

Dear All Souls Members and Friends,

All Souls and Covid-19: Business UnUsual

Greetings in the name of the One whose love remains constant and steady amid the swirls and eddies of uncertainty.

Ironically, our small numbers are a blessing in the “new normal”, so we intend to continue “being and doing church” incorporating all new health and safety practices for responsible worship and fellowship.

Wednesday and Sunday services will continue for the present because they do not exceed 100 people (averaging about 13).

This Sunday there will be one service at 9.00am with Brenton providing music as usual, followed by the Vestry meeting.

Archbishop Geoff writes:

“I think we should try to keep Sunday services going in some form bearing in mind the advice on hygiene, social distancing, food handling etc. ... Our community is entering a particularly difficult time and this is the time we should be open for business offering opportunity for connection, prayer, support and the gospel. Our churches need to be open and active to welcome people who might want to connect with God and community in this difficult time.

In all we do let's be constant in prayer and encourage the people of God to do the same.”

The Diocese has encouraged parishes to go ahead with Vestry meetings this Sunday to ensure the stable administration of the church. For this to continue, we need our new parish council to be properly elected.

To hold a Vestry meeting we require a quorum of 15 people, so I do encourage those of you able to do so, to attend please; it would be a shame to have to reschedule Vestry due to the lack of a quorum.

The Pastoral Assistant, Elizabeth Westphalen, and I are available to help with shopping, to do “safe visiting” or other tasks or chores, so please do call us, that is part of why we are here:

Elizabeth 8362 5238

Julia 0476 126 694

Safety protocols

To confirm protocols already in place and identify new ones:

- Wash/sanitise your hands regularly, cough or sneeze into your elbow and throw used tissues in the rubbish timeously
- If you are not feeling well, have vulnerable health or have had contact with someone who you think may have the virus, please stay at home to protect yourself and others.
- Communion will be offered in one kind only (bread), which conveys the full blessing that God bestows in the sacrament. Everyone involved will use cleansing hand wipes before handling the host, and afterwards.

New arrangements

- If you are concerned, please feel free to wear gloves and a mask
- Hymn and prayer books will be wiped with cleansing wipes before the 9.00am service on Sunday. **PLEASE THEN TAKE A PRAYER BOOK AND A HYMN BOOK HOME WITH YOU.** When you come to church again, bring them with you. This will prevent the need to disinfect books regularly, and it will allow you to use them to worship at home, if you are not able to attend church services.
- The church is big enough for people to sit at least the suggested 1,5m away from others
- Before you leave, please wipe down the areas of the pews that you touch
- Sharing the Peace can be done with smiles and eye contact – no need to approach others to do the “elbow-bump”
- Avoid getting close to others to receive Communion – approach the altar individually
- The Collection plate will no longer be passed around: Please place your offering in the collection plate as you enter or leave church.
- Those who count money are encouraged to wear gloves to avoid touching their faces and to wash their hands thoroughly afterwards

Prayer for a Pandemic – Author Unknown (edited)

Lord,

May we who are merely *inconvenienced*
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May those of us who have *no risk factors*
Remember those who are most vulnerable.

May those who have the *luxury of working from home*
respect and support those who must choose between preserving their health and paying their rent.

May we who have *flexibility to care for our children* when their schools close
remember those who have no options.

May we who have to *cancel our trips*
remember those who have no place to go.

May we who are *losing our investments*
remember those who have no money to invest.

May we who settle in for a *quarantine at home*
remember those who have no home.

During this time when we cannot wrap our arms around each other physically, help us each to find ways to be your loving embrace to our neighbours. **Amen**

Be aware. Be supportive. Be accepting. Be kind.

May God bless us all in these uncertain times.

Julia

Rev'd Julia Denny-Dimitriou
All Souls St Peters