



**St Leonard's Church**  
cnr Strickland & Mitchell Sts  
Denmark

## Anglican Parish of Denmark-Walpole

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**St. George's Church**  
11 Vista St  
Walpole

Parish Priest: Revd Sally Buckley tssf 9848 2173  
Wardens: Alison Kershaw 9848 2606, Sally Prickett 0428 747 262. Judy Ross 0455 509 317  
Treasurer: Chris Prickett 0413 103 743

***We endeavour to be an expression of God's love in the community***

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Thursday, 14 May 2020.

Dear Parishioners,

I pray that you have all had a good and productive week, and are keeping well, or at least, as well as can be expected!

Well, this week has again seen more proposed changes offered in the coming weeks as the WA Government moves towards easing some of the restrictions in their "Phrase 2 of the WA Roadmap". If you are interested in reading this document, if you *Google* "COVID-19 coronavirus: WA Roadmap" you should get to the document.

From Monday (18<sup>th</sup>) we will be allowed public gatherings of up to 20 people, as long as the social distancing rules of 4m<sup>2</sup> and good hygiene are adhered to. Churches may reopen thereafter. Oh! Goody, you may think! **HOWEVER**, there are a number of conditions in the fine print which you need to be aware of, and which has influenced our decisions going forward.

While St George's in Walpole will be able to cope with the 20 rule and the ability for correct social distancing using the chairs, we calculated that at St Leonard's we would be struggling to fit 17 or 18 in the space, having less flexibility with the pews.

On speaking to the Bishop and Archdeacon on Tuesday afternoon, they were cautioning parishes not to hurry back, and if worship does recommence, it be services of Morning Prayer rather than Holy Communion, and there will be no refreshments after the service.

Also, in the WA Government guidelines is the stipulation that we will need to complete "an official COVID Safety Plan" before venues reopen. The problem is that the government hasn't finished drafting the safety plans yet! I understand these plans are likely to cover cleaning and disinfecting areas, on-going good hygiene, physical distancing and possibly the maintaining of an attendance log with contact details for each attendee.

I spent yesterday in discussion with the Wardens, then Fr. Kevin and Harold in Walpole and finally, with the Parish Councillors via email and this is the plan we have come up with:

St George's Walpole. Fr. Kevin is prepared to reopen the church on **May 31<sup>st</sup> – Pentecost Sunday** – for Morning Prayer, **on the proviso** that we have been able to complete and submit our COVID Safety Plan by then. As I mentioned, St George's has a smaller congregation (approximately 12), a larger floor area and individual chairs which can be appropriately spaced.

St Leonard's, as I said above, is not so straight forward - our congregation is bigger and worships in a smaller space, with pews which cannot be moved. Other issues we need to consider is that we would be meeting for Morning Prayer, and we would need to submit our Safety Plan prior to recommencing worship. If we did recommence worship, how do we keep the congregation to just the correct number and would we have to have someone standing at the church door, turning people away? Do we have several services to enable parishioners to attend at different times?

The Wardens and I spent some time yesterday discussing the viability of worship in Denmark in the short term. I am taking Annual Leave at the end of June and the first two weeks of July (more about that later) and for continuity, the decision we finally came to, was that we continue as we have for the time being and aim to reopen St Leonard's on **July 19<sup>th</sup>** with a big celebration, hoping that by then a lot of these restrictions will have eased. I know that seems a long way off but the rate this year is going, it won't be long and I do think I / we have a strong duty of care to our more vulnerable parishioners.

This morning I received a beautiful reflection from one of my Franciscan Tertiary sisters, Gabrielle McGee:

There is a time to be slow  
Lie low to the wall,  
until the bitter weather passes.  
Try, as best you can, not to let  
the wire brush of doubt  
scrape from your heart  
All sense of yourself  
and your hesitant light  
If you remain generous,  
Time will come good  
And you will find your feet  
again on fresh pastures of promise,  
where the air will be kind  
and blushed with new beginnings.

So, while we wait to reopen again, I will continue with my weekly letters, and sending out a sermon and the pew sheet (or pewless pew sheet, as Alison calls them!) each week. I am hoping that you will continue to set aside some time on a Sunday morning, either streaming someone else's service, or spending time using one of the services I have sent through to you, and can I again encourage you, at around 10.15 am, to say the prayer of *Spiritual Communion* which I shared some weeks ago:

Jesus, may all that is you  
flow into me;  
May your body and blood  
be my food and drink;  
May your passion and death  
be my strength and life;  
Jesus, with you by my side,  
enough has been given;  
May the shelter I seek  
be the shadow of your cross;  
Let me not run  
from the love which you offer;  
Hold me safe  
from the forces of evil  
And on each of my dyings  
shed your light and your love;  
Keep calling to me until the day comes when,  
with your saints, I may praise you for ever. Amen.

As I indicated earlier, I am planning on taking Annual Leave from June 22<sup>nd</sup> until July 13<sup>th</sup>. This will enable me to help my husband, Chris, finish up in Esperance and make the final, permanent move to Denmark. During that time Alison Kershaw and Sally Prickett will be the people to contact for pastoral matters, with Revd Sue Lodge Calvert standing by in case of a priestly emergency.

I am also planning to be in Esperance this coming week for a few days but will be back some time on Wednesday.

So, until next week, stay safe and keep well.

With my prayers and good wishes, your priest and your friend,

Sally

