

The Rector's Weekly Message

A Message from Anglican Aid: [editor's note: this Message was updated on 30 August to include corrected information sent by Anglican Aid.]

The recent weeks have reminded us again that we are living in a broken world, which is groaning for Christ's return.

As the Delta variant of COVID spreads across the developing world, many people throughout the world, including our ministry and development partners, are facing extreme suffering.

Anglican Aid is launching a new [Worldwide COVID-19 Relief Appeal](#).

This appeal will support our Christian partners as they care for COVID patients, by providing ventilators, oxygen machines, medicine, protective equipment, emergency food relief, and more.

In the past 18 months, we have supported partners in 14 nations, including India, Nepal, and Pakistan. We don't know where the next COVID crisis will take hold, but with over 130 Christian partners in 35 countries, we are well placed to rapidly send aid to emerging hotspots, through believers on the ground.

Presently, we are focusing relief efforts in Myanmar, where recent political turmoil has exacerbated the difficulties in treating COVID patients. Through Anglican Aid, your church can partner with the Church of the Province of Myanmar, which has set up emergency clinics that require urgent support for medicines and equipment.

I know this is a difficult time for all of our churches, with restrictions and lockdowns. Anglican Aid's mission is to help you as you strengthen your church, by giving opportunities to partner with the global church in prayer and support. I pray that the partnership with those in need would be a great comfort to your congregation members in their own challenges and isolation.

[Click here for resources including prayers, powerpoint slide and newsletter text.](#)

Afghanistan Update

Anglican Aid is currently developing plans together with various partners to provide for those who have managed to escape by plane or over the border into Pakistan. We will keep you updated and will launch an appeal when we have greater certainty. In the meantime, we urge you to pray for protection for our Christian brothers and sisters in particular.

[Click here for more information as it comes, and a prayer from Archbishop Raffel](#)

Together in Christ,
Tim Swan
CEO Anglican Aid

Afghanistan:

It was expected, yet nothing could 'stop' the taking of innocent lives when a terrorist group detonated two explosions. The exodus from Afghanistan has seen civilians rescued, including various ex-patriots and some Afghani who assisted the occupying forces. The history of Afghanistan reveals it has struggled politically with the different tribes, clans fighting one another. What united the tribes was their hatred of occupying forces and their Muslim heritage. The tribes share a Muslim heritage. Even within this, there is fighting over which expression of Muslim faith the country should follow. The loss of innocent lives can rightly sadden us.

Sadness:

Feeling sad is not a sign of having a lack of faith. Being sad does not undermine believing in the sovereignty of the LORD. It is okay to feel sadness. The Bible has many examples of both individual and corporate feelings of sadness.

For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"⁴ How shall we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land?
(Psalm 137:3-5 RSV)

The recent events in Afghanistan have caused sadness to those involved with the twenty-year war, whether that involvement was directly or indirectly. I talk to several parishioners who have expressed their sadness regarding the new political power of the Taliban. It is okay to feel sad. Sadness over the events in Afghanistan or something else in your life triggered the emotion of sadness; the feeling of sadness is an emotion that affects all people, including Christians.

To deal with the emotion of sadness is first to acknowledge what is the root of this sadness. I then express that emotion to the LORD through prayer. I allow God to 'minister to me' during these times of prayer and biblical reflection. As I intercede, I look at the cause of this sadness; this may lead me to pray, calling for these terrorists to repent of their evil ways.

I share the above with you, which I have no doubt many of you are in the practice of bringing your sadness to the LORD in prayer. As Christians, we have a personal relationship with the LORD, who desires His children to pray to Him. The LORD is good to us all.

Public Health Orders:

The current changes to the restrictions may bring joy as some can meet together for picnics outside. Regarding the reopening of the Churches to allow the congregational members to return has **not** been flagged. I am planning to continue with the live streaming in all of September. If the Public Health Orders change, I will, of course, alter these plans.

When the Public Health Orders permit the reopening of the Church, I would like to move straight away back to the two Morning Services, albeit with COVID-Safe protocols. Until then, I encourage you to participate by watching the live-streaming of the Services from St. Johns.

Pastoral Care:

It is pleasing to see the ongoing creativity of the way people are looking out for each other. One of the marks of the early Church was a Caring Church. (Cf Act 2:42-47)

The members meet together, shared what they had, and met one another's needs. During this lockdown, we cannot physically meet with one another, yet with the various electronic

devices, we can *express our care and concern*. Our fellowship with one another know no bounds. We can call, email, text, or even write to one another. Fellowship between the members of the Church is part of God's vision for his people. How to foster that fellowship has been done creatively within the parish. I invite you to attend and join in the fellowship on Tuesday evenings at 7pm.

August 31st 7-8pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87882612754>

Meeting ID: 878 8261 2754

Thank you for the suggestions and feedback regarding the initiative of the street banner. I am working to place an order this week. Any other suggestions, please get them back to me as soon as possible thanks.

Nursing Homes and Aged Care Facilities have rightly closed their door at the moment to visitors, including that of the clergy. Clergy may be permitted to enter if it is part of the end of life care. Again this is at the discretion and permission of the facility. Although this news is disappointing, it is understandable. We all must honour COVID-Safe practices.

I spoke briefly with Archdeacon Rob Sutherland, and I know he would like me to pass on his greetings. I reassured Fr Rob of our prayer for him as he is ministering to his fellow service men and women in these traumatic times.

May the Peace of the LORD be with you.

Reverend Robert H.
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