In light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Newcastle University Islamic Society (ISoc) Committee has suspended all congregational prayers and activities including the Jumu’ah prayer, indefinitely. The Muslim Prayer Space will also be temporarily closed from 5pm on Friday 20th of March in line with several key university buildings around campus, in order to protect against the spread of this virus.

We know from the example of the Noble Messengerﷺ that social isolation in such conditions is part of our religion, as per the narration of the Holy Prophetﷺ said: “If you hear of a plague in a land, then do not go into it. If it happens in land where you are, then do not go out of it.” [Bukhari 5396, Muslim 2218].

During this time period, the prayers (salah) should be performed at home, and the Jumu’ah prayer should be replaced with the standard 4 raka’ats of Dhuhr, in accordance with the rulings made by leading scholars.

This situation is unprecedented and has been changing rapidly over the past few days – these steps have thus been taken with the University to ensure the wellbeing of our community.

The Muslim Prayer Space will reopen once the circumstances improve in sha Allah; the ISoc is working closely with the University with regards to the situation. Please keep up to date with the Islamic Society’s Facebook (facebook.com/NclISoc), Instagram (instagram.com/isoc_newcastle) and other social media pages for further developments and reminders bi’ithnillah.

The ISoc works to ensure the wellbeing of Muslim staff & students at Newcastle University. For advice and guidance during this challenging time or for support with essentials/shopping during periods of self-isolation, please do not hesitate to get in touch via email (Islamic.soc@ncl.ac.uk) or social media.

Allahﷺ says: “O you who believe, seek help in patience and prayer. Truly, Allah is with the patient” [2:153]. Let us take this opportunity to grow in empathy, spirituality and worship. May Allahﷺ protect us all, grant shifa to those who are ill, lift us out of this test, make this a means of drawing closer to Him, and may He be our Guide and Protector. Amin ya rabbul ‘alamin.

Jazakumullahu khayran

Aqib Nur Akhtar, Islamic Society President 2019-20