



Friday Fellowship News No 18 14 August 2020

ALL IN GOD'S TIMING

BACK to work today (Friday) after my summer 'Staycation'.

Normally, by this stage of summer my mind is buzzing with all the plans we have for the church and future, and how all that may unfold. I usually return and, as the Wardens/Church Leadership Team will confirm, I'm firing off emails with all sorts of things we might do, ideas, plans etc for us to discuss – having had time to stand back and consider where we are, and where God might be taking us in the next steps.

Since March, some Christians have described 'lockdown' as the Church being in a period of 'exile'. Until now, I've not felt like that'd been the case for us here, as I've felt the Church has continued to be 'The Church' locally here. But now, I feel the 'exile' stage.

These next 12 months, humanly speaking, there were all sorts of exciting steps planned for the future growth of the Church in the parish. But with everything 'humanly speaking' so uncertain, it's as if we're on the edge - but not yet able to cross over into the land which God had called us to, and to His blessing - after 7 years of prayer and preparation working through the Parish Profile and Mission Action Plan into developing a new congregation reaching families not connected via usual forms of service.

And so, if we are in Exile, we would do well to remember the basics:

- nothing takes God by surprise
- the Church is Christ's, not ours
- God will still be at work - so we must be watching and joining in
- At the right time, God will lead us into the next phase of the church's life here, and if previous evidence, biblically, and personally is anything to go by - it won't exactly be as we thought, but different - and better!

And so I return to public ministry with a frustration, yes, but also with a renewed sense that in this 'Exile', I, and we, each have a time to draw closer to God, to be

willing to be transformed more into the image of his son and, prayerfully, expectantly, patiently, be watchful for the sign of His spirit at work amongst us.

Prob 16:9 says: **"A man makes his plans, but his steps are ordered by the Lord.."**

This verse has been coming back to me time and time again this year and so, I think I/we as a Church, need to take heed and trust a God.

Despite all our frustrations, and our desires to get on with things, God is not 'in lockdown', or on 'furlough' - He's at work!

So as members of the local church here, this coming term leading through to Christmas, let's each walk patiently, faithfully and expectantly as we allow God to order our steps - in His timing.

Avoid the Three Cs

Be aware of different levels of risk in different settings.

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Region

There are certain places where COVID-19 spreads more easily:

1

Crowded places
with many people nearby

2

Close-contact settings
Especially where people have close-range conversations

3

Confined and enclosed spaces
with poor ventilation

The risk is higher in places where these factors overlap.
Even as restrictions are lifted, consider where you are going and #StaySafe by avoiding the Three Cs.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Avoid crowded places and limit time in enclosed spaces

Maintain at least 1m distance from others

When possible, open windows and doors for ventilation

Keep hands clean and cover coughs and sneezes

Wear a mask if requested or if physical distancing is not possible

If you are unwell, stay home unless to seek urgent medical care.

ST DENYS – OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

PLEASE NOTE that these are **now 11am till 12noon** on Sundays (not 2-3pm), until we resume Public Worship again on September 6th. **Please remember to bring a Face Covering with you.** Many thanks to Nigel and the C-19 Task Group for their continued work on all these practical issues for us.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

THERE are some excellent mental health resources to be founded at <https://www.oxmindguide.org.uk/>. Do take time to search and see what's there – even if only to pass on to a friend in need.

VE DAY BELLS – SATURDAY 15 AUGUST

Whilst VE Day marked the beginning of the end of the Second World War, many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still involved in bitter fighting in the Far East.

75 years on, we continue to remember the contribution of all Allied Forces, including forces from across the Commonwealth, without who the liberation of Europe and Japan would not have been possible.

The Second World War had a profound impact on communities across the UK and the Commonwealth which continued long after the war came to an end. The challenges of leaving, longing for and returning home were experienced by many people at the time and are still faced by Service families today.

The Royal British Legion will commemorate VJ Day on Saturday 15 August and as part of the plans locally, a single bell at St Denys Church will be tolled 75 times at 11am.

You may wish to pause at 11am and remember all those who died and say a prayer for peace, not only in Europe, but throughout the world.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEEK

“God, please make my days useful, my nights restful, my home peaceful and my efforts fruitful.”

BIBLE READINGS & SUNDAY REFLECTIONS

I will upload a Reflection on the reding from proverbs to our YouTube and Facebook pages for Sunday. The Daily Bible readings for Morning prayer are as follows:-

Fri 14

Psalm 51
I Sam 22: 6-end
Acts 2; 37-end

Sat 15

Psalm 98
Isaiah 7: 10-15
Luke 11: 1-28

Sun 16

Prov 16:1-9
Rom 11: 29-32
Matt 15:10-18

Mon 17

Psalm 71
I Sam 24
Acts 3: 11-end

Tues 18

Psalm 73
I Sam 26
Acts 4: 1-12

Wed 19

Psalm 77
I Sam 28: 3-end
Acts 4: 13-31

Thur 20

Psalm 78
I Sam 31
Acts 4: 32-5:11

Fri 20

Psalm 55
2 Sam 1
Acts 5: 12-26

HEALTH UPDATE

THE day I started my summer holiday, my GP telephoned with news of an Xray I had taken as part of my treatment plan.

As you know, I've been recovering from a severely damaged Sciatic nerve, and just before lockdown, was back to work 95%. However, during lockdown, with no 'hands-on' physio, pain increased. The xray has shown an unexpected, underlying cause of the increased pain I've been in. I have Osteoarthritis in my right hip which, as I'm sure many of you will know, either from having it, or knowing someone who has, results in pain and referred issues – hence the muscle spasms etc I've been having. The good news is that now we know the underlying issue I can be referred to a specialist and, having already undergone one year of physio, we're hoping I can go straight to surgeon advice/action.

Obviously with OA, things don't generally improve on their own, so I'd be very grateful for prayers that I get to see a specialist soon and, whatever action she/he recommends, can be done soon to enable me to regain fully health and pain free again!

In God's planning (see article at start of this FFN) I will still be able to do 95% again of all vicaraging, until I get treatment. However, I am currently in talks with Revd Nigel Knight-Johnson, the recently retired vicar who helped out over recent months. He has said that he would be delighted to work with me here in ministry until I have an operation, or whatever.

With my love and prayers: **Revd Paul Eddy, Vicar, T: 01367 710267 E: vicar@stdenys.org**