



Dear all,

It's been quite a while since we met together. I was calculating the weeks with Rosemary the other day and it has been 17 weeks for us. Around the same for you. That's just over three months, a quarter of the year.

Thank you for keeping in contact with each other. And if there are any who feel they have been neglected or forgotten, I apologise. That certainly has not been what I hoped or intended. I trust the weekend material sent out or delivered on a Friday, church online, the opportunity to catch up via zoom on a Sunday night, and the occasional texts and calls have shown so.

I gather lockdown and not meeting 'face to face' for church has been hard for some. That's understandable. There were days I found very hard. Others have told me they've found it refreshing. A time of renewal. A time to slow down, value what is really important in life, pray, know God and depend on Him more.

A few people from the community wrote to me and told me they valued the bell ring morning and evening. Two people wrote and thanked us for the service online because their church wasn't able to live stream or record. The last month I found encouraging, seeing from my study window families playing together in the park, people going for walks, exercising, talking, walking their dogs. There's a lot of fit dogs out there! Sadly, all that has stopped. But we can now get a haircut!

However, the time has come for us to be able to return to meeting together, and to do so in a way that you know is safe and in compliance with health regulations. Safe for others as well as for ourselves. I am excited and thankful as I am sure you are too. The purpose of this letter is to simply let you know when, how and why. If you have any questions or concerns, please raise them with me.

On Sunday, I talked with the Wardens and Parish Council (and Karen was invited also). We met via zoom, and this is the 'roadmap' 'going forward', to use a few familiar words.

Sunday 28 November we return, and all are welcome to meet for church. It happens that that Sunday is the first Sunday in Advent (the first Sunday in the church calendar year). A fitting start I think for, in a way, a new beginning. That's six weeks away giving us plenty of time to prepare ourselves.

Rosemary and I are grateful to the Wardens and Parish Council for understanding that we had prearranged our holidays before lockdown. This allows us to go away and return to church when you do. Rosemary especially is looking forward to holidays as she has been

working quite long hours. In the meantime, the service and sermon will continue online as it has been during lockdown, and we can catch up on Sunday nights via zoom from 5pm to 6pm.

Kid's Church is continuing to meet via zoom until they are back in church with us on 28 November. Playgroup will go back to meeting in the park from Wednesday 1 December.

I encourage Bible Studies to continue meeting, via zoom or in someone's home. If meeting in a small group in homes, it's ok. Be mindful of others. Wear a mask and keep a comfortable distance between everyone. If meeting outside masks are not compulsory but can be worn if you want. If you are hosting a Bible study at home or elsewhere (i.e. like in the park, or in the church foyer) please let Janice know. I encourage you to start meeting with others from church if you feel comfortable to meet socially. One way might be to meet together to listen to our Sunday service. Please feel free to do your own visiting. I for one would love to visit you. I don't want to put you on the spot so let me know if you'd like me to come round or drop in to the Rectory.

When we return to church for the first Sunday we're back it will be the same as before lockdown. Someone will meet us at the door, invite us to check in via the QR code, or mark our names off the roll. We will need to wear a mask and use the hand sanitiser on arrival and on leaving. A couple of people will be rostered on to usher us into the church and tell us where to sit, to ensure that we think of the comfort and safety of others as well as our own. We won't be able to sing the first Sunday but certainly the next. Oh, and it might be like a scene out of 'Gone with the Wind'. What I mean is, the doors will be open and fans running to circulate the air. It won't be blowing a gale! But the church will be properly ventilated. I don't think that will be a bother to many. The weather will be getting warmer. However, please come prepared if you feel the cool of a breeze.

On Sunday 31 October, in two weeks' time, the service online will be Holy Communion. If you want to have an individual cup with wafer I can drop one or more to you before the Sunday. Let me know and I will bring it around. The service on our first Sunday back will be Holy Communion also.

The Diocese also has helpful article up on its website about what to expect on return to church. I encourage you to have a read. Here is the link www.sydneyanglicans.net I have also attached the "road map" they sent out last week for going back.

I understand that some of you may choose to hold off coming to church until a later time, maybe Christmas or New Year. That's ok. We'll keep in touch. As I hope you will too. Again, if you have any questions or concerns please call me.

Finally, thank you for praying. Thank you for keeping in touch with God and conforming your life according to his desired way for you to live in 'different' times like we have been doing and will continue to do for some time until we understand them like we did before COVID.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Trevor

