



**THE DIOCESE  
OF SHEFFIELD**

Renewed | Released | Rejuvenated

Coronavirus Ad Clerum  
13 July 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

### **Pouring out our soul to the Lord**

‘Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, “How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine.” “Not so, my lord,” Hannah replied, “I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the LORD.....So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the LORD for him.”

(1 Samuel 1: 13-15,20)

Today begins the reading of the story of Samuel in the Morning Prayer lectionary. It is a story of God’s faithfulness from the time of Judges to the end of the reign of King David. Like other significant characters within salvation history, Samuel begins in unusual birth. Also, unusually, we are given a glimpse of the intimate worship life of his mother Hannah as she ‘pours out her soul’ to the Lord in the temple. Her distress is tangible as she faces the taunts of Peninnah, such that she is unable to eat the customary meal at the end of the temple sacrifice.

It has been documented that many are turning to prayer in these days, even those unaccustomed to it. As the Church we have always encouraged people to ‘pour out their souls’ to the Lord whether in times of joy or sorrow. It is our prayer that whether we meet online or in person for our gathered worship and prayer, we will be ready to welcome and support those who are crying out to God for whatever reason they come. Perhaps, like Hannah, the fruit of their prayer will be great wonders and signs of God’s faithfulness as we continue to trust in him for ourselves, our communities, our diocese and our world. We remain those who ‘ask the Lord’ and he is still ‘the God who hears’.

### **Church of England guidance updates**

There are three documents to draw to your attention:

1. Advice on conducting public worship (July 6<sup>th</sup>) note the section relating to children and young people on Page 5.
2. Advice on ordinations and consecrations (7<sup>th</sup> July) It is still our intention to proceed with ordinations of deacons and priests during the last weekend of September in our Cathedral Church.
3. COVID-19 Advice on Individual Prayer by Members of the public in Church Buildings. (7<sup>th</sup> July).

The link to these papers can be found [here](#).

## **Recognising our schools and all those affected & taking rest**

It has, without doubt, been one of the most testing periods in our lifetime for those working within our education system as well as children and their families and carers. We recognise that all have had to face exceptional challenge and have managed to be creative and courageous throughout this time. Many have not been able to take a meaningful break for many months. We would also of course recognise the local authority and independent schools who have shared many of the same pressures. We would be very grateful if you are able to pass on our particular thanks to our Diocesan schools asking that they share our appreciation with their staff teams. It is our hope that all will be able to take some well-earned rest so that they are able to recharge their batteries and return to school refreshed for the year ahead in September.

We also want to honour all children and families who have sought to continue with learning at home during this challenging period. We are aware that for many this has been a time of great strain so we do also hope that families are able to take a break over the summer too.

Whether you live alone or in a busy household, we very much hope that all will do their best to take some time for rest over the summer. It is vital for our wellbeing and self-care in this most difficult of seasons.

## **Leading Well**

The clergy study day held on the 1<sup>st</sup> July to help us to reflect together on our experience to date of responding to the Coronavirus pandemic, was so well received that we have been asked to repeat it. The evening is open to any clergy who were previously unable to attend, and licensed and authorised lay leaders.

*'Reflecting Together on our experience during the Coronavirus pandemic'* will be held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 7:30pm-10pm on Zoom!

The evening will be led for us by Dean Peter who has produced a very helpful reflection for us to consider and will include a biblical reflection from +Pete.

The event will take place on Zoom and will be split into two one-hour sessions with a short refreshment break. You will receive the Zoom link information when you register for the event.

You will also receive a programme and some preparatory information for participants. You will need to read these in advance in order to make the most of the workshop so please confirm your attendance by emailing [lucy.nunn@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:lucy.nunn@sheffield.anglican.org) by Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July

## **Worship in person, online and in other ways**

Though we are delighted to see 'in person worship' beginning to resume in a variety of places, we also recognise that the recent easing of restrictions around public worship has led to an increase in pressure for many clergy and lay leaders. We are grateful that some

have written to explain your approach and indicate when you hope to resume, while others are taking a more incremental approach. Our message is to do what you reasonably can by the date you feel comfortable and can ensure that you are Covid secure in accordance with the guidance. We are heartened by the way you are seeking not to exclude those who cannot attend in person for a variety of reasons and feel sure that will make us a healthier church in the long term. Both Bishops are leading public worship in a variety of places across the diocese over the summer as are other members of the Senior staff team. Weekly sermons are also being made available for each Sunday during July and August together with a text version which is on the diocesan website by the preceding Wednesday

### **Common licenses and weddings**

We are delighted to see weddings taking place again. In terms of the legalities, we are most grateful for the grace generously extended at the discretion of the Chancellor as follows:

a. For all weddings up until 31<sup>st</sup> August, the common licence fee will remain at £60. We believe that this provision will cover most couples who have applied for a common licence in the last fortnight.

b. For wedding dates after 31<sup>st</sup> August, surrogates will be asking the couple to confirm why the common licence is needed. If it is due to a church being closed as a result of Covid prevention measures, so that banns cannot be read, then we will continue to issue a common licence for a fee of £60. If it is for any other reason, such as one of the couple being resident abroad, then the usual fee of £200 will apply.

This approach may need to be reviewed if the Covid situation changes so we will keep it under review.

### **Past Cases Review 2**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group realise that some form of lockdown may be in place much longer than any us envisioned when the Covid -19 pandemic struck and that parishes will have a whole range of priorities to address once churches are fully operational. Parishes are therefore asked, now that some access to churches is allowed, to complete the PCR 2 submission wherever possible, but only if the work can be done in line with Covid-19 safety guidelines and government advice. A further deadline is not being set yet and a regular update will be provided each month via the Safeguarding Team's newsletter. If you have any questions about this, please send an email to: [pcr2@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:pcr2@sheffield.anglican.org) and a member of the Safeguarding Team will endeavour to respond within 3 days.

A copy of the Ad Clerum, associated documents and further information about PCR 2 is available on the Diocesan website at: <https://www.sheffield.anglican.org/pcr2>

### **Addressing Racism**

Deeply affected by the systemic issues of racial justice, the Bishop's Senior Staff Team has decided to read and reflect on the newly published book 'Ghost Ship' by A.D.A France-Williams. This is an 'insider's story' written by a young black priest, reflecting on his journey

within the Church of England. It is highly recommended reading as we seek to listen to what God is saying to us and take action to address the injustices we face.

[Ghost Ship on Hymns Ancient and Modern](#) - The book is on special offer at £15.99 until 30<sup>th</sup> July.

For a taste of his writing see [this Guardian article](#) from 4<sup>th</sup> July and this feature [article in the Church Times](#) from 10<sup>th</sup> July.

### **Archbishop of York**

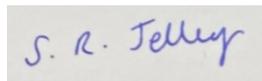
It was a joy to witness the Confirmation of Election of Stephen Geoffrey Cottrell on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July. You can view the service and an introductory video about the 98th Archbishop of York [here](#).

General Synod Presidential address from Saturday [here](#).

Also, the national Sunday service he led yesterday is on YouTube [here](#).

Also his Yorkshire Post article [here](#).

As ever this comes with our prayers and gratitude for you all,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. R. Jelley".

Canon Sophie Jelley  
Bishop-designate of Doncaster

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Pete Sheffield".

The Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox  
Bishop of Sheffield