

St Denys Church

Belonging / Serving / Blessing



20th March 2020

Dear Church Family,

This is a very important letter as it sets out everything you need to know about how St Denys will function in the weeks and months ahead. Please read this letter carefully and, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch.

We are living in extraordinary times. I'm told the last time the church closed its doors on a Sunday was 23 March 1208 when the English and Welsh bishops under orders from Pope Innocent III laid a general interdict on England and Wales. It's a stark reminder of how unprecedented these times are.

However, it is important to remember at such times that a church is not a building but its people. St Denys is NOT closed. We will be developing ways to enable us to continue to meet, enjoy fellowship together and sustain ourselves spiritually. In fact, I am excited about what lies ahead. I believe that we are going to grow as a church through this time and that the church that gathers again when this is all over will be stronger for it. I am confident that in all things God works for the good of those who love him (Romans 8.28) and so I am convinced that this time, difficult though it is in many ways, presents an exciting opportunity to deepen our relationship with Jesus as well as out fellowship with each other and to be salt and light to our wider community.

What changes are we going to see in the weeks and months ahead? These are my initial suggestions but we are feeling our way and things may change as we go.

A. SERVICES

The writer to the Hebrews urges his readers to "consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb 10.25). When a coal falls out of the fire it glows for a while but it soon begins to grow cold. We are no different. If we neglect to meet together it will have a significant impact on our spiritual lives. We must not stop meeting together but must keep stirring each other up to love and good works. How will we do that in the weeks ahead?

Sundays

St Denys Church Office, 7 Church Road, Lisvane, Cardiff, CF14 0SJ

office@stdenyschurch.org.uk ☎2075 2363

Registered Charity No: 1131310

9.30am Morning Prayer. On Sunday mornings we will say morning prayer together at 9.30am. The liturgy and the lectionary are attached to this email. This service will be broadcast via our Facebook page. Even if you are not able to join us online, please join in at home knowing that we are still praying together as a church. For details on how to join Facebook see page 8 below. If you would prefer a paper copy of the liturgy and lectionary please contact the church office and a copy will be sent out to you. We will be sending it out to all those not on email in any event.

11.00am Morning Praise. This service will be broadcast via Zoom. We will try to replicate all the usual elements of our service. Please do download Zoom and look out for an email inviting you to join this service in the coming days. Those who do not have access to Zoom will be able to access the meeting by phone and instructions will be provided on how to do that. For details on how to download Zoom see page 8 below.

7.00pm Evening Prayer. Bishop June is encouraging the diocese to join in prayer together each day at 7.00pm. On Sunday evenings we will say evening prayer together at 7.00pm. The liturgy and the lectionary are attached to this email. Our services will be broadcast live on Facebook.

Weekdays

7.00pm Evening Prayer. Bishop June is encouraging the diocese to join in prayer together each day at 7.00pm. Each evening our service of evening prayer will be broadcast live on Facebook.

Prayer

The church will be open for silent prayer from 12pm-2pm every day Monday to Saturday. We will need to have one member of the congregation present in the building at all times. If you would like to help out by being part of this rota please contact Rev Jim (revdjamesgriffiths@gmail.com) or Denise (office@stdenyschurch.org.uk).

We are hoping to establish an online prayer meeting using Zoom. Further details will follow.

Sermons

If you would like to listen to a sermon we are spoiled for choice with the amount of sermons now available online. Here are some places you might like to try:

<http://www.sermonindex.net> (a vast treasure trove of sermons by many great Christians)

<https://www.allsouls.org>

<http://www.gospelinlife.com> (Tim Keller)

<https://www.htb.org> (Nicky Gumbel)

<https://www.desiringgod.org> (John Piper)

B. GROUPS

Home Groups. Our home groups are made up of 8-12 people and provide an opportunity for fellowship, Bible study and prayer. Home groups will become a central part of our strategy providing for pastoral care and support. We will continue to meet in Home Groups on Wednesdays but will use the Zoom platform. Each Home Group should also create its own WhatsApp group to stay in touch with and support each other. For details on how to download WhatsApp see page 8 below.

If you are not yet in a home group, could I urge you to consider joining one? It may be that you can think of a group of people at church who are in a similar position and might like to join you. We need to organise this centrally so that we can ensure people are evenly distributed across the groups. If you would like to join or form a Home Group please contact Rev Jim (revdjamesgriffiths@gmail.com) or Denise (office@stdenyschurch.org.uk).

Congregational groups. If a home group just isn't your thing then could I encourage to become part of a Congregational Group. These will be of a similar size (8-12 people) and will be a means of providing the same pastoral care as a home group. Again, you may know a group of people who would like to join with you. If you would like to join or form a Congregational Group please contact Rev Jim (revdjamesgriffiths@gmail.com) or Denise (office@stdenyschurch.org.uk). Each Congregational Group should also create its own WhatsApp group to stay in touch with and support each other. Each Home Group should also create its own WhatsApp group to stay in touch with and support each other.

C. OTHER MEETINGS

PCC. Our PCC meetings will be held as per usual but using the Zoom platform. To allow people time to download Zoom in preparation for our first meeting. The PCC meeting due to be held on the 23rd March will now be held on the 30th March at 7.30pm. For details on how to download Zoom see page 8 below.

Church House Meeting. A meeting to discuss developments regarding church house was due to be held on 24th March. That meeting has been postponed but a report will be emailed out in due course. We will then invite questions by email and send out a global email answering all the questions asked.

D. STAYING IN TOUCH

Being isolated from friends, family and church is going to be difficult. Here are some ways we can keep in touch:

WhatsApp

In addition to the Home Group and Congregational Group WhatsApp groups we have created four larger WhatsApp groups to provide different forums for people to connect:

St Denys Info. This is a group for church staff, home group leaders etc to disseminate important information.

St Denys Community. This is a group for general community chat, encouragement etc.

St Denys Prayer. This is a group for asking for prayers and giving answers to prayers.

St Denys BIOY. This is a group for anyone who wishes to use the BIOY app/email to read through the Bible in One Year. If you have not yet joined but are thinking about it, now is a good time to join.

Please note that these groups are for members of St Denys. Other churches will be putting similar structures in place for their members. However, anyone who is not a member of any church but who would like to join is always welcome.

Facebook

Please also keep visiting the St Denys, Facebook page which we will be updating regularly.

Pastoral Visiting

I am afraid that clergy have been told that they are not allowed to conduct pastoral visits in person or administer home communion during this time but I am always available by phone or email.

E. CHILDREN & YOUTH

This is going to be a tough time for parents with many schools shutting and it is a very difficult time for those who were expecting to do GCSEs or A levels.

However, it is also a great opportunity for us to grow spiritually as families. The only downside of having such excellent provision for our children midweek and on Sundays is that family worship can sometimes take a back seat (that's certainly been the experience of our family). However, as parents we are primarily responsible for the spiritual nurture of our children. This is going to be a great time to grow as a family.

Sundays

Children's Fun Sheets. We will email a printable sheet for children to use as you engage together in our online 11.00am service. Each sheet will have an activity suitable to KS 1 and KS 2 that ties in with the same theme the adults are thinking about.

Midweek

The Mighty Boosh! An online 30 minute children's 'club' every Monday 4pm-4:30pm broadcast on Zoom featuring child-friendly, Bible-based fun and craziness with Ali that will bring a mighty Jesus boosh to your day! This resource will be suitable for school years 3-5 (year 6 can join in too if they want).

Family Bible Bites. The most important place to start spiritually investing in our children is together at home on a regular basis, as a time that suits your family unit. So, we will email 5 minute family-friendly Bible times to enable the whole family grow in God together

McJ Online. On Tuesdays 7.00-8.00pm we will continue to work through our Urban Saints material on Christian Foundations using the Zoom platform.

FNYC Online. We will email a link to a spiritual reflection each week. Young People can then access the material when it suits them.

Older Youth. Mondays 6.00pm-7.00pm we will have a forum on Zoom for our older youth to engage with. Each week we will discuss different things in the Bible, chat and do life together.

Additional Resources

Here are some additional resources that might help for your family:

- Ed Drew, *The Wonder of Easter: An Easter journey for the whole family.*
- Marty Machowski, *The Gospel Story Bible: Discovering Jesus in the Old and New Testaments*
- Sally Lloyd Jones, *The Jesus Story Book Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*

Or why not check out www.gominno.com. This is an online Christian Children's streaming service. My personal recommendation is the *What's in the Bible?* series which is absolutely superb but there's loads of good stuff on there.

There are loads of other good resources available from:

<https://www.10ofthose.com>

<https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk>

F. COMMUNITY

This is a difficult time for many people. There is a lot of anxiety, fear and panic. We want our community to know that they are not alone and we are here to help in any way we can, whether by:

- Picking up and deliver shopping
- Making a friendly phone call
- Posting Mail
- Collecting prescriptions
- Delivering urgent supplies
- Praying

We will be delivering leaflets to every house in Lisvane offering this support. If you would like to help deliver leaflets they will be available from the vicarage porch on Saturday.

If you would like to be involved in anyway way whether by doing someone's shopping, making a call, praying etc then please contact Jan Marsden (029 2076 4310) and Ali Jensen (07866 587316) who will be coordinating this work or email stdenyscoronavirusresponse@gmail.com (apologies for those who tried to email before but there was a typo in the address in the last email).

G. HARDSHIP FUND

The coming months are going to be very tough financially for some people within our congregation and our wider community, especially those who do not have permanent contracts, run their own businesses or are on low incomes. The writer to the Hebrews says "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." We want to be ready to alleviate an financial hardship as a church and to that end we are establishing a hardship fund. Any money given will be ring-fenced for this purpose and, when all this is over, if there is anything left in the fund it will be added to our charitable giving fund.

If you would like to donate to this fund, please do so by making your payment into the church account using the reference 'C-19 Hardship' and please contact our treasurer, Linda (lindaashm11@aol.com) to let her know that the payment has been made.

Account Name: The PCC of St Denys, Lisvane
Account Number: 65861695
Sort Code: 08-92-99

H. GIVING

Finally, although we won't be having any services in our church building our running costs remain essentially the same.

We won't be having any services we will not be able to take any collections during this time. However, our expenditure is unlikely to decrease.

Could we urge to you consider setting up a standing order or direct debit if you have not done so already? Further details can be found here: <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/clergy-and-members/gift-direct/> or you could speak to our treasurer Linda Ashmore (07812 486380; lindaashm11@aol.com). If you give via direct giving the whole amount is passed on to the church and does not go to the Diocese or the Representative Body.

We've referred to Hebrews a couple of times already, so let me close by reminding you of what the writer to the Hebrews reminded his readers as they faced comparable trials 2,000 years ago: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever! If we have given our lives to Him then there is nothing that we need fear, not even death itself.

You are all very much in my thoughts and prayers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Griffiths'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long horizontal stroke.

Revd Jim Griffiths
Vicar of Lisvane

Help! I'm a Zoom, Facebook, WhatsApp Newbie!

Don't worry! They are all very simple to use (which is why they have been so successful). To access each platform just follow the instructions below. Any problems please get in touch with Rev Jim (revdjamesgriffiths@gmail.com) or Ali (ali@stdenyschurch.org.uk).

Zoom

Zoom can be accessed at <https://zoom.us>. Click on the top right blue 'Sign in it's free' button to register. To download to your desktop click the Resources tab (top right) and click 'Download Zoom Client'. Zoom can also be downloaded for your phone at the App Store or in Google Play. When a church meeting takes place using Zoom we will send an email to you with a link to join the meeting.

Facebook

Facebook can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com>. Follow the onscreen instructions to create an account. Facebook can also be downloaded for your phone at the App Store or in Google Play. The St Denys Facebook Page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/stdenyschurch/> or simply by searching for St Denys Church, Cardiff.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp can be downloaded at <https://www.whatsapp.com>. If you click on the Download tab at the top of the screen you will be given the option of downloading WhatsApp for your phone or your Mac or PC.