

Vicar's Letter #18: 18 September, 2020

What's happening in the parish?

Dear Parishioners

Today I would like to highlight three items of parish news.

Stewardship Sunday

In our "Kingdom of God" preaching series, this Sunday's theme is "A kingdom of generosity". This will be our Stewardship Sunday for this year, on which we reflect particularly on our giving of money to God's work through the local church. On Stewardship Sunday it is customary for the parish to provide a stewardship pack, containing a pledging form, a letter from the Wardens etc, for all parishioners. Since we are not worshipping in church this Sunday, we plan to get your stewardship pack to you at a later date.

Covid-19 has made life extremely difficult for some people, and the Vestry acknowledges that not everyone will be able to increase or even maintain their level of giving. That makes it all the more important that those who can give generously maintain or increase their giving to the parish, so that together we can continue to provide for the needs of the parish and its mission to our community.

In various parts of the New Testament, followers of Christ are encouraged to give with a generous heart, regularly, and in proportion to our income, so that God's blessing to us is passed on as a blessing to others.

All-in Zoom meeting:

There are lots of benefits in meeting as small groups of believers in people's homes. But most if not all of us are also missing being together as members of a larger church congregation. So as a way of catching up with others in our parish community, we are organising another "All-In Zoom Gathering" this Sunday at 3.30pm. This won't be a worship service, but a gathering with some opportunities to interact and to pray, and to hear from a range of people in the parish. Please take the time to join others in the parish this Sunday at 3.30pm. The Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82820568638?pwd=UTNxMk95N21wVzhrQIN6Y0t4c2RxZz09>

Or you can phone in on (04) 886 0026 and use the following to access the Zoom meeting:

Meeting ID: 828 2056 8638

Passcode: 465419

Personal news

On a more personal note, I have some news to announce about Helen's and my intention to work overseas. Initially, when we said that we were actively exploring a call to work in Tunis, there was no Covid-19 pandemic around the world. Since then six months have passed while we have waited for clarity on when we could plan to go. The Bishops in Egypt have understandably been eager for us to come and fill the position as soon as possible, but we still do not think it is a suitable time for us to make plans to leave New Zealand. So with some regret we have decided not to keep the Bishops waiting any longer and have informed them that we will not be going to Tunis. This notification allows the Bishops to engage someone else for the position of Chaplain of the English-speaking congregation at St George's in Tunis.

After the struggle we have had to make this decision, we hope to pause from major life decisions for a little while! We are very grateful to everyone who has been praying for us over the last six months.

With my prayers and warm greetings in Christ,

Peter Bengé

Vicar

(Anglican Parish of Lower Hutt)