

An Open Letter to our Parishioners

'The Divine Image *William Blake*

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.
For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is Man, his child and care.
For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,

And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.
Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.
And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

Happy Epiphany, the last of the Christmas feasts (until Candlemas), and the day on which the decorations must come down. As Mary and Joseph fled to keep their child safe, so too must we hide away any trace of the celebrations; and yet, the light of Christ continues to shine in the darkness, so this household will be keeping up the bright shiny lights of Christmas, reminding us that even in these dark times Christ's light continues to shine.

Lockdown?

This letter is rather late today. Kindly Dawn agreed to forward it to you all outside of her normal work hours so that I would have time to reflect following the meeting that the ministers and I had today to discuss the way forward for worship. We are cautious, of course, and want to make sure that we don't put anyone in a position of potential threat from the virus. We also want to worship with you. We so enjoy being together to worship, but sadly the virus likes it when we gather together too.

The ultimate responsibility as to whether churches remain open or are to close this time, is with individual churchwardens as we are without a team rector (since neither Matthew or I have been bestowed with the role of 'Acting TR'), so PCCs will be 'zooming' over the next couple of days to make those decisions and then be in contact with local congregations. Please do support your churchwardens, who have a difficult task at the best of times, made all the more complicated in this season.

We shall of course continue to write these letters and musings, to provide an online act of worship, and daily compline. The toddler group has gone back online too. And don't forget, if you just want hear another human voice, just pick up the phone.

With love and blessings,

Vanessa

A reminder that **Compline** is livestreamed each evening at 6pm here www.facebook.com/thewallopingvicar/live

Little Angels Toddler Group www.facebook.com/littleangels/live