

08 May 2020.

Dear All Souls Members and Friends,

I greet you in the name of the One whose love remains constant and steady amid uncertainty and change.



Greetings to all the mothers, stepmothers, mothers-in-law, godmothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers for Mother's Day on Sunday 10 May. Special thoughts also go to those to whom – for many and varied reasons – it is not an occasion for joy or celebration: "Be gentle with yourself".

A poem for this time:

Peace be with you - Jeff Shrowder, based on John 20: 19-31

In these virus times
life is reordered, anxious,
indoors and afraid.

We "zoom" our study,
worship on-line and in print:
a different way.

We venture outside:
groceries, a walk, fresh air,
take-away coffee.

Our congregation,
isolated but gathered:
Jesus in our midst.

We gather in twos,
saying what needs to be said,
keeping our distance.

This Sunday is the seventh that the church has been closed for worship. I am pleased that many parishioners report that they are managing fine, but these are still strange times, for which none of us were prepared. In the article attached, the writer quotes an expert on the psychology of isolation: "*Take it easy on yourself, ... The next few months may be hard. All things that would energise people and assist them to function effectively have been taken away, so this is a genuinely hard thing to go through. 'Anybody who is experiencing anything difficult is a normal reaction to an abnormal environment.'*"

I commend the article to you and that sage advice: “Take it easy on yourself ...”

What the article does not cover is something that our faith encompasses:

*“All healthy religion shows you what to do with your pain, with the absurd, the tragic, the nonsensical, the unjust and the undeserved—all of which eventually come into every lifetime.” - **Richard Rohr***

This virus-induced isolation and separation has caused pain for many people: Loss, bereavement, grief, name it what you will. Naming our pain helps to reduce its power and its hold on us. I encourage us all to recognise, name and talk to God about the losses we have incurred, and will continue to suffer in whatever form: Relationships, quality of lifestyle, connection, Communion, choice, purpose, loved ones, and so on. Please let Elizabeth, one of the Wardens, or me know if we can do something to help, even just to talk, which can be a helpful way to identify and mitigate loss.

We will be able to gather to worship together again eventually in a post-isolation age. When we do that, in addition to celebrating a new beginning, it will be important to recognise the pain of the COVID experience with a suitable ritual of some kind. Please let me know if you have any ideas about what might be helpful to do in this regard.

Worship recommendations from our Organist, Brenton Brockhouse

I asked Brenton to recommend some worship resources that incorporate quality church music, which is dear to many people. Thanks to Brenton who writes: “There are many locations on Facebook (some of which link to YouTube) that are relevant to our separated worship.

- St Peter’s Cathedral is my first port of call where their usual printed order of service is supplemented by links to lovely music.
<https://www.facebook.com/StPetersCathedralAdelaide/>
- My next favourite is from Pilgrim Uniting Church Adelaide which has beautiful (almost Anglican) music performed by their choir and soloists.
<https://www.facebook.com/pilgrimorganandchoir/>
- Because of my brother Grant’s connection with Peterborough Cathedral in the UK I also check in on their Sunday service which is around 7pm our time. This is more like a normal service with pre-recorded music.
<https://www.facebook.com/PeterboroughCathedral/>.

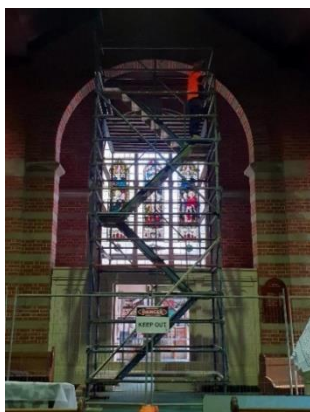


Noon prayer pause

I continue to ring the All Souls’ bell every day at 12pm and 9am on Sundays and posted notes about this in the post boxes of the Church’s neighbours as far as I thought the bell could be heard. This has generated some unexpected connections with locals who stop to talk or come to look at the windows. I encourage all of us to continue praying at noon every day for all those infected and affected by the pandemic.

Church buildings

North arch repaired



Skilled masons have repaired and strengthened the north arch. However, they warn that with the age of the building, soil movement and cracking, more bricks and plaster are likely to fall, so we need to expedite the repair and restoration of the church building.

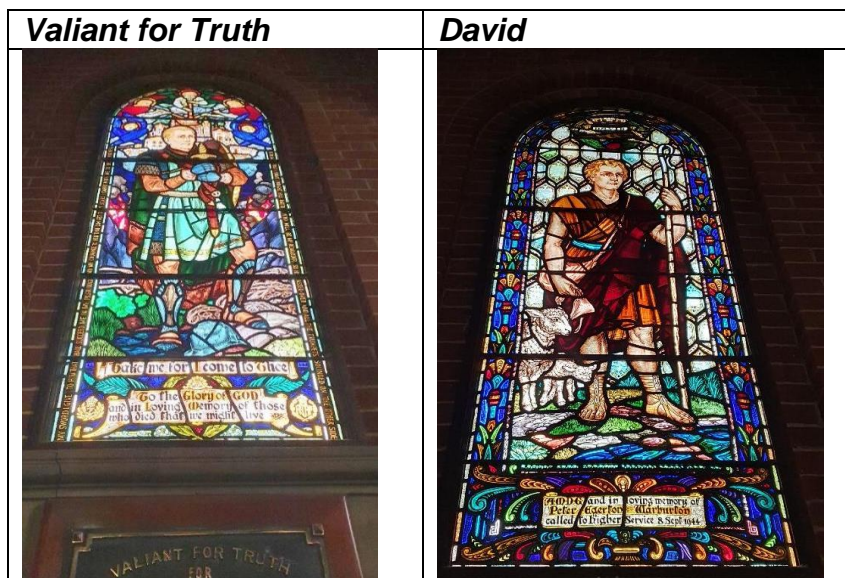
The roof...



The urgency of addressing the church building is underscored by the fact that the roof seems to have sprung significant new leaks near the high altar and in the bell tower. Great thanks to Colin McLeay, the People's Warden, who has attended to these diligently and is in touch with the heritage roof specialist on behalf of the parish.

Buckets and tarp to catch the leaks from the roof...

Repair of *David* and *Valiant for Truth* windows



Thanks to the generosity of parishioner Didy McLaurin and her sister, Joan Lyons, the two most “at-risk” windows in the West wall of the church are shortly to be removed, repaired and returned to their places in new frames.

The Parish Council has chosen a contractor from three quotations provided by reputable companies. The Architect of the National Trust is familiar with all three contractors and is comfortable with the Council's decision. Stakeholders like the Diocese, National Trust and local Council are being informed appropriately. Please speak to me if you have any queries.

Community News

Celebrating 72 years of marriage

My parents, Colin and Maurine, celebrate their 72nd wedding anniversary on Friday 8th May. Mum is in dementia care and Dad needs high level medical care so they cannot be together but for Dad, this is a special and emotional day as he remembers their life together. He misses his soulmate of 80 years - they met at high school and they are now both 95. Please keep them in your prayers as we celebrate an amazing milestone. – Sue Crees

A social distancing reflection from Judith Brown

There is a restaurant called *The Nest* in the Woolworths complex at Walkerville. They have had to close both the inside and outside areas but are still open for coffee so people tend to take their drink and sit on the low stone wall (at the required distance) which separates the restaurant from the footpath. I was sitting there with my daughter when a woman I know came past and stopped to talk. She said that her husband had passed away a few years ago. I told her that Noel Coward had written a play in which someone said a woman had passed away and the other character replied, "She didn't pass away, she didn't pass over, she didn't pass under, she **died**". The woman to whom I was talking laughed and went on her way, my daughter went to buy something in Woolworths. A woman who as sitting at the required distance, leaned towards me and said, "I always say passed away". I am perfectly sure this would never have happened before but because the virus has isolated people so much they are now reaching out to perfect strangers and it will be interesting to see whether this continues when it's all over.

May God bless us all in these uncertain times.

Julia

Rev'd Julia Denny-Dimitriou
All Souls St Peters

