

Tens of thousands of people coping with bereavement amid the coronavirus pandemic are to be remembered in prayers at a special national Church of England service from St Paul’s Cathedral to be broadcast this weekend.

The Bishop of London, Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, is to lead the Church of England's online weekly service on All Saints' Day, marking the start of the season of remembrance.

The service, of thanksgiving, hope and remembrance, with hymns and anthems from the choir of St Paul's, will be broadcast on the Church of England's [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#) at 9am on Sunday.

In opening remarks, Bishop Sarah will speak of the Christian message of hope, in the face of the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic. She will say that God is with us in our pain and fear and that his love for us can never be destroyed.

"We gather at a time of great uncertainty and challenge as the people of our world struggle to overcome a devastating pandemic that has cut short earthly lives, destroyed livelihoods, and separated us from the people and activities we enjoy. But we are not without hope," she will say.

"Through word, prayer, song and symbol, we are reminded that God's love for us can never be destroyed. God is with us in our pain and fear and will lead us to a yet more glorious day."

The service will hear prayers read by the Dean of St Paul's, Very Revd Dr David Ison, giving thanks for the lives of all those who have died and praying for all those who mourn their passing. He will also pray for all those caring for the sick and those providing essential services. He will further lead prayer for people in positions of leadership both at local and national level as well as those who advise them.

Delivering the sermon, Revd Canon Mia Hilborn, Hospitaller, or Chaplain, at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and for the London Fire Brigade, will describe how she has seen 'extraordinary' acts of compassion and kindness while at work this year.

"I have witnessed real heroes and heroines at work in intensive care units, the Emergency Department, oncology and elderly care wards," she will say.

"Firefighters have been expanding their skills by supporting paramedics and still fighting fires and keeping London safe. Doctors, nurses, therapists, chaplains, being utterly extraordinary supported by teams of workers who give their all, and who are continuing to give their all because we are still very much in the midst of the Covid pandemic."

She will add: "The hope we have in our hearts as Christians is eternal. So this day we remember with love and respect those who have gone before us, giving honour to their names and respect for their lives by our continuing to live with hope. Hope that is in Christ will not be disappointed."

Viewers of the service will be invited to remember those who have died whom they have known and loved. They will be invited to remember especially those who have died during the pandemic, whose names are memorialised in the [Remember Me online Book of Remembrance](#)

hosted by St Paul's Cathedral.

**At the end of the service, viewers will be invited** to light an online candle in memory of a loved one who has died.

## Notes to editors

- To read more about how cathedrals and churches are marking All Souls' Day this year visit [this page on our website](#).
- Read *~~All Souls Day amid Covid-19: the value of remembering~~*, by Revd Canon Dr Sandra Millar, the Church of England's Head of Life Events.

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