



Letter #27 Church Family 02/07/2020

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

*“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
²³ They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.” [Lamentations 3:22,23]*

It may well be that these are the only verses we know from Lamentations. Yet what encouraging words they are, reminding us that God’s love is never stale but always delivered fresh to our home each day! I trust that even though for some of us there is a weariness and staleness to life in lockdown we would nevertheless experience the freshness of God’s compassions each morning.

Exploring God’s word

- This week Matt has produced a slightly different sort of video message which relates to his series on Lamentations which kicked off last Sunday evening. [Click here](#) for the video message and [here](#) for the sermon on Lamentations 1.
- Sue and I have regularly attended the Keswick Convention over the years. This year it will be delivered online and so all of us can access it from Monday 27 July <https://vkc.keswickministries.org/>

Joining us on Sunday

To join us on Sunday please head to the [St Nicholas website](#) where the different services are clearly labelled. To access the various ‘Zoom coffee’ gatherings please note the following:

- for the 09:15 congregation [\[click here\]](#) (meeting ID 710 8940 4113, password stnics)
- for the 11:00 congregation [\[click here\]](#) (meeting ID 989 8217 9349, no password)

Members of other St Nicholas based congregations are very welcome to join either of the above virtual coffees.

- for Grace Church and 4 O'clock congregations [\[click here\]](#) (meeting ID 886 6180 2881, password church)

Praying for this Sunday

- On Sunday morning we start a new series at St Nicholas on John 1 with John Khnana preaching at our all age service. I will be preaching on 1 Corinthians 6 at GC/4 and in the evening, Matt will continue his series in Lamentations. In my reading this morning from Jeremiah 23:29 God’s word is described as a fire and a hammer – unusual images which highlight its power and effectiveness. Pray that it would be so!
- Pray for Centrepoint and Contact under Simon’s leadership. Pray especially for good preparation for both the virtual houseparties, that they would be effective in drawing to Christ and establishing believers.
- Pray for all the women’s Bible studies under the overall coordination of Andrea Trevenna and Hannah Blake, as well as the Monday morning groups under Sue MacLeay. Pray that they would be the means of real encouragement during these days.



Plans for Sunday 12 July at 10am at St Nicholas Church building:

Our current plan is to open the church building for a 10am service. It will be in line with government and House of Bishops guidelines and so it will feel very different from a normal service. We fully recognise that to start with many will not be able to come or will be unwilling to do so. **So, from the outset please note that we plan to continue to offer the two Sunday morning YouTube services and the Zoom evening service for the coming months.**

In terms of what to expect if you come to the building:

- i. On arrival, all attendees will be required to use the hand sanitiser provided before entering the church through any of the 3 main doors.
- ii. In accordance with Test & Trace guidelines, we will record your name and telephone number, which will be stored for 21 days.
- iii. We will need to follow 2 metre social distancing out of love for each other – and a one way system has been put in place to help with this.
- iv. We are sadly unable to provide separate children's ministry or a creche so any children present will need careful supervision.
- v. We will need to follow the directions of the stewards, especially before and after the service.
- vi. During the service I regret to say that there can be no singing, though we hope to have some music.
- vii. You will find it helpful to bring a Bible and perhaps pen and paper if you wish to take notes on the sermon (all church Bibles have been removed from the seats and service sheets will not be provided).
- viii. We will aim for the service in the building to run parallel with the St Nicholas 10am YouTube service in terms of content so that the physical service and the virtual service are seen as equally viable options.
- ix. Due to social distancing restrictions, the capacity at the service will be limited to 124 people.
- x. [Click here](#) to see more information on the current guidance for church attendance.

This all sounds so unlike what we have experienced before ... and yet it will give an opportunity for some of us to gather physically and over the weeks to come that number will surely grow. Our aim in these early weeks is to enable people to have confidence that we are faithfully following the guidelines. Our desire is that as we gather together it will provide the encouragement which so many of us need. Hebrew 10:24,25 includes the encouragement for us not to give up meeting together so that we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Though I know that I cannot attend at present due to being shielded my prayer is that over the coming weeks there will be a growing number who gather to strengthen each other in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Finally, a song and a prayer....

The song is [Amazing Grace](#) in a version produced earlier this week for the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast.



The prayer is the Collect for the fourth Sunday after Trinity:

*O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.***

Warmly in Christ,
Angus MacLeay

See overleaf for a full list of the links in this letter

To access the articles / items referred to in the letter, use the links below:

Click Here	To watch Matt's video message on the Lamentations series
Click Here	Matt's sermon from last Sunday evening: Lamentations 1
Click Here	To join the Virtually Keswick Convention
Click Here	Directions to all our Services on a Sunday
Click Here	On Sunday for the 09:15 congregation coffee (meeting ID 710 8940 4113, password stnics)
Click Here	On Sunday for the 11:00 congregation coffee (meeting ID 989 8217 9349, no password)
Click Here	On Sunday for Grace Church and 4 O'clock congregation's coffee (meeting ID 886 6180 2881, password church)
Click Here	To see the full guidance for Sunday 12 th July's service in church
Click Here	To listen to "Amazing Grace"