

Last month, Revd Ylva wrote this letter instead of me and it raised speculation that I was leaving/had left. I'm still here! Ylva has now been 'priested'; she will continue to serve our communities as an ordained priest, and as our curate. (If you want to know the difference, ask Ylva or myself.)

Something that has left us, though, are all the Covid restrictions. All the restrictions on public worship were lifted on 19 July with the Government saying: "You know your own situations, apply Covid guidelines to keep people safe in your church building." This we have done. Briefly, when you come to church, please hand sanitise; please use the NHS Test & Trace system - either the QR Code or the register - on entering church. Social distancing and the wearing of face coverings are now optional; and there will be congregational singing. If you would prefer to wear a face covering please do so. If you would prefer to be socially distanced, please use the designated safe zone on the right-hand side in church. It all about respecting other people's views. If someone is sitting in a pew wearing a face covering, perhaps that is an indication that they'd prefer to be socially distanced or would prefer you to wear a face covering if you sit next to them.

I hope you will consider coming back to church. On my return from annual leave, we will be reviewing the service pattern (and any new Government Covid guidelines) in both parishes ready for October.

All the way through the Covid restrictions, a daily scripture and reflection has been available on the church website and outside St George's Church. We took a break from this in August due to holidays; but here is an example of a reflection:

Scripture: "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry'." (John 6:35a) And the Reflection: We need real food - represented by bread - to live our physical lives. If we don't eat, we do not lead healthy lives; if we do not eat, it leads to death. But we are also spiritual beings; and we also need to eat food that feeds our spiritual life. Food that feeds us for our eternal life. What is that spiritual food? Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." He is our spiritual food. Get to know him; read the scriptures in the Bible; pray; spend time with others who believe in Him' i.e. come to church, and worship him. That is how to feed your spiritual life. Try it."

Just a short reflection to think about each day. If you want the daily reflections to continue, I'd be grateful if you would let me know.

Finally, our harvest festival service is approaching at 10am on Sunday 3 October at St George's Church. Let's gather and be grateful for all that God gives us.

Revd David Commander, Rector

