

Dear Friends,

"The Lord knows those who are His" (2 Timothy 2:19, part of today's reading at morning prayer). This is the inscription on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster Abbey. We are known, there are no unknown soldiers on God's side. Whatever you are going through, whatever you feel at the moment, whatever you are celebrating or mourning, God knows. The Lord knows those who are His.

This week's news, links etc.

- Sundays *Remembrance Day service* is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTnGKc1Xgnc>. Also on the Youtube channel you'll find a new Virtual Assembly, and some new videos to go with the 7 Sacred Spaces workbook.

- *Mental Health*: We're aware of how difficult many people are finding the interminable restrictions and lockdown. Attached is a brief piece by John Hanson, our 'mental health lead' on some sources of support. 'Support Groups' are one of the few meetings which are allowed in lockdown, so if you are finding it a struggle and would value being part of an informal mental health support group for church members, please let John or David know.

- *Advent* starts on Sunday 29th November. We are planning to produce a daily prayer and worship resource covering Advent and Christmas, with daily prayers and readings, which will be available in printed and electronic form.

- *9 Lessons and Carols hits the streets*! Traditionally our Christmas outreach is all about inviting people to services at our churches or at Palmers. This year that won't be possible, so as well as doing streamed services, we want to take the message out into homes around our neighbourhood. Ruth will say more about this on Sunday, but we're thinking of a 'Christmas trail' around the parish, with 9 displays each based on one of the 9 Christmas readings, in windows or front gardens around the parish. Even better, 18 displays, with different trails in the E and W halves of the parish, if enough people are willing to host and/or create a display.

- There is a new *Daily Prayer Podcast* from Ruth every day at: <https://anchor.fm/pjs>, about 10 minutes long, with a daily bible reflection. They're great.

- You may have seen in the media that the Church of England has produced a new resource '*Living in Love and Faith*'. The introduction says: /Living in Love and Faith sets out to inspire people to think more deeply about what it means to be human and to live in love and faith with one another. It tackles the tough questions and the divisions among Christians about what it means to be holy in a society in which understandings and practices of gender, sexuality and marriage continue to change. /There is a 480 page book (free to download <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/LLF%20Web%20Version%20Full%20Final.pdf>), a video-based course, and a range of other materials. The idea is to get the whole church praying and reflecting together, listening to scripture, culture and one another. It's a very ambitious project, and wades into what, for some are very difficult or painful areas. When we are able to meet face to face again, we will look at how we can engage with this course as a parish. I've had a look at some of the materials and so far so good. In this area, there is a lot of either shouting, or burying heads in the sand. There is a better, more loving and more Christlike way, I hope that the church is a place where we can have difficult conversations whilst remaining committed to fellowship with one another.

- *Church Finances*: a brief update. *St Peters,* miraculously, looks like it will break even for the year, despite the loss of most of our income from envelopes, cash collections and fundraising events. And the refurbishments to the church were fully paid for from the Gift Day in the summer. What's more, we've had grants to cover pretty much all the running costs of the Community Centre for the next 12 months. God is good! *St James* has lost about £20,000 of our normal income this year, from collections, church room hire and fundraising. We are still afloat thanks to the amazing response to the Gift Day, and some generous donations earlier in the year, but income falls short of outgoings by about £1500 per month. We're likely to need another Gift Day next summer to stay on an even keel, as we have minimal reserves, and a small but growing list of significant bills

Ruth will be on leave from 18th-27th November, please pray for a refreshing and restful time for her. Please could you also pray for the family of Jean Jackson, a longstanding member of St Peters, who we said goodbye to on Monday. And if you know of anyone in lockdown who would appreciate a phone call, or needs shopping or prescription collection done, please let us know.

May God bless you and keep you in His love.

David and Ruth

--

Rev David Keen
3 Poplar Drive
Yeovil BA21 3UL
01935 422286

<http://www.stjamesyeovil.org.uk/>

<http://www.stpeters-yeovil.org.uk/>

St James and St Peters on

Youtube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS_rhjBAJTixz3kIXLMN_Xw/

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS_rhjBAJTixz3kIXLMN_Xw/>