



What next?

Lockdown is easing. What do we do next ?

This is a hard question for everyone, but it is a hard question for St Barnabas Church too.

We need to follow the guidance as best we can. The number of cases has, thank God, dropped massively. But the bug is still out there.

But the downsides of staying in lockdown are big too. I am coming across increasing cases of mental and emotional distress. This should be no surprise. Genesis nailed it when it said 'it is not good for ...man to be alone.' (Gen 1:18).

Beyond that is the spiritual cost of lockdown. There are good things about what we can do online, but there is a lot that we can't do and not doing it damages our walk with God.

So what do we do?

Archbishop Sentamu once urged churches to do two things: pray and party. Can I encourage you to play and to pray in the coming weeks.

'Play': the last months have been hard for many,

disorientating for everyone and the future is uncertain. We need to find ways, somehow, to lighten up. Simply getting to Redcar and feeling the sand between our toes is a start. My personal simple pleasure is to go to the Tees Barrage and watch the seals that gather there. Whatever 'play' means for you, do get some 'play' in the coming weeks. We need to feel the sun and the breeze.

'Pray': the future is unclear. There are dangers with going too fast out of lockdown. There are also dangers with going too slow. Please pray for yourself. What is wise for you? How do you grow in faith and fellowship amidst this all? Pray too for the church staff, the churchwardens and the PCC whose role is to navigate St Barnabas out of lockdown. We need the Spirit to give us a cautious boldness in these days.



Photo by [Brian Gordillo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Beyond this, there are opportunities as well as challenges. The COVID-19 crisis has shaken everyone. But whilst governments and societies rise and fall, God is solid. And the good news of the gospel only looks more good as human wisdom flails around. As we pray to God, we will know his strength and discover his wisdom for these days.

David

Worship

We are beginning worship in church with our Wednesday morning service, at 9.30 am on Wednesday 22nd July. It remains very important that we follow government and church guidance. As part of this, if you plan to come, please can you inform the church office that you are coming via phone 01642 651818 or email office@st-barnabas.net.

We are working on beginning Sunday worship. Doing this is complex and will take time. Church continues to be open for private prayer from 4 to 5 pm on weekdays.

Vanessa



Many of you will know that I began training for ordination at Cranmer Hall in Durham last September. I was only required to study for 1 year as York Diocese felt because of my training with Church Army and experience of community ministry that this would be sufficient. My time at Cranmer has been excellent and it has been wonderful to be part of the community as I have focussed upon theological studies and formation as a priest. Of course, training and formation continue into curacy and I am delighted that I can stay in Middlesbrough for this. I will be based at St Oswald's and St Chad's in Grove Hill for 3 years with Rev Sue Richardson as my Training Incumbent and working alongside Kath Dean (Deacon) and Frank Hadfield (Reader).

I was due to be ordained on Sunday 5th July at York Minister, this has been postponed due to COVID-19 and will hopefully be at the end of September. As I wait to be ordained, I will be licensed, along with other ordinands, as a Lay Worker via Zoom on the 5th July.

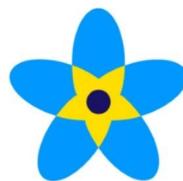
As many of you know my heart has always been for those on the edges of our communities and to find ways to creatively share the Gospel with those who have never been inside a church building. This will continue to be the focus of my ministry and so I would value your prayers as I look to God to guide me for this next chapter of ministry. I believe, during this time when as a Church we are having to look at new ways of worshipping due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been presented with a wonderful opportunity to explore new ways of sharing the love of Christ. I am excited about the new possibilities but also aware of the challenges so do please pray for the continual equipping of the Holy Spirit.

With love and prayers

Vanessa Kirby

Dementia Friends

Dementia Awareness Week was in May and we weren't able to mark it in church this year. However, as a dementia friendly church, we remember those who are living with dementia and those who care for them. If you haven't seen it, Hal Jackson's film can still be seen on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbCdhhw3K94&t=8s>.



Book of Remembrance

St Pauls Cathedral has set up a Book of Remembrance for victims of the pandemic. This is a virtual book of remembrance and is open to all faiths or none for a remembrance message and photo (if wished) to be entered.

The website is "rememberme2020.uk. The procedure is quite simple and only requires the name, date of birth and death certificate number for verification.

PCC in June and July



The PCC met via zoom in June and July.

Updates on the various taskgroups set up in response to coronavirus were received. The PCC discussed the ongoing Immeasurably More process. Updates were received on the employment of a worship leader. The new intern scheme and the new post of was discussed. The PCC reviewed and approved the SLA with Big Kids. The PCC discussed the restarting of the 6.30 service and the return to worship in the church. The treasurer gave a financial update.

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