

DATE: 23RD JUNE 2021

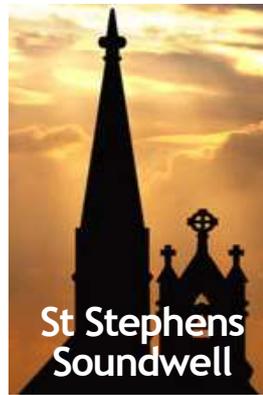


VIA **ZOOM!**

Join in online every Sunday
in July at 4pm with **Peter!**

Click link [Peter](#)
MEETING ID: 724 4261 7817
Password: Tea&Talk

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72442617817?pwd=NIgydHlsUXZaQTVjaDE3dk9nOUk2UT09>



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Hello my dear sisters and brothers in Christ

You may or may not yet have spotted the title of the lead article in Open Space... Disappointment. The reason I chose that title and theme is because, as the article states at the beginning, Regan Meares won't be joining us in July as we were expecting. I, along with most of us I'm sure, was really excited at the prospect of Regan joining our Church family and ministering alongside us.

Sadly, on Saturday 19th June, I received this official notification from the Diocese, following a telephone conversation with the Director of Ministry Division, the day before:
"Regan Meares will not be ordained on 4th July as planned.
Regan is being supported through this time, please keep him in your prayers."

I will let you know more, as and when I have more information to share with you. I know no more than this at this stage. So, as suggested, please continue to hold Regan, and all those involved in this, in your prayers. We trust God is in this situation, because we know God is in all things. Thank you!

There will have been some other disappointments for all of us I'm sure, following the extension of the restrictions as they were, but we all know that this is for our own safety and to stop the spread of the newest Delta variant of Covid-19. For us in Church this will include a delay in all the ways we hoped Church life might move forward, as I described in my letter last month. These may all simply be put back until restrictions ease and our nation moves into the next phase of the Government Roadmap. Or may require tweaking as we move forward. We will let you know more as soon as possible.

So, for now, please continue to book a place to come to Church by calling **07903 763 420**. Our Church Dedication Service will be on Sunday 11th and Wednesday 14th July – so please do book in for one or other of those 'special' services. When we no longer have to book a place at services, Open Space can then be collected from Church. If this becomes tricky for you, let me know and perhaps someone can drop it to your home.

The Summer Fayre, scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday 3rd July, has been 'paused' for the time being and we will let you know when we may be able to schedule in a new date.

Tea and Talk will continue throughout July. There will be a new link for each of the Sunday's in July, so please do take note of that here and in the advert at the top of the page. ID: 712 6792 6024 Passcode: Tea&Talk Details will be on the website.

Pray & Praise and Play in Page Park with a Picnic at 11am on 10th July will continue for Youth Church families and helpers. We were hoping for this to be a whole Church invitation, but because groups meeting outdoors are limited in number to 30, we will just have to focus on Youth Church for this time.

Dial-a-Sermon will continue, so please do phone in to listen to the current weeks' Sermon, or go to our website and click on the link to hear it that way. The Church website address is on the advert...



Luckily for us, the Bishop has re-scheduled my Installation and Induction as Vicar, so she can find space to get away on holiday... which is great news, as we don't need to concern ourselves about the current restrictions. The new date and time is **Thursday 9th September at 7.30pm in Church**, so we hope and pray that we can celebrate together on this new date.

We thoroughly enjoyed having Cathie Watson with us on placement throughout June and I think she very much enjoyed being with us. Even through her mask we felt her joy in Jesus, didn't we? Cathie has written this message for us all....

Hello St Stephens! If I didn't get the pleasure of meeting you in person then my name is Cathie and I'm going into my final year at Trinity college as an Ordinand (trainee vicar/chaplain etc.). It's been such a pleasure to serve and observe, to get to know you all as well as learn about the wonders of Costco and Midwifery (when you know, you know!). As Boris Johnson's announced that further restrictions were being slowed down for a bit I know it can cause anxiety, disappointment or even anger. I'm reminded of St Paul's letter to the Colossians (3:12-14) "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." Now, more than ever the community and the world needs that extra bit of support, kindness and patience. And remember, when we don't feel like we can give that, we turn to God who restores and refills us with his love. We do so not as individuals but as a community, God's 'chosen people, holy and dearly loved.' Keep running the race St Stephens!

I have given Cathie a Willow Tree Angel, called 'Lots of Love', from all of us at St Stephens, so she has something to remember us all by in the years ahead. Please do continue to hold Cathie and her family, Aidan and Reuben, in your prayers as she embarks on the last year of her training at Trinity College, before starting a Curacy somewhere next summer.

We plan to resume Youth Church on Sunday mornings, and also Baptism Services from September and would love some more of you to part of those times with our families. If you'd like to be a 'helper' at Youth Church now and again AND / OR support the families of our parish by attending their child's Baptism from time to time. Please do be in touch with me if you'd like to be part of these wonderful ministries. The new Youth Church team will be meeting on 7th July to think how best we serve our families and Follow Jesus together. YOU are more than welcome to come along and listen in or get involved – just be in touch for more details. Thank you!

Please be assured of my love and prayers at all times. If you would like me to visit, please do let me know as we can easily and carefully arrange that. If you would like to speak on the phone, then please do know you can call at any time... although I may be asleep after 9pm! I know this time ahead of transition from full restrictions to less restrictions, then onto no restrictions, will be a challenge for us all. We may well experience feelings of both joy and fear in various measures. So, keep following Jesus and remain connected to Him. Keep in touch with one another and keep connected to the Body of Christ. And most importantly, always know you are loved, by God and your Church Community.

Every blessing

Lisa x

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Charity number 1131503