

## **Vestrylink – Number 3 <sup>1</sup>– May 2020**

Vestry met by Zoom again on 20 May, so we're getting familiar with the new technology!

### **Managing Lockdown - The Survey**

We sent out our first Survey during April and it has provided some useful information. The return rate was 23%. We learned all respondents used technology to some extent, a small number of people asked for help with each of the devices listed (computer, internet, smartphone, zoom and TV) and nearly half the respondents seldom or never used the St Alban's website. Please feel free to email the office with your response to the survey at any time. We can then arrange any help you may need.

Work is being done to modernise and improve the website. The effect of not meeting together has shown the importance of having a website current, attractive and with a skilled 'owner'.

If you or someone in your household is tech savvy and keen to have the experience of working on the St Alban's website please email the parish office.

### **Managing Lockdown - Caring for Each Other.**

During the various stages of the lockdown the Pastoral Care Team and the St Alban's Volunteer Army have been active, for which we sincerely thank them. Now as situations return to some semblance of normal, pastoral care can continue with its traditional role and it's hoped the volunteer army might continue in a new and wider role of providing more general assistance. This initiative is under active consideration.

### **Sunday Worship – How and When to Start Again?**

By the time you read this, the government will have reviewed progress to date through level 2 and it's anticipated some relaxation will have been announced. For us and the recommencement of Sunday worship, things are a little more complicated. Getting back to Sunday worship at Wellesley College needs to take into consideration information from the government, the Diocese, Wellesley College regarding cleaning and sanitising, plus finally the confidence of each of us and how safe we feel in returning to large gatherings, especially when we're over 70.

A new issue you might not have considered. If you heard Professor Michael Baker interviewed on the radio during the weekend, you'll have heard his cautions about the deep breathing associated with singing and its ability to spread a virus. He quoted the negative results of several studies of choirs. Do we need to consider using recorded music for a week or two? Do you have favourite recorded hymns which could be used? What do you think?

### **Sunday Worship- Our Covid-19 Experiences**

I hope you've read Rev'd John's parish letter by now and noted his proposal to have a Celebration Sunday sharing our experiences of lockdown on the first Sunday we're back. Vestry endorses this and encourage you to write your short lockdown story. We'd love some people willing to share these in a 'people's sermon'. My hope is there will be far too many for one morning. With your agreement, vestry would like to arrange a booklet, with

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<sup>1</sup> This really is Vestrylink 3, the numbering on the previous one was an error!

suitable photos, as an Eastbourne record of a significant historical event, to leave for future generations.

### **House Church Initiative**

You'll also have seen Rev'd John's initiative to offer House Church gatherings from 31 May. Small groups in our homes, listening to the Diocesan service together and sharing coffee. This will have to be carefully organised, so people wanting to participate are shared with homes available. Rev'd John's newsletter has more detail. If you're willing to host, please email [vicar@stalbanschurch.nz](mailto:vicar@stalbanschurch.nz) if you'd like to join please email [office@stalbanschurch.nz](mailto:office@stalbanschurch.nz)

### **The Royal Commission**

Many of you will already be familiar with the establishment of The Royal Commission into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions. The chair of the Royal Commission, Coral Shaw has asked the Wellington Diocese to provide information (through their parishes), of how many children, young people and vulnerable adults have been in the care of the Diocese since 1950. In the case of St Alban's, 'care' is not residential, only involving Sunday School and Pop in and Play, baptism and confirmation records. Our records are not extensive, but we're providing what information we can locate.

### **Historical Records**

In providing information for the Royal Commission, Patsy and I have searched through some boxes of paper records held in the parish office. One of the things we've been struck with in doing this task, particularly in looking through vestry minutes going back decades, is the number of St Alban's parishioners now in their 70's 80's or 90's who are previous vestry members. We'd like to extend thanks to all these people for their commitment, work and loyalty. Too many names to mention, but you know who you are. So a sincere thanks.

### **The Diocesan Sunday Service**

And finally, in addition to the very personal sermon Bishop Eleanor shared with us recently, two extracts from the service which struck me with their relevance for this time.

"God is always present and often most able to talk to us in times of our most vulnerability".

And in one of the hymns the musicians sang of

"Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow."

Joy Baird  
For Vestry  
24 May 2020