

19<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

COVID-19 Survival Plan

Dear Parishioners of Mittagong Anglican Church,

Our Archbishop Glenn Davies made a public announcement yesterday (18.03.2020) which included the following thoughts:

*“In light of the Prime Minister’s announcement this morning, banning enclosed gatherings in excess of 100 people, I have decided that the Anglican Church in Sydney should suspend all public church gatherings until further notice.*

*We are encouraging all our churches to consider providing their services online or by other communication methods. We shall make every effort to care for our church communities and the wider public, especially those who are isolated and vulnerable.*

*God’s love for all people has not diminished, nor his sovereignty over his world. Therefore, I urge all Christians to continue to trust in God’s goodness and mercy in this crisis, and to show Christ’s love to those affected”.*

May we also be encouraged by these words from Joshua 1:7-9

*7 “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

We can also ponder Corrie Ten Boom’s words: *“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God”.*

Keep reassuring references such as these handy, maybe on your fridge.

The changes we need to make in how we interact with each other means that many of you may be feeling quite anxious. Be assured that your church family will still be a very real support group for you. Please contact us through this time if you need help/reassurance with **anything**. On the practical level, keep to your normal routines as much as possible, and look after yourself (good diet, sleep, exercise, bible and prayer time), as they will all help to alleviate anxiety.

Much thought is going into how Mittagong Anglican Church can provide spiritual input when that can no longer be done through normal church services. The following steps outline what will happen.

1. From this Sunday there will be no Sunday Services at our church until further notice. We will however begin live-streaming a Sunday morning service. A link and further information

will be sent each week on Friday. The service will then also be available on our website and our brand-new YouTube channel.

2. We would like to encourage you to continue meeting in your Bible Study groups, but please observe correct social distancing. You may choose to meet together on Sunday mornings to share in the service as well as at your normal time during the week. If you are not in a Bible Study group, we would encourage you to meet up with others from our church on a Sunday morning and do church together.

3. We have made up a handout for our members to take between 10-20 each (if they want) and leave with neighbours. The idea is for us as a loving church to offer support, prayer, assistance for people in our community who have self-isolated. This is a private arrangement between the person who gives the leaflet and the person who responds - nothing needs to be recorded by church or for church.

4. All Sunday Kids material will be available each week in a shared Google Drive folder. The link to this folder will be in the weekly email containing the service link. Each week there will only be the material for that week in the folder along with discussion questions for parents to do at home.

5. Rochelle and her leadership team are working together to come up with creative solutions for all our kids and youth ministries over the next few months. If you have kids or youth, keep your eyes peeled for more information.

6. Matthew will be providing a small weekly devotion which you may like to tune into each week. More details to come.

7. Please maintain your regular financial partnership in the gospel with us. Many of you already use electronic transfer of funds, which is helpful. If you normally use cash, please consider using cheques, or giving either in the home groups or at the bank itself. We are considering the best options and will let you know soon.

This looks like it will be a long-term situation and so we want to encourage you to continue to meet together in small groups, continue to share Jesus with others and continue to lovingly care for others in our community.

Should you ever need to chat we can be contacted by phone or email (please leave a message):

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