

The Church has a vital role to play in offering hope and comfort to the nation as we face an expected second wave of the coronavirus, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have said.

In [a joint letter to the bishops of the Church of England](#), Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell set out a stark assessment of the challenges facing the country amid the pandemic including hunger, homelessness, mental health pressures and domestic violence.

But, they say, the Church of England, through its presence in every community, can play a vital role in serving the nation - especially those most in need - and in bringing hope to all through the gospel.

Churches are especially well placed, through networks and partnerships across the country, to help those in most need those who are hungry and homeless, they point out.

“Most of all we need to draw close to Christ, and continue to offer the hope and stability of the gospel,” the Archbishops write.

“It is this gospel joy, even in the darkest times, that alone can help us through this crisis, bringing hope and an eternal perspective to the very pressing trials of the moment.”

They also highlight the particular pressures faced by small businesses after months of restrictions and issue a challenge to banks to show the same mercy to those in difficulties now as banks themselves received during the financial crisis.

Referencing the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18, they add: “It will be for us and others to encourage the banks, who received such help in 2009, to be equally merciful to others as the nation was to them.

“St Matthew 18:23-35 seems highly relevant.”

Further information

[Read the letter in full.](#)

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