

**Coventry Diocese Readers**

**President: The Lord Bishop of Coventry**

Dear all,

I hope that this this newsletter finds you well.

I always find the season of Remembrance beginning with All Saints; then All Souls and the commemorations of Remembrance Sunday and Armistice (Remembrance) Day really touching and thought provoking, but somehow this year seems even more poignant. Many of us have lost friends or relatives this year and as the number of people dying from the Covid pandemic reaches 50,000 in the United Kingdom alone, it is important to remember that each of these people, were not just a number, but a parent or child; sibling; partner and friend.

This Saturday is the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Coventry Cathedral, an event which I heard stories about, when I was a little girl, from my Grandma, who had been born in Coventry in 1909 and lived here until her death some 80+ years later. My Grandad both worked for the Coventry Corporation and was a member of the Home Guard on duty that fateful night in 1940.

We are currently in a strange place, with this new lockdown and no services permitted in church. I find myself planning services and unsure whether they will be held in person over Christmas in church, or over zoom, but this current pandemic has certainly made me grateful for the technologies and the other blessings that I have in life.

Jo and I have been really grateful to all of you who have emailed either of us about thoughts which have been sparked by the last newsletter, and in particular the book review I included. We hope that you will continue to ponder and pray about various issues in our society including the effect of racial prejudice, hatred and unconscious bias which many of us benefit from.

Bishop John, who is always sent copies of our newsletters, emailed me back in response to say that he hoped our various email conversations would “strengthen your commitment, which I share, in bringing change in this whole area”

The Church of England has also released recently two other reports that you may like to, or may have already read:

Living in Love and Faith report was overseen by Christopher, Bishop of Coventry and included three years’ work by 40 different people.

 <https://www.coventry.anglican.org/news/living-in-love-and-faith-resources-published-.php>

Additionally, a report on lay ministry, called Kingdom Calling was also launched a couple of weeks ago and focuses on all lay people having a role within the ministry and mission of the church.

The below link, from our colleagues in Leicester diocese, also enables you to download the report for further contemplation.

<https://www.leicester.anglican.org/news/bishop-martyn-welcomes-the-kingdom-calling-report-to-aid-the-churchs-understanding-of-vocation.php>

As one of the Diversity and Inclusion representatives for my work, I am only too aware how this last few months has impacted on so many areas of life and how many in our society have struggled.

For people on the margins whether due to race; sexuality and gender; poverty; disability or living with physical and mental illness the last few months has been particularly tough.

Our churches can be open for private prayer only and we are aware that some of you are spending time in your local church, during those time the church is open. A few of you had said that you would like a bit more support on how to deal with people suffering with mental health issues, both in your congregations and those who come in off the street.

I am pleased to say that Rev Ali Hogger from St Paul’s church in Foleshill has agreed to lead a training session on Zoom for us on Monday 30th November at 7pm. Please do contact Lorraine in you would like a Zoom invite. Lorraine.baker@covcofe.org.

Additionally, as mentioned in our last newsletter, I am holding two Fellowship meetings later this month, one on Monday 23rd November at 7:30pm and one at 2:30pm on Thursday 26th, please also let Lorraine know if you are interested in attending one of these meetings. Lorraine.baker@covcofe.org.

I am hoping that I might continue to run online Fellowship meetings in January, and perhaps through the winter months next year, rather than asking you to come out in the dark and cold to meet up with your Fellow Readers. It would be really helpful to know if you would value these meetings, even if you cannot make the current dates, or if, when the situation permits, you would prefer to be able to meet in person.

Helen Allred, our Reader Secretary, has asked me to remind those of you with current PTO licenses to contact your incumbents to get the PTOs signed and to discuss and complete a new working agreement. We are aware that this could be difficult so please do contact Helen, Jo or Lorraine if you are having problems organising this.

Additionally, please send any changes of address, phone numbers or email address to the Reader Secretary Helen.Allred@CovCofE.org so that we can update our database.

The Reader committee all hold you in our prayers, and hope that you may each continued to be blessed in your various ministries.

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. (**Numbers 6:24-26**,)

Lorraine Baker and Jo King

Assistant Warden and Warden of Readers