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# BENEFICE NEWS

17 May, 2020 - 6th Sunday of Easter

the benefice of saxmundham with kelsale-cum-carlton



## ONE CHURCH

## four congregations

St Peter, St Mary & St Peter, St John, Connections

### ON SUNDAY...

This week we have a Service of the Word with music and songs, led by Stephen Hart, in which we will be considering Jesus the Good Shepherd, and the Promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Readings and prayers from familiar voices, and this time with a sketch from Robert and Lennart (two brothers from Germany) which will help illustrate the first reading. Lennart has also put his talents to good use by creatively editing this pre-recorded service. Access through the [St John's church website](#) from 9am as usual.

10am 'Live from the Lounge' with Tom & Lou at 10am... this week thinking about 'prayer' as part of the series, *Anchored*. To take part, go to the [Connections Facebook page](#), or later, watch an edited version on the [Connections YouTube channel](#).

Don't forget, you can now leave comments on the website, if you choose. They won't appear publicly, though, until they have been moderated.

The Bible Readings for this Sunday are:  
John 10:1-10 (I Am the Good Shepherd) and  
John 14:15-21 (Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit)

## Altar to an unknown god ...

Paul's sermon to the Athenians is very different to those of Peter and Stephen in Acts (chapters 2 and 7); he doesn't even mention Jesus by name calling him 'a man appointed by God'. Paul is such a forthright character in his letters to Christians in the early church but here he is in the market place in Athens addressing Greek philosophers. He compliments them on how religious they are (Acts 17:22), even having an 'altar to an unknown god'. He tells them that this 'unknown god' is God who created the whole universe, made human beings in His own image and calls them to repent and believe in this 'man appointed by Him' who is raised from the dead.

When Paul mentions resurrection many scoff and walk away, some say they would hear him another time but there are others who become believers.

What can we learn from St. Paul about witnessing to others of what God means to us, particularly in these uncertain times? He engages where people are before telling how much God loves them and wants to save them through Christ's death and resurrection. He doesn't convert everyone and we can't expect to either. That is God's work and in God's time, but it is for us to be ready to speak of what God has done for us with gentleness and reverence (1 Peter 3:15-16).

Serenity Prayer: God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can ... and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

**Alleluia. Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!!**

Pam Peeling

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## St John's ... Stay Alert !

As much as we may wish to, in line with guidance from the Government, we do not yet believe it is time to resume meeting in homes !

By all means have a Zoom meeting on line or keep in touch by phone and whatever means are possible, or you can meet outside with one other person, provided you remain 2m apart.

However, it is still not permitted to leave your house to visit friends and family in their home. The government is looking at how to facilitate greater contact with close family or friends, and will explain how this can be done safely in the coming weeks.

You can exercise outside as often as you wish and you can also sit and rest outside – exercise or recreation can be alone, with members of your household, or with one other person from outside your household, while keeping two metres apart at all times.

By following this guidance, you are helping to protect yourself, your family, the NHS and your community.

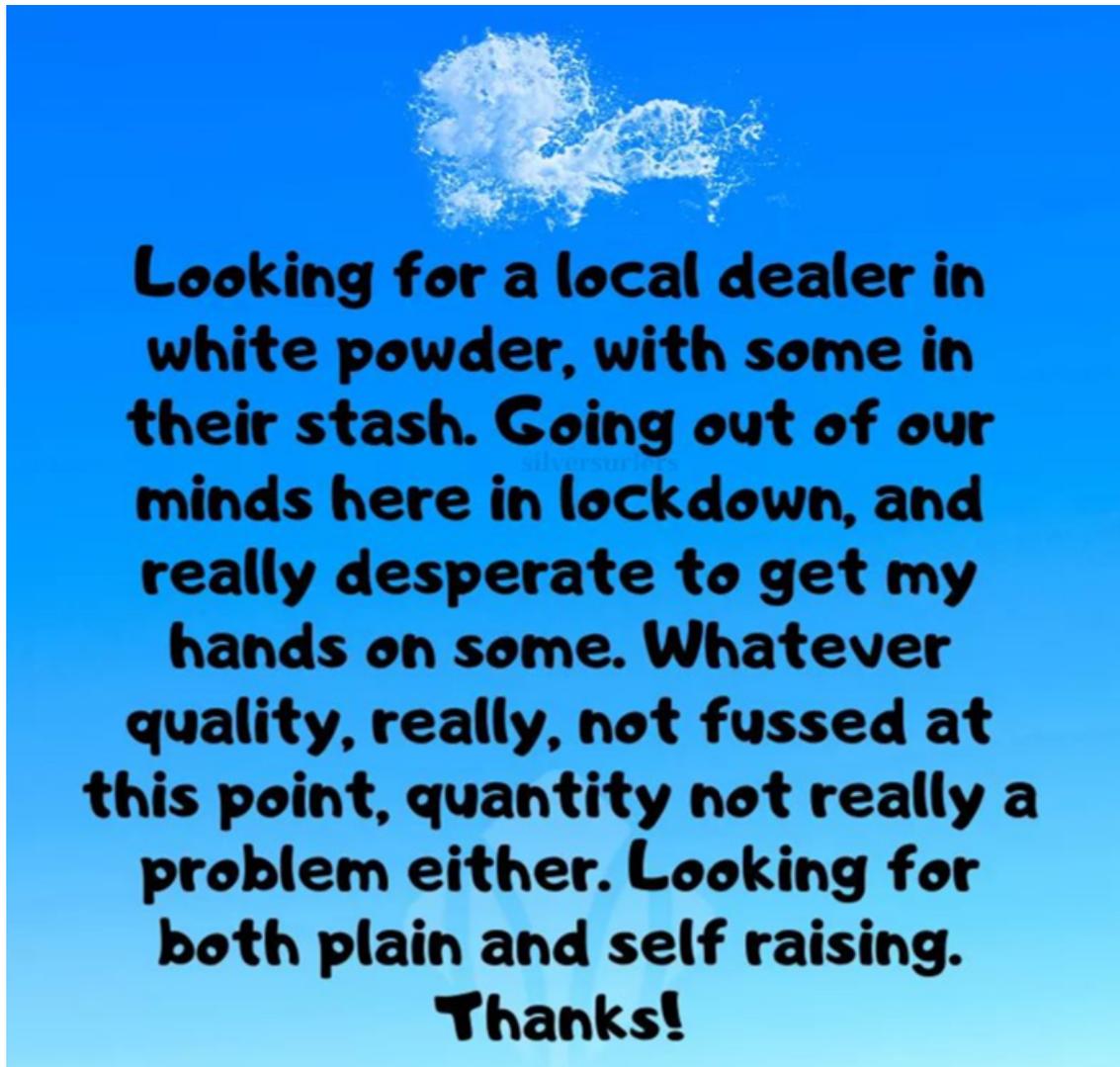
This may all sound very limiting, but these restrictions will be lifted eventually, Meanwhile we can talk, think and pray on line and even prepare a Service to be

shown on line when we pool our resources.

God Bless and Keep Safe.

{Source:- Cabinet Office Guidance - Staying alert and safe (social distancing) Published 11 May 2020}

Stephen



### Mens' Group

The nine of us who zoomed into our virtual Mens' Group the other Thursday evening (7th) after the 'Clap for Carers' so enjoyed it that we have arranged a follow-up to take place on Thursday 28th from 8:05pm. Come and join us, with a glass of something you like, via Zoom at the St John's meeting room:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2907979571>. No need to book: it's fun to see people as they arrive, just as it would be in the pub!

Nic

### Marriage Sessions

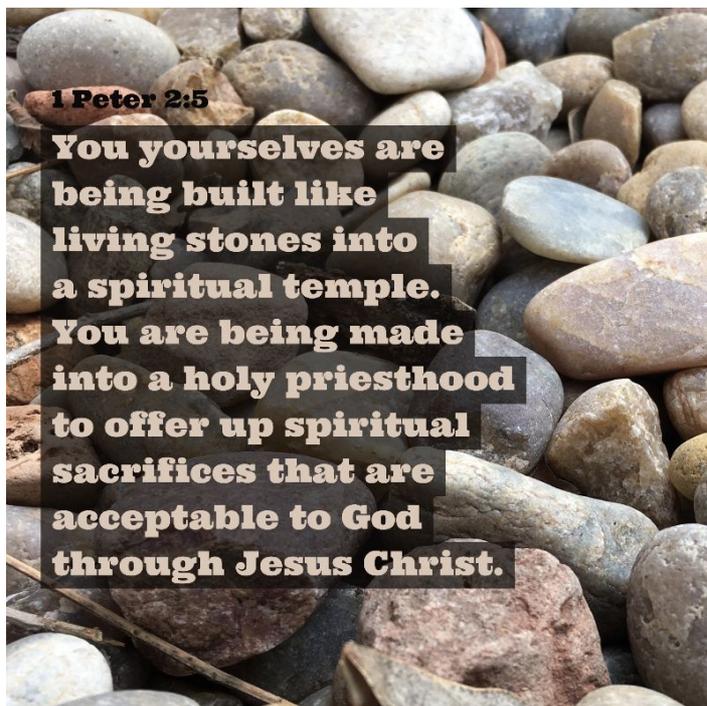
Whether your marriage is rock solid or flaking a bit around the edges, now, in lockdown, might be a good time to think about it and talk together. Care for the Family is a Charity that St John's supports for its national ministry of Christian family living (we've used their Bereavement training and the Marriage by Design

preparation course for wedding couples). CfF is offering a free four-week on-line course called Marriage Sessions. Each session lasts an hour (or longer depending how long you want to take discussing it). The first session appeared last Monday (11th) but will remain on the website for a while. Sessions will then appear weekly at: <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses/marriage-courses-the-marriage-sessions>

Nic

## Prayer requested for ...

- Charlie Kinsey (Adrian & Julia's youngest) - a London firefighter but now in hospital with appendicitis
- front-line workers fighting every day in the battle against the virus
- back-room research still looking for a vaccine
- everyone in between as we anticipate a safe and sensible route out of lockdown



### *A Prayer for today*

Thank you, dear Lord, for reminding us during these times that your Church is a body of people, not a building, and that you live in that Body through your Holy Spirit. As 'living stones' joined together, we pray for each other that, whatever our personal circumstances, we may "come to Him, the living Stone" with all our fears, worries and doubts, and find release, comfort and a heartfelt desire to serve Him all our days; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

So, to repeat ourselves... please remember and understand that we are still keeping our churches locked as we are not out of the woods yet. This also means no homegroup meetings outside of the conference-call style that some groups are using. Everyone's health and wellbeing remains our first priority and is entirely in line with Jesus telling us to 'love our neighbour as yourself'.

[One click here to see the Lectionary readings for every day.](#)

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