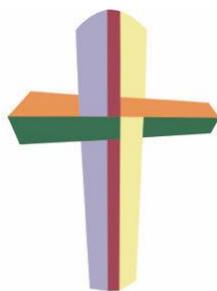


**Guidance on
Mental
Health and
Wellbeing
and
Coronavirus**



Infectious disease outbreaks, like the current Coronavirus (Covid 19), can be scary and can affect our mental health. This is true within the Church context. However often we think that our faith should get us through alone. But the reality is, we are all human and subject to both physical and mental ill health. This is true of us all. It is easy to be so busy looking after others' needs that we forget our own!

Here are some tips based on ones the Mental Health Foundation has produced that will help all of us to look after our mental health at this time when there is much discussion of potential threats to our physical health.

1. Try to avoid speculation and look up reputable sources on the outbreak

- Rumour and speculation can fuel anxiety. Having access to good quality information about the virus can help you feel more in control.
- You can get up-to-date information and advice on the virus here: **Gov.uk**. Alternatively, if you can't access the internet, ask a trusted friend to look for you.

2. Follow the Government advice on staying safe

- Follow hygiene advice such as washing your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds with soap and hot water (they recommend singing 'happy birthday' to yourself twice – but you could also say the Lord's Prayer slowly twice to make sure you do this for 20 seconds too!). You should do this whenever you get home or into work, blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food. If you can't wash your hands straightaway, use hand sanitiser and then wash them at the next opportunity.
- You should also use tissues if you sneeze and make sure you dispose of them quickly; and stay at home if you are feeling unwell.
- Follow appropriate advice on social distancing and self-isolation

3. Try to stay connected

- At times of stress, we work better in company and with support. Try and keep in touch with your friends and family or contact a helpline for emotional support.

- It is a good idea to stick to your daily routine. You may also like to focus on the things you can do if you feel able to:
 - stress management
 - keep active
 - eat a balanced diet
- Stay in touch with friends on social media but try not to sensationalise things. If you are sharing content, use this from trusted sources, and remember that your friends might be worried too.

4. Talk to your children

- Involving our family and children in our plans for good health is essential. We need be alert to and ask children what they have heard about the outbreak and support them, without causing them alarm.
- We need to minimise the negative impact it has on our children and explain the facts to them. Discuss the news with them but try and avoid over-exposure to coverage of the virus. Be as truthful as possible.
- Let's not avoid the 'scary topic' but engage in a way that is appropriate for them. We have more advice on talking with your children about world news. There is a children's webpage
- In the Worcester Diocese there are activities and ideas - <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/children-family-worship-at-home>

5. Try to anticipate distress

- It is normal to feel vulnerable and overwhelmed as we read news about the outbreak, especially if you have experienced trauma or a mental health problem in the past, or if you have a long-term physical health condition that makes you more vulnerable to the effects of the coronavirus.
- It's important to acknowledge these feelings and remind each other to look after our physical and mental health. We should also be aware of and avoid increasing habits that may not be helpful in the long term, like smoking and drinking.

- Try and reassure people you know who may be worried and check in with people who you know are living alone.

6. Try not to make assumptions

- Don't judge people and avoid jumping to conclusions about who is responsible for the spread of the disease. The Coronavirus can affect anyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity or sex.

7. Try to manage how you follow the outbreak in the media

- There is extensive news coverage about the outbreak. If you find that the news is causing you huge stress, it's important to find a balance.
- It's best that you don't avoid all news and that you keep informing and educating yourself, but limit your news intake if it is bothering you.

8. How should people deal with being in self-isolation or in quarantine?

- If there's a chance you could have coronavirus, you may be asked to stay away from other people (self-isolate).
- For people that are in self-isolation or are in quarantine, this may seem like a daunting prospect. It will help to try and see it as a different period of time in your life, and not necessarily a bad one, even if you didn't choose it.
- It will mean a different rhythm of life, a chance to be in touch with others in different ways than usual. Be in touch with other people regularly on social media, e-mail or on the phone, as they are still good ways of being close to the people who matter to you.
- Create a daily routine that prioritises looking after yourself. You could try reading more or watching movies, having an exercise routine, trying new relaxation techniques, or finding new knowledge on the internet. Try and rest and view this as a new if unusual experience, that might have its benefits.
- Make sure your wider health needs are being looked after such as having enough prescription medicines available to you.

10. Looking after your spiritual health

It is important to look after your spiritual health as well as your physical and mental health. Find ways to pray, read the Bible, talk to other Christians maybe by phone. Maybe you could buddy with someone as a prayer partner online or over the phone etc. The Parish of Kidderminster East will be offering services over the internet. There are resources available of the Church of England website for daily prayer and other spiritual support.

In our Parish of Kidderminster East we are providing the following;

- Daily reflections every evening
 - A pre recorded Communion service and sermon each Sunday
 - A reflective talk specifically for children and young people each Saturday
 - A written reflection in the newsletter
 - Updates on facebook, twitter and our Parish website
www.kidderminstereast.org.uk
- You may find it helpful to memorise a verse or passage of scripture that you can use when you feel anxious, such as:

Psalm 121

Assurance of God's Protection

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?

2 My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

4 He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

6 The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

8 The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in

Matthew 28 v20

Jesus said, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters

3 he restores my soul
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

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

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long

Matthew 10 v 31

Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Psalm 91

1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust."

3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow that flies by day,

6 Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.

8 Only with your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place,

10 No evil shall befall you,
Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

11 For He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you in all your ways.

12 In their hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

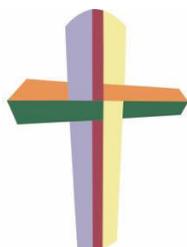
14 “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him on high, because he has known My name.

15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honour him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.”

God bless everyone

Stay Home, Protect the NHS, Save lives.



KIDDERMINSTER EAST PARISH
Five Churches One Parish One Lord