

Sunday 14 June 2020

Greater Togetherness

Dear All

This week, having a few days off, we took the opportunity to visit friends in Milton Keynes. Driving down a quiet motorway felt very strange after so long and it was lovely to see them, albeit at a distance across the garden! I'm sure many of us are longing for that sense of togetherness again, to be reunited with loved ones and friends, and it's good that 'lockdown' is gradually being lifted – something we want to be sure to do safely.

'Greater Togetherness' is our theme for this Sunday as we continue our series exploring how we might take forward the positive changes we have seen recently. With many stories of racial injustice across our media and cries that 'Black Lives Matter', it is a very topical theme indeed. I hope it will help us reflect more deeply on our vision priorities and what it might mean to be truly 'Open' and 'Connected'.

Sunday's Service

I'm delighted that Lusa Nsenga Ngoy will be preaching for us this Sunday. Lusa is the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Mission and Ministry Enabler for the Diocese of Leicester. I was inspired to invite him after hearing him speak of 'ubuntu' (the African philosophy of life) in his interview with Bishop Martyn a few weeks ago. If you are interested, you can watch it here: [Bishop's Weekly Message – interview with Lusa](#). As ever, the links for our service and for the service sheet will be on our [website](#). We will also again send an email with just the service link. **If you open that email on Sunday and click on the link in blue writing, it should take you straight to the service.** (If you click on it before Sunday, there's no harm done, you will simply see a 'placeholder' slide!) Any problems, do please ask someone for help, or call Adele.

Opening Church

I expect you will have heard the government announcement that churches can now open for private prayer when they can do so safely. Please pray for us as we talk through plans for how we can enable this for St Mary's in a way that is welcoming but also sustainable and safe for both visitors and volunteers. Just to be clear, we are not yet ready to open as there is much preparation to be done first, but I hope to be able to give you a clearer update in my letter next week.

A Reminder:

Patchwork Banner

As we think about community and togetherness, it seemed a good opportunity to remind everyone about the collaborative patchwork fabric hanging for the Church. Everyone is invited to decorate a green fabric square (4, 6 or 8 inches + border) using whatever technique you choose. When sewn together, we hope this will form a banner that speaks of our continued faith and hope through this time of separation. Please contact Katherine Hetzel for more details: church_warden@stmaryincharnwood.org.uk

"Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
Ephesians 4 vv 1-3

With love in Christ
Adele