



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
St Mary-le-Tower Ipswich



VICAR

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**To the St Mary-le-Tower Church Community
Sunday 22nd March 2020**

Dear Friends,

We live in strange times as, today on Mothering Sunday, the Church of England begins an extended season of suspending public worship because of the coronavirus epidemic. Our prayers are with all those who are guiding the nation's response and making difficult and challenging decisions, all those on the front lines in the health and emergency services, and also with those who are facing many weeks of personal isolation. We pray too for the sick and the bereaved.

So how are we going to continue the life of St Mary-le-Tower in these new and much changed circumstances? It has been disorientating for everyone, but plans are beginning to take shape.

The Elders of our church are working to make sure that we have the right contact details for everyone connected with SMLT and to put in place a telephone contact network that will enable us to be in touch with one another and to offer assistance to those who need it. As part of this we will ensure that we have email addresses too so that we can send newsletters electronically.

The music department, which has strong and energetic leadership, and an enthusiastic choir community which is in good heart, is working to set up an on-line choral music school with all sorts of things happening. The aim is to sustain the musical life of SMLT in such a full and exciting way that, when social restrictions are lifted, the choir is ready to resume leading worship in church without missing a beat. Watch out for more information about what will be happening on-line.

Meanwhile we have been making arrangements for SMLT staff to work from home, and the Parish Office is now closed. Contact details for particular departments are on the church website (below) and my telephone number (above) is now the main contact number for St Mary-le-Tower. Tower House will remain open for the time being as part of our support for the organisations that have offices there, though the meeting rooms are not now being used. Please bear with us as all these new arrangements are put in place.

Finally, do make use of the services and prayers that are rapidly being made available on the radio and on-line, particular those being led by our Bishops and our Cathedral. Go to the website CofEsuffolk.org.uk for these links. In due course there will be live streaming from St Mary-le-Tower too. Do also regularly visit our own website for updates.

With my prayers and best wishes to everyone,

www.stmaryletower.org.uk