

MAY  
2020

# SCATTERED SAINTS

In the light of the current lockdown, the closure of the church building, and the suspension of public services, we have been adapting the way we do church together. We want to keep you updated so have drawn together the scope of what we are currently doing, and some things we are working towards. In this season of uncertainty, we thank God for his unchanging faithfulness, and ask that he would grow us as a church through this time.

## SUNDAY SERVICES

There is a pre-recorded service, which premieres at 10.00am each Sunday, and can be accessed at any time after that via the church website. We have opted for this approach so as to be as accessible as possible to as many people, well aware that for some this is a big technological leap! While there are some limitations to this format, and it lacks the interaction of a livestream, it avoids some of the technical issues that can come in real time, and has enabled greater participation in the services. Watching a screen at home is a very different experience to meeting together in church, hence the online services are about half an hour long.

### Talk themes

Throughout May, we are in the gospels, walking with the disciples as they meet the risen Jesus, and following him to his ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We are also exploring a supplementary teaching series to consider some of the practical and theological issues which have arisen in these strange times. The Sunday teaching is supplemented by 'Bible Bites', short devotional videos available on our YouTube Channel.

### Music

Many of you will have been helped in worship by Chris and Ali Steynor on our Sunday morning broadcasts, and have appreciated the familiarity of 'our people' singing some of 'our songs'. In addition, the 'Sunday Services' page on the website has YouTube playlists for each of the congregations, which contain many of the songs that are known to us.

During lockdown a big focus for the music ministry is to create resources for our classical and contemporary repertoire that will enable us to more easily involve larger ensembles in our regular worship when we return to the church building. Lockdown provides a great opportunity to make progress on large events like the Good Friday special event for 2021, and Christmas services. Working on these now will make Chris more available to support the wider ministry team in other ways in the months ahead.

## **The Lord's Supper: Holy Communion**

Many of us are missing Holy Communion together, which has prompted some to ask whether we will be doing any online communion services. Generally speaking there are two types: (a) watching communion being celebrated by a presbyter (priest); and (b) church members participating online in a synchronised sharing of bread and wine.

The clergy team have thought a lot about this and have come to the conclusion that both these offerings fall short of what Holy Communion is intended to be. Type (a) is a ritual in which we spectate, the presbyter alone enjoying the meal. There is no real partaking, no 'communing' of those who watch along. Type (b) is somewhat preferable as there is fellowship of sorts, but it lacks physicality and the actual unity of the body of believers.

Both these offerings miss key elements of the Holy Communion service: the physical fellowship of The Peace and the unity in sharing the common bread and cup. But, crucially, both these offerings leave members behind, especially those excluded by lack of technology. When we are able to gather again, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper together. The pain of waiting, will make it a richer, sweeter meal to enjoy.

## **Children and Families**

We are very grateful to the Steynor family (especially Samuel and Theo!) for producing an online 'Children's Church' on Sunday mornings.

All Saints Kids has relaunched online on Sunday afternoons as we are partnering with St James' Muswell Hill, North London. This term is following a series through Nehemiah with drama, talks and crafts to do at home. Steph Sayers has taken a step back from her role as All Saints Kids Co-ordinator to allow her to focus on schooling at home. We hope to have news to share soon about a new Children's Pastor.

## **YOUTH**

Jonny Payne is keeping in touch with our young people through various communication platforms. He has created a website to help support them through this time — [www.throughthestorm.co.uk](http://www.throughthestorm.co.uk). This currently contains daily devotionals, but will, in time, also feature videos and other written pieces.

## **PRAYER**

Last Wednesday Hugh Bourne hosted All Saints' first ever whole church online prayer meeting using the video conferencing programme, Zoom. It was, in his words, "Complete chaos, but fantastic to have well over 100 people praying together!" We are planning another one for 20 May.

## SENIORS

People over 70 have now been in self-isolation for seven weeks, often on their own. Carrie Britton and her team have worked hard to keep in regular contact with every member of Tiger@Ten (over 55s group) by weekly telephone calls. This has been a much-appreciated ministry.

Carrie has established a Volunteer Support Group, which Simon Head is now co-ordinating. There are a good number of younger folks using their daily exercise to support Seniors. Carrie continues to organise other areas to support older people.

A small team is producing a fortnightly *Tiger@Ten Times*. This lively newsletter include puzzles, exercise notes, and creative ideas. It is being delivered to the 50+ people who prefer a printed copy, and a similar number receive it by email. The keystone of *Tiger@Ten Times* is the Thought for the Day, which points to the difference knowing Jesus makes to our lives. Some of these have been filmed by the contributors, and are available on All Saints' YouTube channel.

There is a small prayer group that prays through any issues that have arisen, asking that faith would grow in the lonely and anxious. We note the growing divide between individuals or homes that have access to digital resources, and those that still rely on telephone or postal contact. We will be trying to enable as many people as possible to access All Saints' services and other digital support. Please continue to pray for Seniors who may be in isolation longest.

## PASTORAL CARE

Antonia Easley has been seeking to find ways to maintain contact with the women she supports. This has included phone calls, messaging, WhatsApp support group chats, and writing cards and letters. For many women it is not easy to find time and space for calls. The Single Mums Support Group received a Mother's Day posy at the start of lockdown; Antonia has since had chats with them all, and been able to make practical help available. This week a fun letter went out to remind them that we are still thinking of them, and to suggest ways to stay connected.

The Parent Carers have their own WhatsApp group chat, which is used for sharing resources, prayer requests and encouragements. The Monday daytime Connect Group, which cares for a large number of women, has moved to Zoom on a Monday evening, and is meeting the needs for emotional and spiritual support.

More widely, the Staff Team have been ringing round the congregation to chat and pray with folks over the phone. We are working our way through the church directory, and are prioritising those who are most vulnerable, isolated or in need.

## CONNECT GROUPS

The need for social distancing and physical isolation has greatly increased the importance of Connect Groups as a key way in which people can stay connected. The Groups are experimenting with different ways of meeting virtually, and video conferencing is proving to be a reasonable substitute for face-to-face contact. We have had one online meeting with all the Leaders, and another is planned soon to see how things are progressing. It has been encouraging to hear of some Groups meeting more frequently than before, and that generally more people have been attending online.

There are a healthy number of the church family integrated in Connect Groups already, but we would love to see more people join, not only to stay connected socially, but to grow spiritually during this time. If you would like to join a Group, even if only for the duration of the lockdown, please drop Stuart Silk a line (483547 / [stuart@lindfield.info](mailto:stuart@lindfield.info)).

## OFFICE

Steve Norris and Sarah Hagger are continuing to staff the Church Office either remotely or in person, from 9.00am–1.00pm, Monday to Friday. They can be contacted using the Office phone number (482405) and their work emails ([stephen.norris@lindfield.info](mailto:stephen.norris@lindfield.info) / [sarah@lindfield.info](mailto:sarah@lindfield.info)).

## FINANCE

The lockdown has had an impact on church finances with no cash offerings and reduced PCC fees. However, the majority of our giving is received by regular standing order, and there are cost savings that come as the church rearranges its activities. We currently have good reserves, which means our church finances are resilient. We remain confident that we will meet our budgeted expenditure for 2020.

If you would like to give, either regularly or as a one-off payment, to support the church's ministry at this time, the church bank account details for online giving are: Sort code: 20-49-76 / Acc no: 90408913. If you would prefer to make a donation by cheque, please send it to the church office, marked for the attention of the Church Accountant.

Looking ahead, we need to consider prayerfully how to set out our stewardship objectives for 2021 and determine which areas of the church's activities should be prioritised. This will depend largely on how long the church remains closed, and the extent to which a wider economic downturn impacts our giving.

If you have any specific finance queries, please contact the treasurer, Rob Kingdom (07714 226700 / [rkingdom36@gmail.com](mailto:rkingdom36@gmail.com)).