

Dear friends,

Next week we celebrate Harvest on Sunday 20th September in our worship and in our donating of goods for the benefit of a local charity. Harvest feels different this year! Our theme will be 'A God of good things' as we reflect on a season of lockdown and look to a still uncertain future with courage and hope. In preparation for the service I invite you to think about what you might put into a bag of good things that you have become aware of during the last few months? I'm aware that the last few months for some have been a very difficult time but I'm also aware that for some it has been a time of doing new and different things and our harvest season is an opportunity to reflect on our changed routine and give thanks for this. Don't forget there is an opportunity on the afternoon of Sunday 20th between 2-5pm to drop off a donation of non-perishable goods at church or, alternatively, arrange to have them collected from your home. See Judith's newsletter for more details. Our worship this week is led by the Fareham Team and we extend our thanks to them for planning and preparing our worship material.

One new initiative from the Circuit that has come out of the last few months is 'Digital church'. You should have received the details about this last week. Do go onto the Circuit website if you are able (esanddcircuit.co.uk) and take a look. Digital Church is a pre-recorded service that can be viewed at any time of the week alongside other forms of worship that you are able to access and take part in. It can also be downloaded and printed off for others.

I know that some folk have been asking about the latest government guidelines regarding the 'Rule of Six' for social gatherings and whether this affects our plans for reopening the church for worship. In short, it doesn't! Acts of worship are not considered to be social gatherings and as long as they take place in Covid-secure settings working to the restrictions that are already in place then they can continue at present.

We continue to hold in our prayers members of our church community who are in need at this time. We continue to pray for Peter and Val and give thanks that Peter is home following a spell in hospital. We give thanks that Laurie's heart operation has been a success and pray for him and Pam as he recovers at home.

Blessings,

Claire