

BISHOP'S BULLETIN No 38

To the Licensed Clergy of Peterborough Diocese

14 February 2021



Dear friends

Thank you for who you are, and for all you do. A reminder that I and my team are here for you in any ways we can be. Please contact [Joanne](#) for diary or admin, [Tim](#) for pastoral or liturgy, [Rachel](#) for video sermons (now available for March and April).

Covid Keeps

This is a nice little phrase being used in a few places to describe new things people have done which might well continue into the future. I am always glad to hear of those. One of our bigger parishes has done very significant consultation and planning about how their church life is likely to change post-covid (or rather post-crisis, as I think we realise that covid is here to stay). It has been great to read that, though much of it is probably only directly relevant to other large churches.

A benefice consisting of a small town and several villages has described three of their recent activities:

- *We've sent postcards to the 75 young people and children that we have contact details for, who come to our various youth groups and services in 'normal' times. What has been particularly lovely has been the willingness of those involved in our children's and youth work to get on board with this.*
- *We've partnered with someone from the town to help with giving out food packs to anyone in our community who is struggling. It's been good to work with someone who isn't from the church, but has gladly accepted our offer to help, and both families and the elderly are receiving packs.*
- *Just before Christmas, we did what we called a 'Christmas blessing' and invited the whole town to come and collect a free festive packed lunch – thankfully the weather held as it was all outdoors! This has become one of our 'covid keeps'!*

They have initiated intentional conversations about covid keeps at the personal and family level as well as church-wide, and are enjoying hearing of the many things, often deeply missional, that people are recognising as fruitful, that they want to keep.

I'd love to hear more of this sort of thing – and the next step, which is what of the past you are brave enough to be dropping or not going back to. This is often key to releasing the energy for new gospel and kingdom initiatives.

Cathedral Choir Recordings

I am delighted to report that, following the success of the Advent / Christmas project to provide materials for inclusion in online worship, the cathedral Choir has now launched a similar Lent / Easter project. As before, this includes a wide range of hymns, choir pieces and organ voluntaries which parishes are welcome to use as a resource for online services between now and Easter.

If you emailed in December to use the Advent / Christmas recordings, you will automatically be sent the link to this new project and do not need to ask again. If you didn't, just e-mail [here](#) to register for the link to the folder from which the recordings can be downloaded. Any parish using the recordings will need to make sure they have the necessary CCLI live streaming licence, and include these pieces in their usual report to CCLI.

Supporting Headteachers

We all know the generalised weariness of lockdown, exacerbated I suspect by too much screen time, and certainly by a sense of responsibility for others and for the institution. This can be ameliorated by a clear sense of direction, purpose, and specific jobs that need doing – including future planning.

I think that school heads are very similar to incumbents in this regard. Most have been working immensely hard, without proper breaks, and in much more isolation than is good for them. Some are very grateful to their parish clergy who have just done small things to get alongside and show a bit of empathy. This is something I commend to you: be in touch with heads in your patch (church school, community school, private school – it makes no difference). Small acts of kindness, the offer or promise of prayer, a ten-minute phone chat once a week ... there are lots of easy ways to make a big difference, to show appreciation, to stand alongside, and possibly to build better relationships for the future.

If you'd like to do this, but simply don't know how, or if you want some specific tips on how you might encourage your local headteacher(s), our Diocesan Director of Education Peter Cantley would be glad to hear from you and offer suggestions. You can e-mail him [here](#).

With love in Christ

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