

St Chad's Update Thursday 19th March

Dear church family,

Things are changing rapidly, people are pulling together beautifully, and we are all on a steep learning curve. Thank you to all who have fed back words of support and encouragement at this time, I am hearing so many stories of love in action.

In today's update I want to cover:

- Plans for Sunday
- An update on our Pastoral care & communications.
- Kingdom opportunities
- Chocolate!

Sunday 22nd – Mothering Sunday

On Sunday we will be doing church together in a new format. Both services will be 'broadcast' on YouTube at 9.15 and 11.00am (please see details below on how to access either channel). We know that for many worshipping at the same time as others in our family will help build that sense of being together.

Our approach to 'live streaming'.

We have given a lot of thought to how we can make this a meaningful worshipping experience for you at home: the value of connection, the comfort of familiarity, the refreshment of God's word and the need to pray. We are experimenting, we realised people will find different things helpful (as always in church) and we want to learn as we go along, so we would value your feedback both of what is helpful and what you didn't engage with. Next week will look different and we want to keep learning.

9.15am

This service will be as close to our regular pattern of worship as possible, recognising we can't share communion and singing is a shared activity. We will post a video of our service on the St.Chad's YouTube Channel just before 9.15am.

Words for the liturgy will be on the screen. A pdf of the service sheet is attached. Paper copies of this are also available from the Lifecentre to pick up if you are able (along with Mothering Sunday chocolate). Please consider taking copies and posting them through doors of people you know are unable to get out. In future weeks we may not be able to produce printed sheets but we will continue to be in communication.

We will be sharing the peace by sending text messages, so when you sit down to join us on Sunday morning, have your mobile phone to hand and think in advance who you'd like to send the peace to.

11am

One of the many good things that will come out of this season will be families growing in worshipping, praying and talking about Jesus together. Elle has put together a very short piece for the start of our service for Mothering Sunday, which we hope will be accessible to all. We won't be sending children out to groups at the end, but the rest of the 'service' will be designed for those who are 12+.

One area we really want to learn about is sung worship when we are not gathered in one building. This week we will offer a playlist of professionally produced songs, to encourage you to have a time of praise when the service finishes.

11.45am

Interaction, connection and coffee are a really important part of Sundays.

Following the 11am service we will be live streaming on Facebook Live. This will be a coffee session with Richard, Elle, Will and Katie from the LifeCentre café with Q&A so please join us. If you have things you'd like to pray for, encouraging stories of love in action, questions you'd like to ask or anything else, then you can send them in live, or email them to vicar@stchadsromiley.co.uk, message the St.Chads facebook page, or text Richard.

Accessing these services

Facebook - Log into St Chads Romiley facebook page, If you don't already follow this page, then you can sign up to do so, by clicking 'Like this page'. If you are not currently a facebook user then the best way to access our services is via YouTube.

Youtube – we have a St.Chad's Romiley YouTube channel. – You can access that here <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi2bzN9EhzLxzstzgp9VVYQ>

(You can also subscribe to enable you to receive future videos)

Our website – The church website is not set up for streaming or videos, it is designed for its primary purposes which are to be an introduction to church life and place for resources. We will keep it as up to date as we can, but it is not a primary place for up to date communications.

We are also using the St.Chad's 'Reflections on Scripture' facebook group to share spiritual encouraging resources. If you are on facebook search for it and come and join in. I will also be using my blog <https://romileyrichard.wordpress.com> as a place to share resources and reflections.

Pastoral Care

Katie and our Pastoral care team have been working hard to put plans in place to offer the very best we can in care and support. We particularly care about the elderly and housebound, including our Oasis guests. First of all, please find ways to support your neighbours. Secondly email office@stchadsromiley.co.uk both to ask for or offer support. We want to make connections this way. Along with the LifeCentre we are reaching out to community groups to find how we can partner with them to link those offering help with those in greatest need.

We recognise that one part of church life is sharing prayer requests for those who are unwell, or grieving, which in itself becomes a means to communicate this news. We have made the decision that we will not be sharing news of those who are unwell (with Covid 19 or otherwise) in any way through church communications at this time.

Kingdom Opportunities

We are learning so much so fast in this rapidly changing situation. Here are some of my immediate thoughts for how we can respond as children of God.

1. The Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, peace, patience... There are so many stories of these being shown in the midst of this. Change exposes a lot of anger, blame, criticism and negativity, lets be courageously different. When others around moan, criticise those making huge decisions under pressure or focus on stories of lull, let's talk about loving community, God's grace and respect for the many examples of good leadership we seeing.
2. Deeper walk with God. At the moment we are in a transition phase coming to terms with normal life ending abruptly and preparing for extended social distancing. For many life is busy right now, but soon we may have more time on our hands. How can you get to know God better with that time.
3. Using time well. Our youngest Micah came home from school on Monday announcing that he would like to learn a new instrument when self isolating. I love it that our primary school has helped children think about new opportunities, new things to aim for, setting personal goals. Let's all do that. Be intentional about the time you have.
4. Loving our community. We have the time, the connections and the opportunity to show Jesus' love in so many ways. Let's do that.
5. Salvation. God is at work in every season, the Holy Spirit is at work in our community, he will be bringing people to salvation through this. Pray for miracles and powerful moves of the Spirit all around us.

Chocolate & gifts

Finally, we also have the chocolate that we'd bought for all the women in church for Sunday, along with Prampushers Easter gifts and some gifts from Early Essentials. If you are able to get to the LifeCentre today or on Friday or Saturday, then please come and collect them to give to any women you know.

If you are self isolating and haven't read my book 'Awakening', I am more than happy to give a free copy to anyone in St.Chad's to read whilst at home. Email me (vicar@stchadsromiley.co.uk) and we will find a way to deliver a free copy to you.

Stay safe, love one another, pray and join us on Sunday morning from wherever you are.

Love Richard

