



Friday Fellowship News No 5 24 April 2020

SPRING seems to be well and truly underway with several days of blue sky and the churchyard coming into full blossom.

The village, albeit in Lock-down, is slowly coming to life through nature after what has seemed to be an incredibly long time of grey from last September, merging autumn and winter into one.

Sadly, of course, for many, they are not able to even take a walk around the village at present, but we pray that the signs of Spring and new life might signal a start of better days to come for the life of our nation, and those effected by Covid-19.

Our thanks, as ever, go to the many volunteers which make up Stanford20Helpers, and to the staff at our COOP, Pre-School and Primary School for all their hard work – you are each, individually valued and appreciated!

MARGARET TAPLEY REMEMBERED



Sadly, as you may have seen in the national press, one of our villagers has died to C-19. Margaret Tapley, 84, was still working as a Nursing Assistant at Witney Hospital the week before she died – typical of her warm heart, selfless life and her devotion to her vocation, and the many thousands

she has helped over decades of nursing. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends at this sad time.

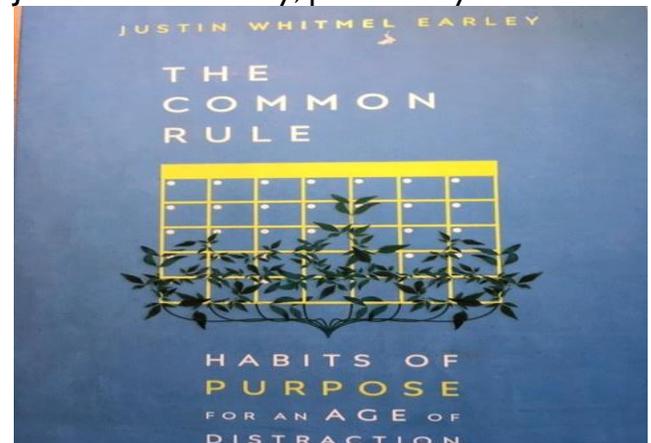
A TIME FOR NEW HABITS?

At the start of the now, daily No 10 Press Statements at 5pm, the deputy Chief Medical Officer was asked whether she felt the pandemic would lead to a nation of couch potatoes?

“Quite the contrary,” she replied. “For some, the focus of having a daily act of exercise might be the final nudge people need to come out of this epidemic a much fitter nation!”

Experts say it takes as little as 24 days to kick a habit or, to start a new one which then becomes part of our daily routine.

In this week’s Zoom Coffee Moring, Jane Smith said she had been reading **The Common Rule – Habits of Purpose for an age of Distraction**, by Justin Whitmel Earley, published by IVP.



It provides very practical helps to show how each of us can make small, but meaningful changes daily, weekly, monthly and yearly in our desire to be more like Christ.

It outlines something of the concept of a **Rule of Life** – which I have shared in overall terms in my preaching over recent years, and will be returning to in the months ahead as I am convinced this is a way of grounding our desire to be more Christ-like. Why not buy a copy as a sign of your own intent to develop new, healthy spiritual habits coming out of this season of life?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

For details of the Bible Readings for each day, a short service outline to help you pray at home, and all sorts of resources and helps, including free Apps, visit <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

STREET or HOME PARTY!

Don't forget 8 May – VE Day Celebrations!



SUNDAY READINGS & MESSAGE

The Bible readings for this Sunday are 1 Peter 1: 17-23 and **Luke 24:13-35**. I'll post a brief video with some thoughts on the Luke reading on the St Denys Church Facebook Page, and on www.stdenys.org website.

Livestream Sunday services can also be found via St Aldates, Oxford:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgyAvKxtSel&feature=youtu.be>

COVID-19 - Response, Recovery, Reconstruction

THE Church Leadership Team is currently prayerfully discussing ways in which we might further help church members and our villages as we work through this Pandemic.

We are using a model that comes from experience of emergency relief and response around the world, which has three phases.

Emergency Response

During this phase, people are running hard to get basic supplies, basic needs. They are stripped back to Maslow's Hierarchy of Need.



THE CLT has been focusing on this phase to date. But, the **Recovery Phase** can typically last 6 – 12 months, depending on the nature of the crisis.

Those months are often characterised by people lacking confidence to get back to normal, feeling that their world has been shaken up and down, and not really knowing what normal is!

We want you to know we are working on ways we can be alongside you through this, as well as signposting you to any external help you may need.

This is also a time which will be characterised by Memorial Services, and an outpouring, for some, of all of the emotions that are pent up right now.

Then experts tell us that finally, we all move into a **Reconstruction** phase, which is likely to be during late 2021 and 2022/3.

Scarce resources in terms of finances, facing up to the reality of new sets of values, new ways of doing things - reimagining what the future will look like. All this is going to be influenced by several factors. One is our health will be more important to us, as will relationships (family/friends). Society will probably also have a greater level of concern for fairness and justice. We'll hopefully have a greater love/concern for all key workers - and a greater appreciation for them!

The CLT is starting to pray about how we might respond to our community in general as it starts to re-shape life. Our desire is that through this storm, as life is stripped back to basics, the Church will be there throughout to explain, in words and deeds, that Christ is the only certain hope to rebuild the future upon.

With my love and prayers
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