

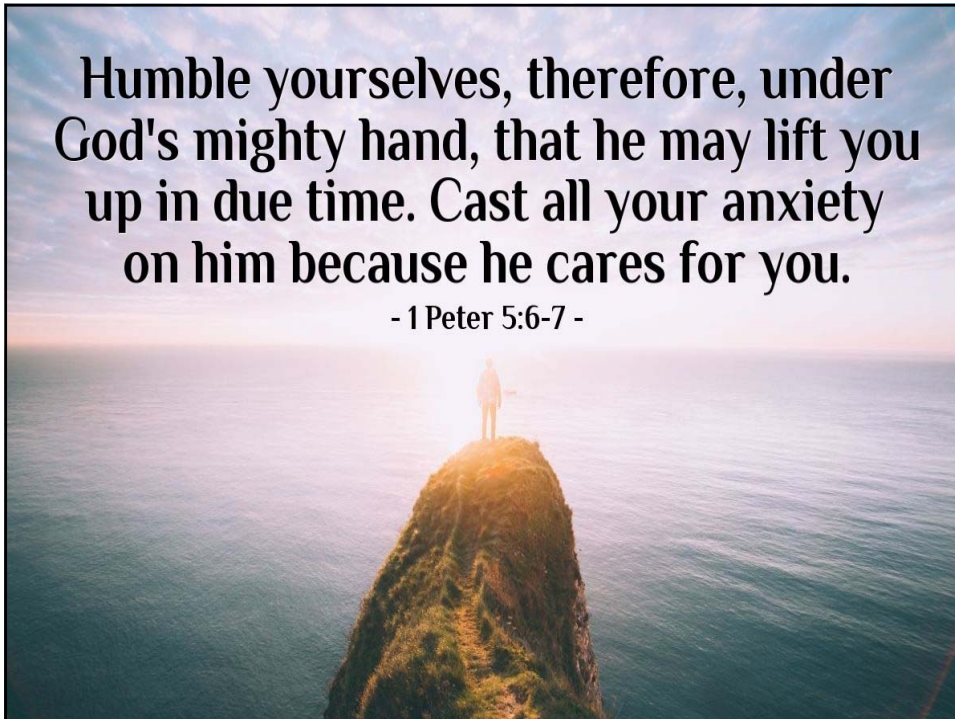
Life Group Central

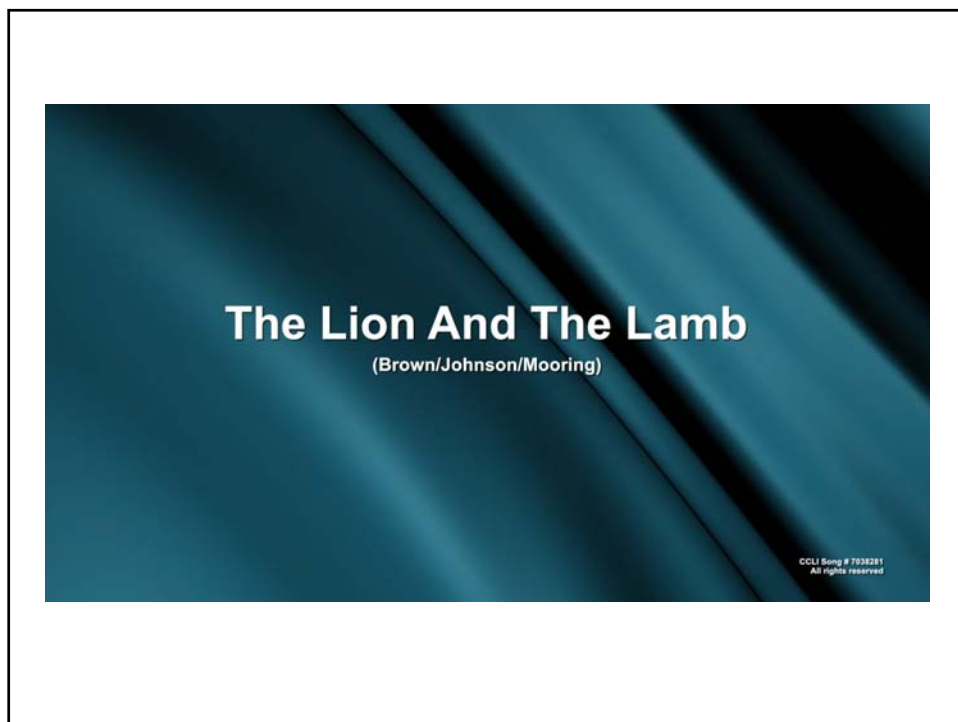
**Being the Church in the
midst of Coronavirus**

Praying Acting Serving

**Humble yourselves, therefore, under
God's mighty hand, that he may lift you
up in due time. Cast all your anxiety
on him because he cares for you.**

- 1 Peter 5:6-7 -







Being the church in a time of crisis

Acts 27

Acts 27: Paul's Shipwreck – they first listened to Human authority

We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. ⁸We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.

⁹ Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement. ¹⁰ So Paul warned them, ¹¹ "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also." ¹² But the centurion, **instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship.** ¹² Since the harbour was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbour in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.



Acts 27... but in the storms they opened their ears to spiritual authority

²¹ After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: “Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. ²² But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. ²³ Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴ and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.’ ²⁵ So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. ²⁶ Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island.”

Acts 27... but in the storms they opened their ears to spiritual authority

Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved.” ³² So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it drift away.

³³ Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. “For the last fourteen days,” he said, “you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food—you haven’t eaten anything.

³⁴ Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.” ³⁵ After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. ³⁶ **They were all encouraged** and ate some food themselves. ³⁷ Altogether there were 276 of us on board. ³⁸ When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.

Acts 27... but in the storms they opened their ears to spiritual authority



...But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

⁴² The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. ⁴³ **But the centurion wanted to spare Paul’s life and kept them from carrying out their plan.** He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. ⁴⁴ The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. **In this way everyone reached land safely.**

What does God want to do through this crisis?

Lockdown by Father Richard Hendrick



What does God want to do through this crisis?

PRAY for God's intervention and His Kingdom to come

ACT to play our part in restricting the virus

SERVE each other and our communities

SHARE the hope that we have

PASS this on... not the virus!

2 Chronicles 7: 11-16

¹¹ When Solomon had finished the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the temple of the LORD and in his own palace, ¹² the LORD appeared to him at night and said:

"I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.

¹³ "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, ¹⁴ if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

How should we PRAY?

“Humble yourselves under God’s mighty hand. That he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5: 6-7)

- Proclaim the sovereignty of God over all things and affirm our trust in him.
- We confess and ask forgiveness on our nation and world & pray for God’s mercy.
- Pray this virus will be contained within boundaries that God sets & for God’s protection (Ps 91).
- That this disease will ultimately serve the purposes of God and His kingdom (Rom 8:28)
- That the church will rise up at this time in obedience

How should we PRAY?

“Humble yourselves under God’s mighty hand. That he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5: 6-7)

- For our community here in Malvern
- For the sick to be healed; the bereaved to be comforted
- For those in the medical and caring profession
- For those engaged in research to be given supernatural insight, revelation and inspiration
- For those in positions of authority at all levels to have wisdom
- For those who have suffered economically – for provision
- For kindness and selflessness to prevail not selfishness and greed

How should we ACT?

- Self-isolate if you need to
- No hand shaking, hugging and kissing when you see people. Elbow bumps are acceptable
- Follow good hygiene practices – hand washing etc.
- Don't hoard food or toilet paper
- Meet in smaller groups if you need (Life groups meet as 3's and 4's) or over the phone/skype?

Church ACTions

- Communion will until further notice be in 'one kind' (bread) only & standing at rail only.
- Hand sanitisers are now available in both churches.
- Refreshments – tea and coffee, shared lunches etc. are suspended until further notice
- Extra cleaning has been put in place (especially of door handles, light switches etc.)
- Bring your own Bibles (not using church ones)
- Some groups particularly for the elderly (e.g. Octagon, Alpha) have been suspended and other groups (e.g. Toddler groups will be continually reviewed).
- Church services (and Easter events) will continue, but we hope to 'live-stream' at least one of our services each week from now on, so that those self-isolating can access worship at home.
- Creating resources to support personal faith practices
- Putting in place extra pastoral care support for vulnerable individuals.

Follow us on Facebook...

www.facebook.com/standrewsandallsaints/



How are we being called to **SERVE**?

a) Our church community?

b) Our local community?

- The vulnerable/elderly/isolated
- Those who are struggling financially
- Heath workers and other caring professions
- How can we provide spiritual hope too?
- How can we 'be culture changers and culture setters?'

How are we being called to **SERVE?**

- Serving our community – ministering grace and love
 - Visiting
 - Keeping in contact
 - Doing shopping/jobs
 - Phoning
- Postcards to neighbours
- Prayer request email & daily prayer at 12 noon
- ‘Volunteer force’ & coordination
- Support local businesses (e.g. Poolbrook Café)
- Blessings fund (Acts 4:34) – give and receive!
- Extra donations & volunteering for Foodbank

HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

My name is

.....

I live locally at

.....

My phone number is

.....

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picking up shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Posting mail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A friendly phone call | <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent supplies |

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep. **#ViralKindness**

SHARE the Hope that we have

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)

- **Offer to pray** for anyone you come into contact.
 - Gathering community prayer requests
 - Noon prayer each day in church for community & encourage others to do this at home
- **Offer the hope of the gospel**
 - Pray for opportunities to share the gospel.
 - Be prepared to share something of your story
 - Listen to others talk and their questions and offer hope of who God is and His love
 - Give away 'Big Welcome' booklet that you carry around with you?
 - Online prayers/testimonies/live streamed services

What can you offer?

- **Community Volunteers** (to help phone/do shopping/jobs) etc.
- **Pastoral Coordinators** (to care & coordinate for specific groups)
- **Video testimony** to put online
- **Prayer team** – to pray and create prayer resources
- **Tech team support** – video camera?
- **Volunteers** to take over from the over 70s who will need to step down e.g. :
 - Toddlers
 - Foodbank