

Pastoral Update #2

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Date: 27 March 2020

Preacher: Derek Lamont

[0 : 00] Hi, it's the 27th of March, Friday 2020 and this is the second of our pastoral update videos for you to have a quick look at and to get some information from.

You may notice I've changed location, I'm no longer in my office downstairs, I'm in the church itself and to be honest sitting in this chair I feel a little bit like the Reverend I am, Jolly.

Anyway, I'll not go into that. There's a few changes, one or two changes this week because of the restrictions. We can't have a team coming in to do the service, prepare the service live on Sunday. So it's going to be recorded today but it'll go out live, as live on Sunday at 11am and 5.30pm. So there's only me and one other person, Ali, in the building and Ali's miles away from me so I trust that we are abiding by all the advice and the restrictions that we have.

But please pray for Sunday and pray that God will use it greatly. Wednesday email again, it will give you all the details that you need to know, all the links that are interesting for you to look up.

[1 : 25] If you don't get that or if you can't find it, please let us know. Please get in touch with us, either phone the church number that you'll get on the website and leave a message. We'll get back to you. Or email help at sinceseasfc.org.

Now on that email there's a link to our resources page that we've put up which gives you lots of great ideas and lots of resources to look at and it will be updated all the time.

The discipleship team we've put on some really helpful suggestions this week about how to disciple one another and help one another, great to see people pulling together.

They've made suggestions about maybe rekindling prayer triplets or starting a prayer huddle online, great idea. And connecting again over a number of years, as you know we've been praying for our friends that are not Christians.

Maybe this would be a great time to connect with them, invite them, get them to click on the link and they can watch the service from their homes and pray for them that it will be a time when they come to consider Jesus and His message.

[2 : 34] And also they encourage us to keep trusting and finding our rest and our peace in Jesus. These are great encouragements from the discipleship team.

praying on Sunday can encourage you to meet online and whenever, in whatever way you can after the service, virtual replacement for coffee time when we're usually milling around the church for ages and hopefully it'll give you some time to reflect on the word.

Parents, can I just say that we've sent out kids' church material to you this week for you to use at your leisure. We are praying for you, we know there's a lot of stress in teaching the kids at home all week and then maybe asking you to do more on a Sunday but we hope it'll be fun and you can tailor it to whenever and however you want to do that.

I'll mention something about that at the service on Sunday. Again this coming next week rather on Wednesday, city groups will meet. The questions are going to go out as normal, feel free to use them or not and if you haven't joined up to a city group then again please get in touch, let us know and we can set you up for that.

The Wednesday last week the engine room, we had over 50 people linking in, there was a few gremlins but we hope to sort these out, please be patient with us and pray that it will be a blessing and remember we're constantly aiming as a community in our terms of our provision to do sustainability, simplicity and stability.

[4 : 09] I just want to finish this little pastor update with a couple of verses from the book of Acts in my big preacher's Bible. Someone's encouraged me with these verses this week.

It's just after the church was persecuted because Stephen was martyred. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem and all except the apostles were scattered

throughout Judea and Samaria.

Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him but Saul began to destroy the church going from house to house. He dragged off men and women and put them in prison. Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

So this was really the darkest time probably in the early New Testament church, time of great persecution. Saul was breathing out violence against them, it was a fragile young church.

Their lives were turned upside down and they were all scattered and they must have thought on earth, how on earth can this young church flourish, how can it grow? And yet we're told there that when they were all scattered and they couldn't be together and they couldn't worship as church, that those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

[5 : 19] And the word just was like seed that was sown on the ground. It went throughout the whole known world and the gospel grew and the church grew exponentially because of that persecution and difficulty.

Saul was converted and became the great apostle Paul. Now it's different today, it's not persecution that's scattering us in a sense but we are in dark times, we are in difficult times and often in these darkest times when death seems closest and our norm and our closeness has been broken apart physically.

It's when the light of Jesus Christ shines most brightly and we believe that he will do today for the gospel in the kingdom what he did in the early church. So be encouraged that he is gathering, not scattering, even though we might feel that we are being scattered.

Thanks.