



Holy Trinity, Hartshill

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PASTORAL LETTER 5

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St Peter's Galley Common.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

During this time of transition where we are no longer in lockdown and where those shielding are advised that they no longer need to shield but are cautious in their 'returning to as normal as is possible,' we recognise that for many of us it means that we are still not able to all worship together as we all hope for. Whilst this saddens us because our maximum numbers for worshipping together remain restricted, we continue to acknowledge and respect everyone's preferences as to whether we choose to worship at church or not. For those who have been able to attend our services in person, we know that it is a very different experience from the normal pre-Covid time, and we wish to assure everyone that our primary aim is to keep everyone as safe as is possible as we worship together. For those who remain worshipping from their homes, we are so glad that we are able to worship together in spirit and we know we continue to live in times where it is not all that easy for everyone, and especially for those of you who live alone. In Ephesians 4, Paul exhorts the "saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus" (chapter 1:1) to be practical in unity (of the church): "I therefore....., beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

We want to say a grateful thank you to everyone who continues to make efforts to pray for and be in touch with others, both in Hartshill and Galley Common, reminding you all again that the church is indeed the people of God, loving God and loving one another, and we know you have all been proving that in spades. Thank you for your love and compassion to one another through these unprecedented times and to all those who have offered others a place in church in advance of them.

As we seek to be the church in unity together in the coming months, we hope that you feel a continued sense of mutuality as we share our services and prayer resources in whatever capacity as St Peter's and Holy Trinity church communities together. From September we will begin a new sermon series on Communion within our services and this is supported by a Sermon Series document that we will be emailing out later. Please be encouraged to read and follow the document on a weekly basis and we hope that you will find it engaging, informative and comforting as we explore what it means to be in communion together as a church family in whatever way that may look like during the coming months as we explore the wider context and content of the communion service.

We'd like to end by encouraging you all to remain in touch – especially as the situation is ever changing and thank you for your patience as we continue to love and serve one another in Christ's name and for the glory of God.

Sharon & Heather

Moving forward....together..... an update

We still cannot all meet together at the same time and so as mentioned last time we will continue to send out the services each week by email alongside our seasonal worship packs and pastoral letters by post....as we are trying not to lose anyone along the way.

We have now also started to speak to our baptism families that were put on hold during lock down and although restricted by numbers and rules – God’s grace isn’t limited for these important life marking services – which we will be re-introducing again soon.

We are also looking at how and when we will be including communion (bread only) again in our gathered services. As you can imagine it will take some careful thought on our part in order to make it covid secure and patient grace on your part as we take a bit of extra time to prepare for it. We will let you know as and when we will re-start this and send out an appropriate briefing document as per our risk assessment guidelines – so that you will know what to expect.

Sundays are starting to find a new rhythm ...

Hartshill continues to start at the same time **every** week (including 2nd Sundays) and **so now always begin at 10am** regardless of which Sunday of the month it is. It is **important to let us know if you want to attend as we need to book you in.** We have a regular core but we do still have spaces most weeks and thanks to the kindness of others have people willing to rota in and out to allow others to attend. So PLEASE do let us know if you want to come back to the building if you haven’t already.

Galley Common continues with their familiar 10.30 starts. Because of the movable chairs and size of the congregation we can fit most of our St Peter’s congregation in every week – but it is helpful to let us know if there are any changes to your plans so we can seat people as safely and as efficiently as possible and help us assess what spaces we have for visitors.

Regardless of which church you attend – along with the services sent out by email (& post) - we all will (at least for the moment) continue to follow the same readings, themes and prayers each week. As part of this we are lighting a single, solitary candle each week as we start our services to remind ourselves of unity and hope both within and between our congregations in church and at home. You are all remembered and prayed for.

Lastly - just a reminder that this free resource is also available – especially helpful if you are not on line



Daily Hope is a free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers launched by the Church of England. It has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind. 0800 804 8044

With our continued thoughts and prayers.

God bless <><

Heather & *Sharon*