

Pause ... for Prayer

May 29th 2020
12 noon

Christian Aid international
response to the Pandemic

Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.

1 John 4:16

God is love, and those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-13

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Love never fails. Even in the darkest moments, love gives hope. Love compels us to fight against coronavirus alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty. Love compels us to stand together in prayer with our neighbours near and far. Love compels us to give and act as one. Now, it is clear that our futures are bound together more tightly than ever before. As we pray in our individual homes – around the nation and around the world – we are united as one family. So, let us pause and find a moment of peace, as we lift up our hearts together in prayer.

For the health workers tending the seriously ill
for the scientists working on a vaccination
for the researchers analysing data and identifying trends
for the media outlets working to communicate reality
for the supermarket workers, hygiene and sanitation providers
for the good news stories of recoveries and effective planning
for the singing from balconies by locked-down communities
for the recognition that isolation doesn't need to mean loneliness
for the notes through letterboxes offering help and support
for the internet and telephones and technology that connects
for the awakened appreciation of what is truly important
Thanks be to God.

For those who are unwell and concerned for loved ones
for those who were already very anxious
for those immune suppressed or compromised
for those vulnerable because of underlying conditions
for those in the 'most at risk to coronavirus' categories
for those watching their entire income stream dry up
for those who have no choice but to go out to work
for those who are afraid to be at home
for those who are more lonely than they've ever been
for those who are bereaved and grieving.

God be their healer, comfort and protection,
be their strength, shield and provision
be their security, safety and close companion

And raise up your Church
to be your well-washed hands and faithful feet
to be present to the pain
to respond with love in action
if even from a safe distance. Amen

A prayer for times of isolation

'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'
(Romans 8:38-39)

God of heaven and earth, in these times of isolation,
apart from loved ones, distant from friends, away from neighbours
thank you that there is nothing in all of creation,
not even coronavirus, that is able to separate us from your love.

And may your love that never fails
continue to be shared through the kindness of strangers looking out for each other,
for neighbours near and far all recognising our shared vulnerability,
each of us grateful for every breath,
and willing everyone to know the gift of a full and healthy life.
Keep us all in your care. Amen.

A prayer for a global pandemic

Loving God, strengthen our innermost being
with your love that bears all things
even the weight of this global pandemic
even the long haul of watching for symptoms
of patiently waiting for this to pass
watching and waiting, keeping our gaze fixed on you,
and looking out for our neighbours near and far.

Instil in our shaken souls
the belief and hope that all things
are possible with your creative love
for strangers to become friends
for science to source solutions
for resources to be generously shared
so everyone, everywhere, may have what they need
for your perfect love that knows no borders
may cast out any fear and selfishness that divides.

May your love that never ends
be our comfort, strength and guide
for the wellbeing of all and the glory of God.

We ask all these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen