

S. JAMES'

Bicentenary 2019-2024

Wardens' Message to the Parish re COVID-19

NEW Update 20th March 2020

Dear Parishioners, staff, volunteers, and musicians,

This email is to update you on the Acting Rector and Wardens' evolving response to try and contain the spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) at St James'. This email has been updated to 20th March 2020 and will be updated and reissued when new information comes to hand.

Worship and the Church Building

NEW Following instructions from the Archbishop, all services are cancelled until further notice. The Music Department and Choir have expressed enthusiasm for continuing to provide music at Wednesday Evensong and at Sung Eucharist at the special time of 10am on Sunday (both closed door). The Wardens have agreed, provided social distancing is observed, and thank the musicians and choristers for their service in trying circumstances. Following a successful trial at Evensong last Wednesday (at the time of writing, 9,179 people had been reached), these services will be available on Facebook Live, found on the St. James' King Street Facebook page (contact the office if you need help in finding this page).

NEW The St. James' Guild of Ringers has volunteered to ring the bells prior to the 10am prior to the 10am Sung Eucharist as a witness to the community. The Wardens have agreed, provided social distancing is observed, and thank the Guild for their service in trying circumstances.

NEW The St. James' Singers activities are suspended until further notice.

NEW The church remains open between 9am and 4pm for private prayer and visitors.

NEW The Annual General Meeting scheduled to take place on Sunday 22nd March has been postponed to a date to be advised. Wardens, Parish Councilors, Nominators and Synod Representatives all remain in office until the AGM is held.

Clergy, servers and staff are instructed to use the hand sanitisers provided in the vestry and sanctuary.

Holy Water in the font at the West Door Baptistry and the stoup by the entrance to the Chapel of the Holy Spirit for signing with the sign of the cross as a reminder of our baptismal covenant, has been removed.

Hard surface areas are disinfected regularly with alcoholic wipes and cleaners. Surface areas cleaned include collection bowls and donation points, candle holders and the like. Pews and floors are cleaned according to the routine maintenance program.

Fr John Stewart has responsibility for worship arrangements and Warden Sid Blairs has responsibility for the church.

NEW Concerts

All concerts (including Wednesday lunchtime, the Saturday series and externally organised concerts) have been cancelled or, if possible, rescheduled to a much later date.

St James' Hall

NEW Two cases of possible casual contact with COVID-19 have been reported by tenants in St. James' Hall (none in the Parish office). These are being managed by the managing agent of the St James' Hall (Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL)).

JLL has instituted similar cleaning and sanitising arrangements.

Warden Sid Blairs has responsibility for the St James' Hall.

NEW St. James' Pilgrimage

The St. James' Pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostela has been postponed for a year, to approximately the same time in 2021.

NEW Parish Finances

The Wardens are working on a number of scenarios to decide how best to manage the Parish finances in a period when a significant part of our income may be removed due to Parishioners and visitors not attending church services or concerts. Our first responsibility is to our staff and musicians, who rely on the income they receive from the Parish to support themselves and their families. We are also keenly aware that we are a comparatively wealthy Parish and we should support those Parishes that are struggling.

More on this in a later update, but if you are a Parishioner who makes your offering by cash in the plate, or if you use the envelope system, please consider making electronic offerings to "Churchwardens St James' Gen. A/C", BSB 032 007, A/C 250025. Alternatively, one-off offerings can be made through the Parish website sjks.org.au/donate. Envelopes can be dropped off to the Parish office, 9am-5pm Tuesday-Thursday.

NEW St. James' Institute

All St. James' Institute (SJI) face to face meetings and activities are suspended. However, SJI is developing some exciting plans to keep its programme going, by being entirely online until further notice.

SJI will send out further details to subscribers and any other interested person, but plans for SJI and the wider Parish include:

- ◆ SJI events (Dr. Robyn Wrigley Carr, Revd. Catherine Eaton and Chris Mulherin) being broadcast as live webinars available to subscribers
- ◆ Parish Lenten study groups meeting online
- ◆ Morning Prayer being offered as a live web conference daily at 8:30am
- ◆ Other online opportunities as they arise

Personal elevated good hygiene practices

The World Health Organisation recommends these standard practices:

WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY: Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and running water throughout the day and after using the bathroom.

PRACTICE RESPIRATORY HYGIENE: Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately into a covered bin.

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING AND AVOID SOCIAL KISSING, HUGGING AND HANDSHAKES: Maintain at least 1 metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing and avoid social kissing and “air kissing”, hugs and handshakes.

AVOID TOUCHING EYES, NOSE & MOUTH: Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

IF YOU HAVE FEVER, COUGH AND DIFFICULTY BREATHING, SEEK MEDICAL CARE

EARLY: Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

STAY INFORMED AND FOLLOW ADVICE GIVEN BY YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER:

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19 by using the resources supplied below and follow the advice of credible government (see below) and medical authorities rather than social media sources.

NSW Health

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

You can also call NSW Healthdirect: 1800 022 222

The Federal Government has a dedicated coronavirus hotline: 1800 020 080.

St James' staff, volunteers, and musicians

If you or a family member have transited through either Mainland China, Iran, South Korea or Italy or you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, do not come to St James'. It is recommended that you isolate yourself for 14 days.

If you are personally unwell, if you are experiencing symptoms related to coronavirus, including fever, flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue, or shortness of breath, do not come to St James'. It is recommended that you are to stay home.

Warden Holly Raiche has responsibility for staff and volunteer matters.

Should anyone have any concerns, please don't hesitate to be in touch with either the Acting Rector or any of the Wardens.

We acknowledge that these are challenging times and the heightened level of concern within the community in general may be distressing to our community, please continue to pray for all those suffering from the virus, those caring for them, and those affected in other ways.

Yours in Christ,
Wardens Holly Raiche, Sid Blairs and Chris Lock
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