



The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is to lead a national broadcast as the Church of England responds to the challenge of becoming a “different sort of church” in the face of the challenge of coronavirus.



The service, including prayers, hymns and a short sermon, will be broadcast online by the Church of England and broadcast on 39 local **BBC radio stations** and **BBC Radio 4's Sunday Worship** this Sunday as congregations across the country find new ways of sharing worship together after public church services were put on hold.

Churches of all major denominations will also be marking a national day of prayer and action this Sunday – Mothering Sunday - particularly remembering those who are sick or anxious and all involved in health and emergency services.

Meanwhile local churches across the country are streaming acts of worship or sharing reflections online as part of an expansion of digital resources to meet the need for spiritual guidance and support.

It comes after the Archbishops of Canterbury and York wrote to clergy on Tuesday advising them to put public services on hold until further notice in response to Government advice to restrict public gatherings to help prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

But they made clear that, far from having to “shut up shop”, the Church of England will face the challenge by becoming a radically different kind of church rooted in prayer and serving others. This service, recorded in the crypt chapel at Lambeth Palace in London includes hymns sung by St Martin's Voices, one of the choirs of St Martin-in-the-Fields

In his address the Archbishop will say: "In all of the current troubles, and they are very serious troubles, looking inwards will only reveal the limits of our own resources, and lead to deeper fear and selfishness.

"Acting in love found from God in Jesus Christ will do the exact reverse. As we look out from ourselves in love, we can enable people to find the place of their nurture, not their historic place but a new place where they meet God and find his consolation.

"As we share our consolation the mother love of God will enfold them. As we love the poor, go and give to a foodbank, call on someone who is isolated, do their shopping, pray with and for them from a distance, we will find that we are deeply consoled by our own gift of consolation."

Notes to Editors

- The service will be broadcast on **BBC Radio 4's Sunday Worship at 0810 and all** local radio stations in England at 8am and will premier online at 9am on Sunday.
- [Like the Church of England's Facebook page](#) to be notified about the upcoming broadcast.
- Further information on what the suspension of public worship will mean will be available as soon as possible [on the Church of England website](#). This page will be regularly updated.
- The Church is working to significantly expand the number of digital and print resources to enable people to continue to walk with God at this difficult time. This will focus on daytime and night prayer services, more video content, new mental health reflections and a range of training webinars on how churches can use social media to reach local communities at this time. A simple online guide for churches wishing to stream acts of worship for the first time [is available here](#).
- Content currently available includes:
 - [#LiveLent daily reflections](#)
 - [Prayer for the day audio and text](#)
 - [Alexa and Google Home smart speaker apps](#)

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/news-and-statements/archbishop-canterbury-lead-first-national-virtual-church-england>