

9 July 2020

Dear Friends,

As you know, Victoria is now in lockdown again for the next six weeks. This means that we are unable to meet face to face for worship. After the joy of meeting together again, this new isolation feels particularly sad. I am writing to keep you up to date with the implications of this for our parish.

Worship

There will be no face to face worship during the lockdown. Up to five people are allowed to meet together for the purpose of recording worship and I will continue to do this, recording Wednesday reflections and Sunday Eucharist services and posting them to our YouTube channel. The text of both these services will still be mailed to those without internet access.

Op Shop

Our wonderful Op Shop volunteers have been doing a fantastic job since their doors opened again. Thank you to Glenys and her team. Unfortunately, in order to ensure the safety of our volunteers, and since Op Shop shopping does not come under the category of essential reasons to leave the house, we have made the decision to close our doors again.

Parish Office

Claire and I will both be working our usual hours, however, for the safety of all concerned, the parish office will be closed to parishioners for the duration of the lockdown. We will both be available by phone or email.

Covid19 Safety

As you are aware, I am the parish Covid19 Safety Officer. If you have any concerns or queries regarding the decisions outlined in this letter, please ring me or email me to talk about them.

There is a tension between the natural desire of people to be able to continue to worship and share fellowship together, and the need to care for each other by reducing the chances of transmitting this virus. At this time, the government regulations make it clear that safety must take priority. I ask for your understanding and support in following restrictions that I know cause sadness and difficulty for many.

Prayer

+ Paul has written to the Premier to assure him of the prayers of the Diocese. He has also written a prayer which I include at the end of this letter for your use.

Please be assured that I continue to pray for you as individuals and for our parish. I give thanks for this precious community to which we belong and I pray for wisdom and courage in serving God amongst you at this difficult time. Please pray for me also.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us (Romans 8:35, 37).

May God bless you with all peace and joy in believing,

Colleen

The Rev'd Colleen Clayton

O God our heavenly Father,

Your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Great Physician, who healed the sick, cured the blind and deaf and raised the dead, and who, throughout all history, holds dominion over disease and death:

In your mercy to this world, arrest and eradicate this coronavirus. Heal the afflicted and comfort those who have suffered from this scourge; so that those who suffer may know your healing heart and hand, that those who are anxious or burdened may know your comfort and peace that passes understanding, that the watching world may know your sovereign authority, prevailing power, mercy, and grace, and that all may come to know, love and worship you; we ask in the name of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.