St Alban's News

August 2021

Pause, and seek the Lord

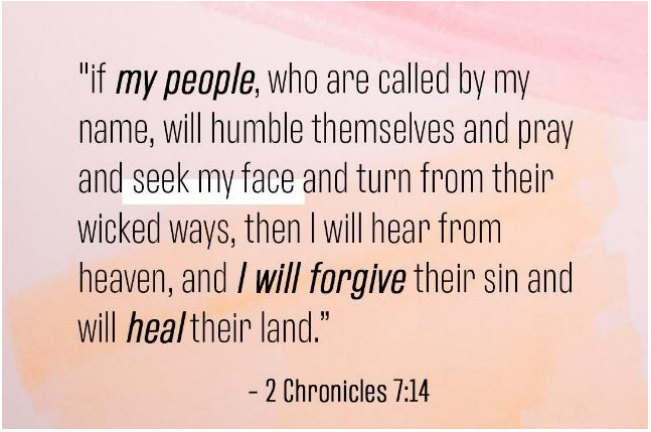
It looks like August is going to be neither the nightmare of escalating cases and overflowing hospitals that some were fearing, nor a paradise of freedom. For months we've been hanging our hopes on the next stage of the roadmap – the 12th April haircut, the 17th May coffee at a friend's house, and then Freedom Day on 21st June 19th July. But now it's here – and we don't quite know what to do.

Maybe it's a time to stop hanging our hopes on the next stage of the roadmap. Time to pause and reflect more deeply. Many people are re-evaluating their work-life balance, others at taking new directions in life and work.

As Christians, we should be asking what God has been teaching us. In the Bible, plagues are often calls to repent, to turn back to God. If God has been using Covid in that way, have we listened? If we really miss being with our fellow Christians, what are we going to do with the freedom to meet again now? Or if actually we've got comfortable doing church in our slippers in front of the TV, what does that say about our commitment to one another?

Over the summer we're having a bit of a pause at St Alban's. We're carrying on with Sunday services, of course – in-person and live streamed – and with the Tuesday night Bible study. But Thought for the Day, TLC, Kidz Church and our new Messy Church are all having a break.

Let's use that time to get our lives back into perspective, to seek the Lord's will.



Teddy bears' picnic

Thursday 12th August, 10-12 – Vicarage garden



Mid-way through the holidays, on Thursday 12th August, we'll be having a Teddy bears' picnic for children of all ages, and their parents / carers, and – most importantly – their teddies! It will start at 10am in the Vicarage garden (weather permitting), so bring your bear, bring a picnic and let's enjoy the summer together.

Community newsletter

As we emerge from Covid, we'd like to remind the local community that St Alban's is still very much alive and here for them. So one of Jamal's projects during his placement here is going to be to produce and coordinate delivering a St Alban's newsletter to all the homes in the district.

We're looking for members of the St Alban's church to share stories and experiences they've had with the church and their faith for a newsletter that will be shared around the Ashmore Park community. If you've got any ideas of things you think people in the local community would like to know, or stories, especially of how God has helped you over the time of the pandemic, please let Jamal know.



No fayre

With the continuing uncertainty over the Covid situation, the DCC decided that it would not be wise to plan on having an autumn fayre to replace the summer one. So let's focus our efforts on planning for Christmas …and praying that things will look better by then.

Praying the district

One last prayer area – church and shops



Our final prayer area is the one around the church itself, including the vicarage, the shops, the Ashmore Inn and the flats above the shops. Please pray for all of us who live here, together with the prosperity of the businesses in these uncertain times.

In September we'll be starting to pray round the district again, because, as the hymn says, "the voice of prayer is never silent". If we want God to work in our community we need to trust him with our prayers. If you'd like to take part in any way, please let Helen Fish know.

Irene Matthews

Some of you will have known Irene Matthews, who lived in Ashmore Avenue and had connections with St Alban's for many years. She passed away last week, and her funeral is at St Thomas's on 13th August. Please remember her family and friends in your prayers.

Thank you for being on the rota

A big thank you to everyone who has agreed to be on the rota to help with different aspects of the services, and thank you too to Laurence for organising it. But it's always good to have new people involved, so if you'd like to help in any way, please let Laurence or Tom know.

If you're on the rota and know that you won't be able to make a particular Sunday, please try and arrange a swap with someone else – and tell us, either by writing it on the copy pinned up by the door into the hall, or by emailing or phoning Laurence or Tom.

Welcome to Derek D'Souza

We're delighted to announce that the Revd Derek D'Souza has agreed to work part-time to help St Thomas's until a new Team Rector is appointed. Derek will be starting at St Thomas's on 15th August, and St Alban's will get to meet him the following week, as he will be coming to preach and preside at Communion here on 22nd August, when Rev Tom will be on holiday.

St Alban's Church

Website: www.saintalbanschurch.co.uk

Facebook page: **St Albans Church, Ashmore Park - @StAlbansAP**
https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansAP

YouTube channel: **St Albans Ashmore Park**
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQRoSiie54dIBgERFOsBA8A

WhatsApp prayer networks: **Praying Women** (contact Elaine Bennett), **Holy Hands** (for men – contact Rev Tom)

Contact: revtomfish@gmail.com **or 01902 732317 / 07841 382773**
or our Administrator on stalbansashmorepark@gmail.com

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