organising support within the URC and have sent an additional note round to its members.

To quote Bishop Olivia of Reading, "Let's live hopefully, love generously and pray earnestly, blessing each other by the way we behave. Stay calm and let those who are in high-risk groups or self isolating know that you care for them. Phone calls, messages, letters, cards, food left on the doorstep are all signs of us being community together."

Church Office: 0118 934 4792



Ideas for staying in touch:

By phone: Why not at some point during the time you would normally be at your group/activity or at a church service phone someone for a chat or just to say “Hello, how are you?” Remember to also regularly check in with your church family “buddies”.

Online services: Bishop Steven will be streaming a church service from Oxford’s Christ Church Cathedral. The Diocese will be posting a link soon—click here for the [Diocesan website](#). Other local churches are doing the same. For e.g., Greyfriars in Reading are streaming at 10.30am and 6pm on Sunday. To find out how to view these, click [here](#).

Online daily apps: do keep using the CoE’s [“Live-Lent” app](#); you could also use the CoE’s [daily prayer](#) or join in with one of their daily services.

On the radio: the Archbishop of Canterbury will lead a national broadcast across BBC radio on Sunday 22nd March at 8a.m.

The church office: remains open to phone calls and emails; our church team are working remotely and can pick up all your messages, so do get in touch as usual.

Light a candle of hope: a national call to prayer

On Sunday, all churches are being called to a National Day of Prayer and Action. At such a time as this, when so many are fearful and there is great uncertainty, we are reminded of our dependence on our loving Heavenly Father and the future that he holds.

At 7pm this Sunday, light a candle in the windows of your homes as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer.

A prayer you may wish to use at this time

Loving God,
 We pray for all those who are suffering because of the coronavirus, may they know your healing power.
 When we are afraid for ourselves and our loved ones, give us your strength and courage.
 When we feel alone and isolated, reassure us with a sense of your presence.
 Give wisdom to those in authority and may our community work together for the good of all.
 We give thanks for those who care for others and ask you to bless them in all they do.
 We ask this in the name of Jesus, healer and physician.
 Amen
 (Taken from the Diocesan website)

Sunday 29th March, Fifth Sunday of Lent	
St Mary’s Twyford	St Nicholas Hurst
Open: Sunday 9.30am to 12.30pm	Open: Sunday 10.00am to 2.00pm
St James’ Ruscombe	Twyford URC
Open: Sunday 10.00am to 4.00pm	Open: Sunday 10.30am to 12.00pm