

## Vestrylink - Number 2 – April-May 2020

Vestry held its first lockdown meeting by Zoom on 22 April, quite a new experience for all of us. We had decided to meet a week later than usual because by then we'd have a better idea of government intentions regarding moving through the lockdown stages.

### **Managing the Lockdown**

Although we now knew we were soon to move from level 4 to level 3, it is becoming clear that especially for our older people, social isolation will still be required in level 2 and as we move down through the levels. We talked a lot about how people are dealing with the lockdown. We decided to survey parishioners to find out who has access to computers, smartphones, zoom etc, and who needs assistance with technology to help them communicate and participate in services and parish activities. You will have received this short survey by now.

### **Responding to the Lockdown**

During level 4 lockdown, the pastoral care team has cautiously supplied meals to people needing them. In addition, Rev'd John has recruited a new support team, the St Alban's Volunteer Army, who have worked with the Four Square supermarket, delivering grocery orders. Our grateful thanks go to all of these people who have worked to support others during lockdown.

To show their gratitude, the supermarket has offered to make a donation to a charity of our choice, as their way of thanking St Alban's for its assistance. Vestry has nominated the Wellington City Mission. As an aside, the City Mission works across the Wellington region, and it's not widely known but they regularly support more people in the Hutt Valley than are supported in Wellington city. I was aware of this a few years ago when I was on their board. This is unlikely to have changed.

And a big thanks to Rose Odlin for her initiative in making masks. Please contact her if you would like one.

### **Sunday Worship**

I hope you've tuned into the diocesan service at 10am each Sunday. (Tv channel 200). It's made me realise I'm a tiny part of something much bigger. The Rev'ds Billy and Caleb Rowe are such sincere and lovely young people and their services informal and relevant. Rev'd Billy's baby is due this week, so I'm sure you join with me in wishing her all the best. Thoughtful tv sermons too, including one from "our own" Bishop Ellie.

After the diocesan service, there is a parish "virtual coffee break" on zoom. You should have all been sent the code so you can join in. If you would like to participate and can't for any reason, please email the parish office [stalbansch@extra.co.nz](mailto:stalbansch@extra.co.nz) so help can be arranged.

### **Diocesan Leaders' Meeting**

The Diocese has held regular zooms with parish leaders during lockdown, with the most recent on 24 April. Much of the discussion focused on preparation for the future move to alert level 2. Parishes were asked to consider what they would want to do for services,

small group worship etc when this happens and report back to the diocesan office by 1 May. Vestry has discussed this at length by email. At level 2, although church services with less than 100 people are allowed (but without full communion), people who are older or at-risk are still advised to stay home where possible. Vestry has agreed we should not be reopening for regular worship in level 2, but should continue to join the diocesan on-line service and develop more St Alban's small group on-line worship, discussions or courses. We will keep you updated on decisions made by the diocese as well as our on-line planning.

### **St Alban's AGM**

You're probably all wondering about our AGM, as we're one of a number of parishes whose AGM was postponed by the implementation of the lockdown. The Diocese has advised AGMs are to be held within 30 days of parish reopening. Of course, we don't know when that reopening will be. Again, we will keep you posted when the situation becomes clearer.

### **Finance**

With no services being held during the lockdown, treasurer Denis Packer advised our finances are taking a bit of a hit. Our expenses are largely fixed though, so haven't reduced. If you are an envelope or cash offerings person, you might like to consider changing your contribution to online – even on a temporary basis. If this is you, please contact Denis.

### **A Challenge from the Bishop**

In talking to the diocesan leaders last week, Bishop Justin posed a challenge - as he is known to do. The challenge was this: in moving forward post Covid-19, we need to take time to discern God's direction as to how we move. We have three options:

- Crash back and continue as before
- Move straight into decisions about the future
- Take time to discern where God wants us to go - look for the positives in what we have learned through lockdown. Listen and reflect before we move.

Please give this some thought.

Keep up the good work you've already done during lockdown. If you or anyone you know needs assistance, please contact the parish office, (562 6269 or [stalbansch@xtra.co.nz](mailto:stalbansch@xtra.co.nz)) where you can be pointed in the right direction.

Joy Baird  
for Vestry  
30 April 2020