

JULY 1ST 2020 | ISSUE#14

The Rock

ST PETER'S PARISH CHURCH, RUSHDEN



BELONG - BELIEVE - GROW - REACH OUT

A Time to Pause and Give Thanks

Today marks 100 days exactly since lockdown officially began. What do you think about that?

I recently overheard one person remark that these past fourteen weeks have gone by like a flash, only to hear another comment that lockdown has felt like a whole year in itself!

I'm sure we will all agree that time seems to be operating rather differently in this season. The rhythms and routines of 'normal' life have been replaced with a system which requires us to simply work from one day to the next, never quite knowing how things are going to play out a week from now.

It's been hard – indeed often impossible – for of us to carry out many of the plans we made for this summer, not to mention make new ones. Perhaps you had a holiday booked, or a celebration you were planning to attend? Maybe you should have been doing exams around this time after months of hard work and revision?

I was supposed to be getting ordained as a priest this past weekend. Fortunately, this kind of event can be rearranged, unlike many others – but I was still disappointed that it didn't take place, and it's a strange feeling not knowing when it actually will.

One of the many reasons I have been looking forward to my priesting, is because this service will officially mark a year of living in Rushden with all of you at St. Peter's. That may not sound like much, but it means a lot to me. This has been a huge year for me, I've gone further and deeper with Jesus than ever before as I've taken on new roles and responsibilities. I've been required to grow in myself too and learn lots of new skills all the time. This has without a doubt been the most important year of my life so far, but it has also been the most fulfilling and uplifting I think, despite all that has been going on.

And that is largely down to all of you, my church family.

Nothing has been easy about these past months, but for me, being a part of this community has been a real blessing. Being able

to journey with others through this, whether it be online, over the phone, or now at a safe distance in person – has allowed me to stay positive and prevented me from losing perspective.

While on my ordination retreat last week (which still took place... online), I took some time to think about what I am most grateful for during this time. To be honest, it took some motivation to have a go at this activity – but when I finally sat down to do so, I realised that I shouldn't have put it off. I quickly realised that **there is so much I am grateful for at the moment**. Here's just a few of the things that I jotted down:

- Laughing with the young people again online at youth group.
- Speaking to my family more regularly than ever before.
- Spending time in nature/ enjoying the birds in my garden.
- Emily's baking.
- The cool relief of the church building on a hot summers day.
- More frequent opportunities to pause and reflect upon/invest in my relationship with Jesus.
- My life in Rushden, the home we have here and the friendships we've been able to establish.

A verse I'd love to share with you, and one that I've been trying my best to live out these past weeks is 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:

'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus'.

We don't know what the next 100 days holds in store for us exactly, nor the days after that. We can't be sure that the plans we make will work out - but we can trust in God's plans, and together as a family in Christ we can journey alongside one another in **joy, prayer** and **gratitude**.

Today 'I thank my God every time I remember you' (Phil 1:3) - for this first year with you in Rushden, at St. Peter's Church.

What are you grateful for today? And how might you sustain a heart of thanksgiving in the days ahead?

- Rev. Jordan Allen

Update on Derek and Jane

Derek and Jane arrived back in the UK on 18th June. Two months after Covid-19 reached Madagascar, they decided to review their situation. They felt that the time had come for them to return home. Here are some reasons for their decision:

1. Their work was restricted because they were unable to travel. The Rev. Florent, their co-worker would make an excellent Co-Ordinator for the Rooted in Jesus programme -- so Derek and Jane's work was largely complete.
2. Their family was worried about them being in Madagascar.
3. The health system there is poor and they were in the high-risk group.
4. If they were ill, they would be a burden on the Madagascar church.

Derek and Jane expect to move into their home in July, after a period of quarantine. Let's pray for their readjustment to life back in England.

St. Peter's Update

Whilst St Peter's is currently open twice a week for private prayer, plans and procedures are being put in place to try to open our church for worship services. More information shall follow. Our church remains committed to meeting the costs of ministry, despite the challenges we face. For information on how to give regularly (and safely), please contact our Treasurer or a Church Warden.

Food Bank

Our local Foodbank continues to operate and assist families in great need. If you would like to donate items, please leave them in the blue box by the Rectory front door. Suitable items include: toothbrushes/ toothpastes, 500g bags of sugar, coffee and tins of: potatoes, spaghetti, veg and meats. Thank you.

St Peter's will continue to open for private prayer
Thursdays 11:30am - 12pm and Sundays 6-7pm.
The church building will be open a come and go
basis - so feel free to come along for all or just part
of the opening times.

**Please let Liz Bateman know if you will be
attending.**

Joan's Joke

I wandered lonely as a cloud,
Two meters from the madding crowd,
When all at once my name was called
To enter Waitrose hallowed hall.

This was the pensioners special hour
I'd gone to buy a bag of flour
But I forgot when through the door
What I'd gone to Waitrose for!

The Waitrose staff were very kind
I told them it had slipped my mind.
They asked me what else I had forgot
They clearly thought I'd lost the plot.

I phoned my wife again to ask,
She reminded me of this special task
"I need some flour to make a cake,
With all that cream you made me take."

"Ah, yes, I recall," I had to lie,
I dare not ask what flour to buy
But, then I saw them by the tills,
A bunch of golden daffodils!

Courtesy of Giles Brandreth (and William Wordsworth!)

Prayer for the Week

God our Saviour, look on this wounded world in pity and in power; hold us fast to your promises of peace won for us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Memory Verse

'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus'.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



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