

02.01.2021



Dear Friends

The New Year and Tier 4

Happy New Year to you all! And as you already know, for us who live in Northampton, we open this new year with Tier 4. I know many are wondering what that means to churches in general and to our parish church so let me tell you where we stand briefly.

As you may know, according to the current Tier 4 guidelines, places of worship are still allowed to be open for public worship. There has not been any further guidelines from our Archbishop or from the Diocese. As things stand now, and as for me, it is my duty to continue to offer the Eucharist at St. Peter and St. Paul on Sunday. I am aware that there are people for whom the church is the only place where they can find peace and fresh energy to keep going in these challenging times. If you need to be in the church and need that sacred space and communion, the church is here for you with an increased level of safety measure that means no live music, limited seats and a cold church building for ventilation.

If you have any concerns, doubts or reservations, then please let me assure you of this. You do not have to come to church. You can worship from home via online and still fulfill your calling as Christians and disciples of Christ which is to keep loving your family, your loved ones and your neighbours and keeping them safe. God is with you. If you feel it is difficult to feel his presence then you can simply light a candle. By lighting a candle in your house, you will be following the ancient tradition of the early Christians who also worshiped from their own homes. The candle will remind you that Christ is with you at the very same place.

For those who are down to read the scripture or lead the intercessions in the next few months, please don't feel that you have to come to church to do this. You can still do this by sending me your recording. If that is not possible then please do not hesitate to let Alison know. You will be back into the rota when it suits you.

There is no easy solution. There is no perfect answer. Whatever answer we come up with, it seems to fall short. But perhaps what is more important to us as followers of Christ than to

find a perfect solution is to keep loving each other in the name of Jesus, keep encouraging each other not to lose hope and to keep our faith in God who is good and faithful.

Message for the New Year

So is there still any good news as we begin this new year with Tier 4 and the new variant of virus spreading? Is there anything new at all on this second day of January of 2021? Well there is but not in the number but in the Holy Scriptures.

As I pray before I write this letter to you. A passage is given to me. 2 Corinthians Chapter 5, verses 16 to 20.

“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.”

Friends, I find this passage immensely encouraging and I hope it gives you hope to for this new year.

If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5.17)

Anyone, not any good people or smart people or strong people or mentally resilient people but ANYONE is in Christ, every day is a new day. Every day, there is a new hope, new strength, new chance not through your power or resolution but through his power, his grace and his love to you. *The old has gone, the new is here!*

The celebration of the new year is a mere reminder of this promise that is given to us everyday. May God bless you all and all those whom you love in this New Year.

With love in Christ

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