



## The Bishop of Grantham

7 March 2019

*Dear friends and colleagues,*

This letter comes with my prayers for us all as we enter the holy season of Lent. I hope that it will be a time of reflection, of renewal and of profound preparation for the joyful festival of Easter.

Bishop Christopher has asked me to help with diocesan preparations for the enactment of the resolution by which the United Kingdom will leave the European Union, and this is the reason for me writing to you today.

The United Kingdom is set to leave the European Union at 11pm on Friday March 29<sup>th</sup>. As yet, significant votes still have to take place in Parliament, but whatever the outcome of these votes I would like to share with you the request from our archbishop and bishop, that as God's people in Greater Lincolnshire we should commit ourselves to prayer at this time, and to being good neighbours to everyone.

It is likely that the national church will produce some easily adaptable resources that might assist us in what I know is already a considerable pastoral challenge. As soon as these resources become available, I will send you the necessary links and details.

In essence, the hope is that church buildings might be open for prayer and that the communities that they serve might be invited to gather to pray together and, where possible, to offer hospitality such as a cup of tea and a chance to talk. It is felt that many different feelings are likely to be unlocked towards the end of March, and that one of the things that we can do as Christians is to recognise our neighbours' different needs – and our own – and take very simple steps to meet them. We are also planning an opportunity to pray together as a diocese at St Botolph's Church in Boston at 6.00pm on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March.

This letter is not seeking to overburden those who I know are already busy and committed in so many different ways. Rather, it is to try to say 'here we are, as God's people, all of us, together, trying to be true to him and to those whom he loves and has made in his image'. My sense is that whatever our personal views of the politics relating to Brexit, we can find common ground in the pastoral issues that are emerging.

It is likely that this prayer will be being used nationally and I offer it to you now, as a first step in making other resources and information available to you:

God of hope,  
in these times of change and uncertainty,  
unite our nation and guide our leaders  
with your wisdom.  
Give us courage to overcome our fears,  
and help us to build a future  
in which all may prosper and share:  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With best wishes,

*+ Nicholas.*

The Right Reverend Dr Nicholas Chamberlain  
Bishop of Grantham