



**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Dear church family,

I write to you as we yet again face a national lockdown, not something any of us wanted. In some ways it feels like another kick in the teeth. We have taken the difficult decision to close our building for the time being for both services and private prayer – but this decision will be under review over the coming weeks. We're heartbroken but feel that this is the sensible thing to do to ensure everyone's safety and protection. We'll let you know as soon as we have more positive news on this front.

I read a quote this morning which said "We are not all in the same boat but we are in the same storm". We are all facing the storm of lockdown 3 but are each in a different boat, some are in yachts and some are on driftwood. Please be kind to yourself as you realise the impact of this lockdown on you.



The Bible is really clear about comparison, it's not a good thing. It's not good to be jealous when others have what we want, this is the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment. But I also don't think comparison about others having a tougher time than us is helpful either. Whether you are on a yacht or on driftwood or somewhere in between, it's important that we all acknowledge the storm. If you feel you are on driftwood, please be in touch and we will try and help in whatever way we can. The Bible is really clear, life it not about us – it's about Jesus.

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

*Hebrews 12: 1-3*

For me this passage brings me such hope at present. My life is about Jesus, this is my priority. Jesus should be my first port of call for everything. It is Jesus that I take my concerns and pain to. It is Jesus who I look to as my source of hope. It is Jesus who helps me 'not grow weary and lose heart.' This is our prayer for you too as we face another lockdown with very little emotional capacity, that you would 'Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.'

So as we start 2021, let's be a community who try to fix our eyes on Jesus. There are a number of things that can really help us all do that:

### **Read the Bible and Pray**

In an update email James sent earlier this week, he included some daily resources to help you get started and we're also attaching daily readings until the end of February to this letter. I encourage you give it a go.



### **Watch Sunday Services and join in with Zoom coffee**

It can be so easy to get digital fatigue and switch off from watching services online. We know they are nothing in comparison to actually all being together, but they are the best we have at present and really do help. For those who can, commenting along helps us feel connected and encouraged.

Our Zoom coffee times (11.45am-12.30pm each week) are a great time for fellowship and a general catch-up, we appreciate that it is lunch preparation time but you'd be welcome to join us from your kitchen too! If you're unsure about Zoom, please get in touch. Contact us for the Zoom code.


### **Join a Growth Group**

A great way to help us fix our eyes on Jesus and not grow weary and lose heart is to be part of a Growth Group. Growth Groups are small groups that meet weekly to encourage each other, pray, worship and study the bible. We would highly recommend that everyone in the church is part of a group. Some of the groups have managed to meet online during this time and others have had regular phone calls between members. If you are not in a group, you have hopefully had some communication from us already, but please, please consider joining one. Get in touch with us and we will link you into a Growth Group.

### **Join in with our weekly rhythm of, Prayer, Fasting and Worship**

Fixing our eyes on Jesus means making Him our focus and our priority. We want to give Him the honour due His name in worship, we want to call out to Him 'to end the storm', we want to declare who He is and listen to what He is calling us to do in 2021. Ultimately, we

are nothing without God and when we come before Him, he calls and equips us to do His work. Therefore, we are feeling a sense of call from God to establish a weekly rhythm of prayer, fasting and worship.



YOU'RE INVITED...  
TO WORSHIP  
TO PRAYER  
TO FASTING

Sundays 8-9pm - worship night on Zoom  
Wednesdays 8pm - Thursdays 8pm - call to fast  
Thursdays 7-7:30am - prayer meeting on Zoom  
Thursdays 8-8:15pm - communion on Zoom

**Contact us for all the Zoom codes you'll need.**

Next Thursday (14<sup>th</sup>) there won't be a communion service at 8pm because we are joining with the City Gathering New Year call to prayer (see below). This is the code for that gathering:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82076044482?pwd=elJhMdBteGlzcFhPTThZUlpSV3R2QT09>  
Meeting ID 820 7604 4482. Passcode 267012.

Our regular Communion will start on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January at 8pm.

As part of the call to prayer for 100 hours hosted by the Beacon House of Prayer, St Andrew's are leading an hour of prayer and worship on Zoom – hour led by Debbie with worship from Nathan. This is taking place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January from 8-9pm. Further details and a Zoom code will follow.

These times are for the whole church not just those who see themselves as 'pray-ers' or 'worship-pers'. We believe out of these times we will see things change and God will show us the way ahead as a church community. Please know you invited and we would encourage you to give them a try.



### **On another note**

For us as a family, baby number three is due this month. We promise that the news will be communicated to you as quickly as possible. Babies come when they come and so we do not exactly know when paternity leave will begin, it could still be 5 weeks away. James will be off for three weeks after baby is born but plans are in place to ensure online services happen and that communication does not stop whilst he is not working. Our wonderful wardens (Martyn and Rob) are more than happy for you to be in touch with them if you have any problems at this time.

With love and prayers,  
Zara and James

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YouTube: [St Andrew's Sneyd Green](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCStAndrewsSneydGreen)

Website: [www.standrewssneydgreen.com](http://www.standrewssneydgreen.com)





# 2021 NEW YEAR CALL TO PRAYER

**Thursday 14 January 2021 - 8.00pm - 9.00pm**

Join Christians from across North Staffordshire as we pray together for the needs of our area and the nation. We will also be linking with the Beacon House of Prayer as it provides a special New Year 100 hour prayer canopy.

**Zoom: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82076044482?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82076044482?pwd=elJhMdBteGlzcFhPTThZUlpsV3R2QT09)**

**pwd=elJhMdBteGlzcFhPTThZUlpsV3R2QT09**

**Meeting ID: 820 7604 4482**

**Passcode: 267012**

*Declaring the greatness of God*

**100 HOURS NEW YEAR WORSHIP & PRAYER CANOPY**

ORGANISED BY BEACON HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR LOCAL CHRISTIANS AND HOUSES OF PRAYER NETWORK

TUES 12TH JAN 8PM TO SAT 16TH JAN 12 MIDNIGHT

SIGN UP TO PRAY FOR AN HOUR! JOIN IN WORSHIP & PRAYER EVERY 4 HRS - BEACONHOP.ORG

**"We are hoping that these 100 hours in January will be filled with prayer from our own homes and Zoom gatherings of led worship and intercession. As we lift the name of the Lord high in this 100-hour canopy, we want to declare his greatness, expect fresh hope to rise up in the church, and look for the moving of the Spirit in every town and place."**

**- William & Karen Porter (Beacon House of Prayer)**

**Sign up to pray here: <https://www.beaconhop.org/100>**

**CITY VISION  
MINISTRIES**

**SALTBOX**  
Strengthening Our Communities