



Dear Parishioners

I am writing to update you on our parish's actions in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Diocesan/Parish Priorities

The Anglican Diocese of Wellington has three priorities during this pandemic:

- 1 To connect with all parishioners through its central website and emails www.movementonline.org.nz
- 2 To connect parishioners in small groups via telephone and/or videoconferencing for social and spiritual support
- 3 To reach out to people in our neighbourhoods (outside our parish community) to support any who would welcome connection or who have particular needs we could help to meet.

This week we are phoning all members of the parish to check how they are doing, help them sign up to Diocesan emails coming from Movement Online, and encourage them to join a local group for social and spiritual support.

Like many adverse events, this pandemic also offers us new opportunities. Can we connect more deeply with one another and our community in a way that will be life-giving for us and for others? There has already been a very positive response in the parish to the creation of small groups, and we are hoping that many parishioners will connect with others in this way.

Parish Vestry

As I informed you in my last email, parish AGMs were cancelled by the Diocese, as a safety precaution. This raised the question of what Vestry should do when several people wanted to stand down from Vestry and we therefore needed the participation on Vestry of other parishioners. At our Vestry meeting on 24 March, we decided to co-opt onto Vestry all those whose nominations for Vestry had been received by the due date (Friday 20 March), and to accept the resignations of those who were not planning to continue on Vestry. Accordingly, Vestry now consists of the Vicar (Chair), Mark Stone (Vicar's Warden) and Dan Reeves (People's Warden), Michael Beauchamp (Treasurer), Richard Perry (All Saints representative), and Elaine Mosley, Fiona Strachan, Allen Sutton and Ellen Yarrow. We farewelled and thanked for their participation on Vestry Jacques du Plessis, Liz Friend, Kathy Ingram, Graeme Messenger, Wendy Shaw, Eddie Taylor and Amanda Wills.

At our Vestry meeting we also appointed our Parish Administrator, Raewyn Berkahn as Pandemic Emergency Leader for the parish. The Pandemic Emergency Leader co-ordinates our parish's pandemic response.



Parish Finances

Like other organisations and individuals in our country, the parish will find this pandemic financially challenging. During the lockdown, we will not receive the usual envelope and cash offerings, nor income for usage of the church and hall. All our fixed costs (mainly staffing) remain however. If you generally give by envelope scheme or cash offerings and are able to forward this money to a bank account while the church doors are closed, please deposit your offerings in the following BNZ account for St James Church: 02-0528-0045901-00.

Parish Continues to Operate

During the pandemic lockdown, the parish is still operating, with our staff working from home. If you want to contact a staff member, some helpful contact details are:

Raewyn Berkahn (Administrator and Pandemic Emergency Leader)

Email parish.admin@stjames.net.nz

Tel. 021 2452677

Rev Peter Bengé (Vicar)

Email vicar@stjames.net.nz

Tel. 569-7685

or, if you need a priest urgently

Tel. 021 2541354

Margaret Hamilton (Reception)

Email reception@stjames.net.nz

Andrew Spence (Youth Minister)

Email youth.team@stjames.net.nz

Tel. 0212226474

Guy and Summer Benton (Children & Families Ministers)

Email guy.k.benton@gmail.com

Tel. 02041304283

Email summer.a.benton@gmail.com

Tel. 02041304285

You can always find further information about what is happening in the parish by going to our parish website: www.stjames.net.nz or our Facebook page:

@angparishlh.

What about Worship?

- On Sundays, we are invited to go to the Diocesan service, which is live-screened at 10am. A link to that service can be found in the email from the Diocese you will receive by signing up to Movement Online (movementonline.org.nz/signup/) and on the <http://movementonline.org.nz/> website. Some children's resources (and soon other worship materials) can



also be found on our parish's newly created YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSpbMc9SEQvHk0E-WUJfUGQ>

- During weekdays you are invited to join other parishioners in morning prayer (8am) and evening prayer (5pm) via the Zoom video conferencing app. First get the free version of Zoom by typing this link into your browser
<https://zoom.us/j/9753574113>
- In addition, some of the small groups in the parish will function as house churches and might have their own Sunday worship options via Zoom.

Safety

Remember to keep safe and keep others safe during this lockdown period (see www.covid19.govt.nz for instructions on how to do this). In particular:

- Stay home as much as you can, and if you need support, ask your parish staff or others for what you need.
- Be kind to others in your home. Check in regularly by phone with people in your wider social network.
- If you have to go out for food or exercise, make your journey relatively brief and take the recommended precautions for physical distancing etc.
- Make sure to keep washing your hands.

These are extraordinary times, but God is an extraordinary God. Let us keep working together with others, trusting that God will bless every good thing we seek to do. Let us pray for our leaders and all the essential workers continuing to serve our community. And let us not allow ourselves to get too troubled and anxious. St Paul advises us "Do not worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

With my prayers for you all

Peter Bengé
Vicar