

Wednesday 1st April 2020

Dear South Wagga Anglican Church Family,

I want to thank everyone for your well wishes and feedback over recent weeks which has helped our thinking as we restructure for this season of being God's scattered people. We are now communicating via email and physical deliveries, to all our membership, and I am delighted that many people, who are not regular attenders of our worship services, have also taken up the opportunity to receive correspondence from us. If you have a communication preference, or need assistance, please just let me know. In coming weeks, I want to write to you of the re-launch of our Prayer Chain (both online and via phone) and about a new SWAC-care Pastoral Team. However, today, I want to think about feeding ourselves spiritually, by being people of God's Word. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4,

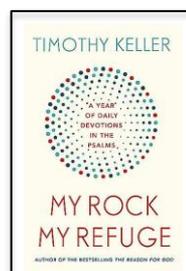
Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

In the Psalms we read, *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path* (Ps. 119:105).

The blessing of Christian faith is the renewal of our minds, and the associated transformation of our lives as we come to know God and become like the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This takes place by being hearers of God's Word, something we usually do through small groups, public church gatherings, and of course, reading the Bible personally. In this season of isolation, reading and listening to the word of God is more vital than ever, and perhaps with a quieter (self-isolated) life, we might find more time to do so. I have discovered over the course of my own Christian life that there is not one way that will suit everyone. Therefore, I offer the following suggestions for you to try:

1. Phone/Tablet **App**: The *YouVersion Bible App* is free and offers many reading plans. The *Bible App for Kids* (life.church) is also free and will be a great blessing for children.
2. **Email**: the Bible Society offers an email subscription called *Daily Bible* that you can sign up to free of charge - <https://www.biblesociety.org.au/the-bible/>.
3. **Physical**: Scripture Union produces *Daily bread*, an excellent Bible reading guide. A parishioner has offered to pay for ten new subscribers who would like to take this up – simply let me know and we will organise it for you.

Personally, in this extraordinary season I feel called to be reading and praying the Psalms. The Psalms are unique in that they are God's word to us and can become our words to God. To this end I want to recommend Tim Keller's *My Rock; My Refuge: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms*. It is available via kindle for \$12.99 or I can place you an order for a 'real' book for \$21.99 – please just let me know by next Monday 6th April.



Then I want to invite you to join me for a Psalm each morning, Tuesdays to Fridays, 930am via video conference. How do you join? Simple! Just email me scottg@swac.church, and I will add you to an email list, and each day, at 925am, I will invite you to a Zoom video conference. As long as you have a computer with a camera or a tablet/phone you will be connected to me and our morning devotion. By signing up you don't have to join me every day but can choose when it suits you. Even if you don't have the devotion book, I can still share it on the screen so you can follow along.

Before signing off on this week's pastoral letter, can I update you on some broader parish matters?

The office continues to be open at this stage – Tuesday to Fridays 10am-midday. All the staff are working from home where possible, but I am available, as always, anytime. The NSW Government *Public Health Order 2020* allows me, as a minister of religion, to be available for pastoral care. As indicated, we have reduced staff hours in order to cushion the financial impact to our parish and our treasurer Mat (treasurer@swac.church) is available to answer any questions. Our Parish Council is reviewing the situation regularly and we are thankful for your financial generosity, either through the office when it is open, or via direct deposit at the bank, or online giving. Our banking details are

*SPTP Partnership Account
BSB 702 389
Account No: 05 202 527*

Once we have a fuller financial picture at the end of April, the treasurer will write to you all.

SWAC-care packages are available for you to take, use yourself or deliver to someone in need – ten were delivered just yesterday! They have in them some essential items (such as toilet paper!) and we have been in meetings with welfare providers and city representatives in order to secure 'take away' frozen meals that we can deliver to people. Just contact Kylie (kyliep@swac.church) if we can help you or you can bless someone else through such a delivery. Kylie has also created a 'how can I help' card which I have attached to this email. Please let kylie know if you need any assistance and/or please use these cards for any neighbors that you can assist.

As I mentioned, I will keep communicating with you in coming weeks about arrangements for pastoral care and prayer ministry. I really do hope and pray, that you are getting something out of the various resources we are emailing and delivering to you throughout the week. And do let me know how we can assist you in your personal engagement with the Bible. To summarise:

1. I hope you will take up the opportunity to regularly read the Bible during this season.
2. Contact me if you would like a *SU Daily Bread* subscription or the Timothy Keller Psalm book.
3. Contact me if you would like to subscribe to the daily *Psalm with Scott* opportunity.

God bless you on your discipleship journey, as we keep being a scattered community that is precious to God.

God's richest blessings, given to you in Jesus Christ.

Your Rector,



Scott Goode

