



Friday Fellowship News No 7 8 May 2020

WHAT WILL THESE DAYS MAKE OF US?

FOR many people, one of the things that keeps them going during this extended time of Lock-Down is 'getting back to normal', or, some sort of normal!

And if we're really honest, it won't be the foreign holidays, or the big concerts, or the expensive outings etc. No, it will be the simpler things of life that we took for granted before and which, we will never again take for granted!



As Christians, yes, we have not been able to gather for worship together but in these days, the Church (people) throughout the UK, and indeed the world, has been 'deployed' in a different way – outside the building and deeper into the communities in which they worship.

Yes, God is working in and through His church and as we start to come out of Lock-down in the months ahead, there will be plenty of opportunity for us all, together, to ask what lessons God has been teaching us and, what He would have us Be and Do differently in the future.

One very exciting thing is how churches have been working together for the benefit of their communities and just last Sunday, Christians across the usual denominational divides used the power of the Internet to record and sing a UK Blessing (see picture) which is still available via YouTube at

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=PUtl3mNj5U#dialog>

One thing, though, we must all be wary of in our rush to get back to 'normal', is that we waste the huge opportunity God is giving to each of us through this pandemic for personal, spiritual growth.

The biggest risk we run is that we would go back to our normal way of life after these days and, be the same person we were when it started. That somehow, we didn't let God do what He wanted to do in us through these trials and difficulty. Well, let's turn the page. We know we are going to get through these days but it's time to ask the question, "**What are these days going to make of us?**" Let us all have the goal to be more like Jesus coming out of this!

There are many things these days which are totally out of our control. But we can all rise above the things we cannot control and, concentrate on the things we can – and that includes, for many, our time to spend with God. The resources I refer to overleaf, I hope, will help in that.

VE DAY CELEBRATIONS – 8 MAY 2020



Earlier today, around 11am, I led a short service at the War Memorial, reading out the names of villagers who laid down their lives in WW2 for the freedom of others, and praying for continued peace across Europe.



A Wreath, on behalf of all current villagers was laid by Cllr Peter Lewis, Chairman of the Stanford Parish Council.

NEW CHURCH MEMBER!

In these times, it's always good to have some Good News to share!

Abi and John are delighted to announce the safe arrival of Luke Humphries-Robertson.



Mum and Luke are doing well and his brothers are getting used to their new arrival. Prayers and blessings on the whole household!

SUNDAY READINGS & MESSAGE

The Bible Readings for this Sunday are Acts 7: 55-end and John 14: 1-14. I will post a brief video with some thoughts on the John reading on the St Denys Church Facebook Page, and on our new YOUTUBE Channel. Search in YouTube for **St Denys Church Stanford**, and then click on the SUBSCRIBE button so you will be notified when new videos are posted. Thanks to Nigel Archer for setting this up.

COVID-19 - SPIRITUAL HEALTH

LAST week I gave some pointers as to how we could ensure our mental health is strong, and develops over these months. On Tuesday, during our Church Coffee Morning via Zoom, I asked those joining to share any resources which helped them in their prayer, Bible study or worship life.

I've incorporated their thoughts, with other resources I've gathered, into a little booklet which I attach with this edition of FFN. It gives an introduction to how to start a **Daily Prayer Time**. How you might go about reading a passage from the **Bible every day**, and reflect on it, and a host of resources for **Christian music** to suit all tastes for worship at home. Well worth looking the resource links up to see if it could help you in these days of Lockdown.

ST DENNYS C-19 BOOK CLUB?

TALKING to lots of people lately, they've all been keen to share all sorts of books they have been reading. In the weekly Coffee Morning, we've been swapping notes on recommendations and I'm sure all of us will be the better for reading new genres which others have found helpful. But it got me thinking.....

For many people, attending a Bible Study, or Homegroup, and making a commitment to go one night every week is something, for all sorts of reasons, they can't commit to. But what about a St Denys Zoom Book Club, based around a Christian book?

I will suggest a few books and those who want to, can order the book and then we'd set a start date. Each week, we'd all read a chapter and then take part in a 30-40 minute (max) **Zoom Book Club** to share our thoughts on the chapter, and its application. The Zoom call would be during the daytime.

If you are interested, do drop me an email: vicar@stdenys.org

THANK YOU!

Thank you to those who have already responded to their personal finance letter, saying that you are switching from cash donations to a Bank Transfer, setting up a Standing Order, or sending a monthly cheque. Each year approx. £12,000 comes in via the collection bags. With our church buildings closed, unless people switch their giving method, the church's accounts will take a big hit!

The PCC meets on Tuesday (12th) to agree a revised 2020 budget in light of C-19. So if you haven't yet responded, please contact **Sue Penman** asap, so we have the most accurate information for our PCC discussions. Thank you!

With my love and prayers

Revd Paul Eddy, Vicar

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