

FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

COVID-19 UPDATE

We are in unprecedented times, times when we need the foundations of our faith provided by our church community. However, as the lockdown continues, the Churchwardens and Acting Rector are continuing to monitor the new requirements announced by the government and also from our Archbishop. In that regard, we welcome the continuity provided by the decision of the Diocese to ask Archbishop Glenn to defer his retirement until March 2021, which he has agreed to do. In line with new emergency provisions, the Churchwardens have now instigated these additional restrictions of gatherings:

- 1) There will be no further small group “in person” meetings held at the church. This will include all services, Bible study groups, the Op Shop, playgroup and Thursday night table tennis. Private hiring of the church hall for exercise or other groups will also cease with immediate effect.
- 2) The working bee at Rectory scheduled for Saturday, 28 March has been cancelled.
- 3) The Archbishop has also indicated that church groups should no longer meet at private homes as an alternative to church premises. This, in effect, means that all meetings and services will now be conducted on-line. Please refer to the St. John’s website for details of these.
- 4) Weddings and funerals will no longer be conducted at the church except in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Acting Rector and Churchwardens and then only with five and ten people, respectively, including the priest.

Archbishop Glenn, in his letter to all church leaders on Monday night, said:

“I want to assure you that we are doing everything possible to facilitate the ongoing ministry of our churches during this time. I am very encouraged by the teamwork and gracious support of one another which I see across the diocese.

I thank God for the rich talents with which he has gifted our churches as I think of the way you all, so quickly, met the challenges of providing virtual meetings when we could not gather face to face. Well done to all who enabled the technology of live streaming to beam into our lounge rooms across the diocese. I am particularly encouraged by the reports that so many people who were not churched watched our meetings avidly ...”

Quoting Philippians 4, the Archbishop said, *“Let us not be overwhelmed by the challenges ahead. Let us, with Paul, bring our requests to God, confident in the gift of peace that he gives to his children in an anxious world.”*

SERVICES ON-LINE

The Acting Rector and Churchwardens have put together an on-line broadcast facility via Facebook (you don't need to be a member of Facebook to access) so you can partake in the on-line service conducted live in the church Sunday mornings at 9:30AM (without a congregation). The links are available to this and other national and international services on our parish website at www.stjohnsgordon.org.au.

OFFERTORY AND CASH FLOW

The Churchwardens are this week closely monitoring our cash flow and revising budgets and commitments for 2020. We will keep you informed of the financial position as the situation evolves in the future.

It is, however, critical, that we maintain our income with the closing of the Op Shop and the potential loss or postponement of the Fête and Raffle so we will be dependent on members of the parish who are able, reviewing their level of financial support for the remainder of 2020. There is evidence this is already occurring and for that we should all be very thankful and appreciative. Given our commitments this year, as we operate on a breakeven budget with a number of one-off expenses such as storm repairs, rectory refurbishment and the search for our new Rector, we would prayerfully request that you review and continue with or increase your weekly giving as your personal circumstances allow, bearing in time the current unusual and difficult situation we find ourselves in.

If you are in the habit of making your offering by envelope or by cash, the Churchwardens would ask you to make your weekly offertory either by changing to direct debit or alternatively, by transferring your weekly offertory to the St. John's account at:

Name: St John's Church Gordon

BSB: 032083

A/C: 810231

PASTORAL CARE—TELEPHONE CONTACT

“HAVE A YARN!” (HAY!)

The “Have A Yarn” project is underway and thanks go to Cynthia Keithly in particular for overseeing this and making most of the initial calls. Over 55 senior members of the parish were individually contacted last week to make sure they were well and not in need of any assistance or worried about the current situation. The Churchwardens are conscious there is a large number of our
(continues on Page 4)

parish family for whom the Sunday services are an important time of social contact in their week. For that reason, this contact list will be updated and ongoing contact made with those on it. If you would like to be part of this program, either ringing a few people each week or would like to keep in touch each week just to “have a yarn” or if you need help with anything within our ability that can’t be done by our friends and family, please let Cynthia or Meg know. Reach Cynthia at pastoralcares@stjohnsgordon@gmail.com, Meg at 9498 2744 or office@stjohnsgordon.org.au. Alternatively, feel free to contact any of the Churchwardens at any time, using the contact details on the back of the pew bulletin. All calls will, of course, be in confidence.

HANDYMAN MEN’S “HELPING US GROUP” (HUGS)

As advised last week, we are proposing to set up a new men’s group to be known as the Helping Us Group, geared around carrying out odd jobs for those elderly or disabled parishioners who need our help. This will be to carry out small repairs, maintenance tasks such as light bulb or tap washer changes, assembling purchased kits for furniture or appliances or even driving tasks. This will not include licensed plumbing work (other than simple tasks such as mentioned above), nor will we allow working at heights or other work for which a WHS ticket is required.

As soon as we have a viable group of willing handymen who have put their names forward, we will work out the details, so if you are handy, have a few tools and would be prepared to help out on a rostered or shared basis from time to time, let Meg McDonald or Chris Russell know. This is an exciting and much-needed service to our parish and we would urge you to consider it as a wonderful (and enjoyable) volunteer opportunity.

Please contact the church office or any of the Churchwardens at any time to discuss your personal situation if you wish. The Acting Rector and Churchwardens thank you for your patience and enthusiastic support and ask that you continue to pray for God’s guidance through this testing time for our world.

The Churchwardens
Chris Russell AM
JK Seo
James Winter