



Update Letter – Thursday 3rd September 2020

Dear all,

I hope you have been able to have some time off this Summer and had an opportunity for some holiday. Zara and I have been grateful for the opportunity to be away and have some time with family which has been lovely. I know that some are heading on holiday later this week or next week so to those, have a lovely time.

This first week of the school terms feels quite strange. We are seeing children return to schools – some for the first time in many months, others moving to new schools after a curtailed opportunity to say farewell. This then gives the opportunity for some to return to work in a fuller capacity, many still from home and some on reduced hours. Our routines begin to shift into what might be more familiar and yet so many things are different and unknown. For many of us, we are still getting used to going out, wearing masks and being limited in gathering with family members as we would have done before. There are unknowns for some about what their job looks like going forward, or even if it's still going to be there. In light of local lockdowns in other parts of the country, there is still the possibility that restrictions may be re-imposed on us if cases rise significantly.



I wrote in my last update about the emergence of mental health issues in those around us and I want to offer some tips to us all to help us continue to process what's going on around and in us.

1. **Remember who God is.** Think about one characteristic of God that is true, that you can focus on right now. It might be that he is provider, saviour, healer, friend.

2. **Remember who you are.** What does God say about you? What has he said to you in the past? Perhaps that you are called, forgiven, equipped, known.

Write these things down, and remind yourself of them regularly.

3. **Talk to God about what's going on.** Pray – we need to keep the communication lines open with God. Relationships only thrive if there's communication. Perhaps you're finding that hard right now, maybe



journal or write a letter to God. Be honest – he can take it! If you're struggling or angry at what's happened or what you've lost, tell him. If you're full of joy and contentment and grateful for his blessings, tell him.

4. Talk to other people about how you are. We are all too good at being 'fine' and not good at admitting when we're finding things hard. Find a safe and trusted friend, perhaps have a time of sharing and praying together in your Growth Group or with others from Church. Let's keep the community close, tight-knit and in touch. Zara and I would love to hear from you if you'd like to chat or you can always contact your Growth Group leader.

I'm conscious that for some of us, anxiety isn't just being a bit cautious of going out but is a clinical condition which impacts every area of life. Depression isn't just 'feeling low' but is an inability to function in a normal way. I would urge any of you who are struggling to seek medical advice, or indeed talk to somebody about it. But I suspect for many more of us, perhaps we are feeling more anxious than we used to, unsure about the regulations and restrictions around, or perhaps we are struggling with feeling low, listless or struggling to find hope. As we continue to journey this season of Coronavirus, let's lean into God, let's grow in our own self-awareness and emotional maturity and let's deepen the bonds which hold us together in Christ. He is good, he is always with us and will never forsake us.

Services in Church resuming

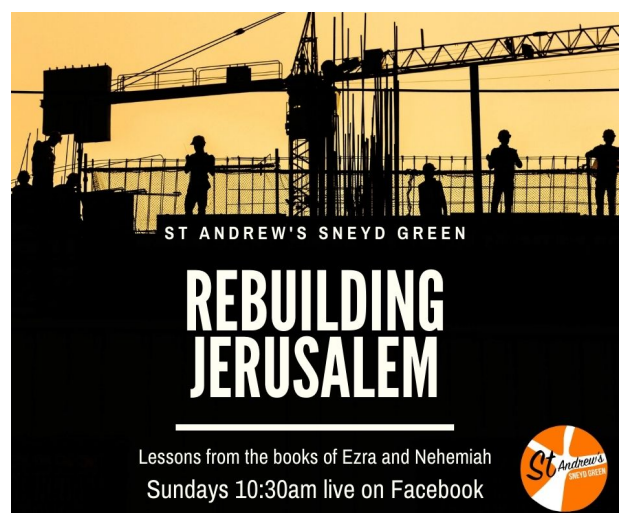
We're really excited to be having our first service in church this Sunday 6th September and I want to express my thanks to Pam and Jenny for their hard work coordinating the teams of cleaners on Tuesday to make everything ready. I have again attached the more detailed document explaining how things will look and there's a video on Facebook too. Please contact us if you are planning on attending so we have an idea of numbers. Please do be in touch with Rob or myself if you have any concerns or questions. To make this service happen, we need a team of volunteers to act as welcomers and to form a cleaning team so the Church can be adequately cleaned each week – please be in touch with Sue if you are able to help.



Our usual 10:30am online services are going to continue plus Sarah is producing some further age-appropriate video resources for our children and young people.

Preaching Series

We are going to be looking at the rebuilding of Jerusalem from Ezra and Nehemiah at our 10:30am services online – which will include some video content and longer sermons.



At the 9am service in Church, we will be following the lectionary readings currently journeying through Matthew 18 onwards. As we are having a shorter service in Church, this will be a much briefer homily. The September readings are attached.

Quick notices

1. **Sunday morning coffee** after the service each week on Zoom – everyone is welcome! Contact us for the Zoom code.
2. Our next two-weekly **Church prayer meeting** is on Tuesday 15th September at 8pm – please join us as we continue to pray for the mission and ministry of St Andrew's. Contact us for the Zoom code.
3. **Our Tuesday Communion services** are back, live on Facebook each week at 12pm – everyone is welcome.

With every blessing,

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Services at St Andrew's

Sunday 9:00am: Holy Communion IN CHURCH

Sunday 10:30am: Morning Worship ONLINE

Tuesday 12:00pm: Holy Communion ONLINE

To watch live, go to Facebook: www.facebook.com/standrewssg

Catch up on our YouTube Channel: [St Andrew's Sneyd Green](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

Details and news on our website: www.standrewssneydgreen.com