

St James' Church, Uplands NEWSLETTER - 18th July 2021

Return to normal?

Restrictions are beginning to be lifted, and following the First Minister's announcement this week, it's likely that from 7th August onwards restrictions will be more a matter for local risk assessment than blanket government policy. This means that we will need to work out if - and then maybe how - we look to re-start different aspects of parish life. We also need to think about if and how we keep going some aspects of life which emerged during lockdown - online worship and zoom groups.

And... who's going to do it all!

There are various areas of parish life, then, that we need to be thinking about how we will re-start, and who is willing to be involved. But for me, it's a missed opportunity if we don't think through and pray about these different aspects. We may want to do things differently, or not at all, more or less regularly, or put a greater effort into them! So I would welcome conversations around the following - and other - areas of our parish's life. I'd also welcome people letting me know how they are willing to serve!

Children's ministry

Prayer group

Tea and coffee after the service

Life Group and bible studies

Midweek services

Welsh language services

Social and fundraising events

And last but definitely not least... we need new church wardens and PCC members!

Rev Sarah Harris - welcome!

We welcome Rev Sarah Harris here today, as she preaches. Many will know her already - partly because she has married into the St James' family! There was an article on Sarah last week in our newsletter. I'm sure you'll join in wishing her well and praying for her ministry across the ministry area.

St James' Day - Bring and (don't) Share Picnic - Next Sunday!

Next Sunday we celebrate the Feast of St James in the church calendar. It seems a good reason or excuse to celebrate, particularly as there is now no restriction on numbers for outdoor activities! The most Covid compliant activity we thought of was a Bring and (don't) share picnic - i.e. we can bring our own picnic, and any folding chairs or blankets, to sit outside in the St James' grounds after the service. It will be good to be able to spend some time together again in a relaxed way. As 'don't share' doesn't seem a particularly Christian message, we thought it would be nice to take up a collection for Christian Aid at the same time, so do bring something to contribute to that if you can. All are welcome, and if there's a regular who isn't here today please let them know.

Letter to the Ephesians

We continue our series with Sarah preaching on Ephesians 2:11-22 this morning. Why not take time over the summer to study this wonderful letter yourself? It's incredibly dense, good and rich - think of a dark chocolate truffle - you need to enjoy it slowly and bit by bit to properly appreciate it. As you do so, pray the prayer below, both for yourself and for our church.

A prayer for St James' Church

Heavenly Father,
Strengthen us in our inner being with power through your Spirit
That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith
As we are rooted and grounded in love.
And give us the power to comprehend the height, breadth and depth
Of the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge,
And so may we be filled with all the fullness of God.
We know that you can accomplish more than we can ask or even imagine
Through the power at work within us.
To you be glory in this church and in Christ Jesus through all generations: Amen! (Eph 3:14-21)

Rev Ian Folks