



Bulletin 29

Dear Church!

24th February 2021

A couple more days and it will be March! I still remember having to break off the Lent Course, “Making Disciples”, last year as we went into our first lock down. Please God, this will be our last.

Here’s what we have come up with as a plan as we follow Boris’s roadmap out of our present lockdown.

At St Paul’s, for their 10.00am service, arrangements will continue as in past weeks – a service open to anyone to drop into but which will adhere very strictly to prevailing social distancing rules imposed upon us as long as they continue to exist.

Prayers are very definitely being answered as regards our youth leadership at Emmanuel

At Emmanuel We will be continuing to send out the 10.30am Gathering by Facebook and YouTube streaming.

The two main reasons we suspended on-site attendance was because of the uncertainty of the increased virulence of new Covid19 strains and because we felt so constricted by regulations that meetings held out little encouragement for those attending. In short, we reckoned we could do better online. Neither of those criteria have changed.

However, our leadership team feel that for some, after such a long time couped up, anything might be better than nothing! So, while we will continue to design and conduct the 10.30 Gathering for streaming online, ***anyone who would like to attend under what have to be fairly harsh social distancing rules, is very welcome to drop into Emmanuel Church building in time for a 1030 start if they wish!*** Please be aware that the intercessions, reading and sometimes sermons will have been previously recorded but you will be able to see and hear

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them on screen. Where the service is an Agapé Communion, attendees will be also be able to receive bread and wine! But please remember we can’t gather before or after the service – that is a very strict governmental ruling.

We anticipate being back in church in a fuller manner by Easter – probably for Palm Sunday and exploiting whatever initiatives we are allowed thereafter. Watch this space.

And in the meantime ... lets crack on with our church life and witness together!

I'm absolutely delighted to hear of the ministry which continues at St Paul's by way of what is now called 'The Larder' – people from the community, if they are able, now come to the church to receive gifts of food and the local Co-Op are adding to the stock during the week as well as people's generous financial gifts continuing.

Prayers are very definitely being answered as regards our youth leadership at Emmanuel. In the next bulletin I expect to be able to announce a second part-time leader for our pathfinder youth (11-14yrs). This has long been our aspiration and it's wonderful to know that someone will now be able to consolidate the long and hard work Kate and Bert have been doing. Please continue to pray for Holly with the Kingz Kidz and this forthcoming appointment.

Our main thrust of seasonal ministry, The Lent Course, 'What do we mean by Church', is now underway and I have reprinted the detail below in case you have mislaid it! Why not read through the book of The Acts of the Apostles a couple of times this Lent and soak up the significance relating to how the Lord founds, authenticates and empowers his church as we cover chapters 2 to 12 over the coming weeks?

And finally, on a fun note, a message from Vera Mitchell...

There is a dog named Barney (whom we meet at morning prayers). He lives with master, who Barney trusts implicitly. He knows his master is also his friend, protector, provider. Barney knows he lives safely and securely. He knows he is cared for, wanted and loved. He knows his master will do everything necessary to give him everything he needs.

Barney is able to live his daily life secure in this precious relationship. He is safe to patrol in the garden, to investigate the day's opportunities. He knows he can play, eat and sleep in the generous love of his master. He is a happy and contented dog.

But there are times when Barney needs more than all these good things. He needs the touch of his master upon his head. He needs to feel the warmth of the love of his master. Barney needs to come close to look into the face of his master and absorb again the truth and present reality of his master's generous love.

When Barney reads that message in the face of his friend and feels it in his touch then Barney gazes at his friend with total peace, safety, contentment and love. He knows he is a dog and not a man, but in the love of his friend and master that does not matter.

He is Barney and he is loved.

Lord Jesus, help us know more abundant life, peace, security and love in You. Amen.

Thank you Barney, for what you teach me of Jesus.

With love from Vera.

**Every Lenten blessing!!
Rev Karl**

Lent Course: What do we mean by 'church'?

Every **THURSDAY 7.30pm** (25th Feb – 1st April Incl.)

Meeting ID: 814 1327 1336 Passcode: Godwithus

Each session will last just under the hour led by Revs Karl, Tony or Robin.

- We will record the meeting, edit out personal conversations and prayer, etc. and then post it on our website as a video for those who can't make 7.30pm on a Thursday.
- Each session will be a mix of: Prayer – both personal and corporate, Bible Teaching, Space for personal, prayerful reflection, Discussion. Identification of anything our church leadership or we as individuals need to take on board.