

THURSDAY MEDITATION 1

The 10 o'clock service on Thursdays is a chance to worship together in a calm, thoughtful and reflective way. It is also a chance for friends to meet and talk and encourage each other as well as pray together and remember particularly those who for any reason are not able to be present.

Very sadly for the next few weeks we will not be able to meet together in church as we take note of the medical advice and instructions. There are however many things we can do to help us deal with the present situation and I would like to make some suggestions.

Firstly we can make sure that we stay in touch with each other. This will most probably be by phone or email. I know that not everyone can be reached in this way but most people can. We can't all phone everybody but what we can do is as well as contacting our particular friends to try to contact those who sit nearest us in church. In that way we should ensure that nobody is missed out. I am trying to be in touch with as many as possible but there are many people whose phone numbers I do not have. It would be very helpful therefore to know that this ministry is being carried on. Needless to say if you contact someone who needs help of any sort please let me or the Churchwardens know and I am sure we will do our best to arrange whatever help is appropriate.

Secondly I would like to encourage you to carry on praying. Praying is a word that can have many meanings and it is a word that can sometimes make us feel inadequate. Everybody quite rightly prays in their own way in whatever form suits them and whenever and wherever they feel comfortable.

Personally I like to make use prayers which are well known and have stood the course of time. There are three sources of such prayers that I especially value and in future weeks I will try to say a bit more about them. Today I will just tell you what they are.

The first is the Book of Psalms. These originated I suppose as a kind of hymn book for the people of Old Testament times but they have gained added significance by their use by other communities over the centuries. They are the basis of daily worship in both monasteries and our cathedrals today and they have a special place in our modern liturgies. There is enough in them to keep us going for the rest of our lives.

The second source that I find especially helpful is a collection of hymns. For some of us these have the added blessing of being associated with a particular piece of music (though that can be a distraction if the organist uses the WRONG tune). Words and music together can be especially helpful in raising our minds to where we would have them be.

My third source of help is the collection of collects in our prayer book – and particularly the introductory part of each prayer which usually reminds us of something special about God and His Son.

These cannot replace our regular services when we come together but they can help us remember and pray for each other and pray for the world which is our job to serve.