

17 April 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Holy Week and Easter

Despite the many restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we were still able to conduct our Holy Week and Easter services - although in a much-reduced format. The interesting thing is that we engaged with many more people through our broadcast services than we would do normally. Here are some encouraging statistics taken from the Parish Facebook page, (current at 16 April):

SJKS Holy Week and Easter Services				
Date:		Number Reached:	Number of Views:	Comments:
5-Apr	Palm Sunday	3612	2700	155
6-Apr	Holy Monday	1751	824	31
7-Apr	Holy Tuesday	1136	740	20
8-Apr	Holy Wednesday	1416	887	23
9-Apr	Maundy Thursday	2511	1700	63
10-Apr	Good Friday:			
	* Stations of the Cross	1615	1500	57
	* Liturgy of the Cross	5951	3500	52
12-Apr	Easter Day	4025	2800	215

I especially thank our guest preacher, the Reverend Catherine Eaton, for her erudite and thought-provoking series of sermons. They were so well shaped for our current vulnerable times and likewise gratefully received by those who heard them. We are planning both to print and digitally publish the series and will contact you once they are available. We also look forward to inviting Mother Catherine to 'preach in person' at St James' once normal services have resumed.

I also thank the St James' ministry team (including the staff, singers and bell ringers) for their commitment to keeping the services going and providing a marvellous celebration of Easter. To this group I add Simon Turnill who has greatly improved the quality of the recording, presentation and delivery of our services. As a result of this, we are now investigating the installation of media equipment that will allow us regular livestreaming of services and other activities in the future. Donations would be gratefully received!

Continuing Worship Arrangements

We will continue to livestream the following services for the foreseeable future:

- Sunday 10am – Choral Eucharist
- Wednesday 6:15pm – Choral Evensong

Other services will be streamed as and when required. The monthly Sunday Choral Evensong, however, will not be conducted while the COVID-19 restrictions are in place. Services can be accessed by way of either the parish website at: www.sjks.org.au/church/online-services/ or the St James' Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/stjameskingstreet/

Morning Prayer will continue to be held on weekdays at 8:30am using the Zoom Conferencing Service. There is now a dedicated page on the Parish website that has further information, including the order of service. It is at www.sjks.org.au/morning-prayer

Likewise, **Kids @ Church** and **Resting Space** both continue to meet online. Please go to the Parish website to find further details.

Getting Connected

Some people may be struggling to access our online services with their home computers. A simple and portable solution can be to purchase a basic iPad (with wifi), which is sufficient for Facebook, Zoom Conferencing and You Tube, among other things. They sell for around \$530 from Apple, but bigger iPads give you more options.

Music @ St James

On Facebook, over the past week, we have been able to present several motets sung by the Choir and organ pieces played by Alistair Nelson. It is our hope to keep performing these virtual recitals from time to time so that people can remain engaged with our cultural activities.

Offertories and Donations

I am pleased to say that our direct credit offerings have increased in recent weeks as new people join this option. On the downside, cash and envelope offerings have ceased for the time being. Overall giving is down, but it is not a desperate situation. The bank account details for direct credit giving are BSB: 032 007, Account No: 250025, Account Name: Churchwardens St James' General A/c. Or you can make an on-line donation at www.sjks.org.au/donate

Conclusion

So far, it looks as though self-isolation is containing the spread of COVID-19. It has therefore proved to be a good thing, but it looks as though we are going to remain in this situation for some time. Nevertheless, this crisis has provided us with a good opportunity to learn how to be church in different ways and we will continue to explore new ideas as we go along. Let's see where the Spirit leads us.

*Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

(Church of England Prayer Resources)

Every blessing,

