



Saint Andrew's Report **October 2020.**

The congregation of Saint Andrew's would like to send their greetings to the congregations of the Presbytery.

Latest

- The start of Rev. Betsi Thane's ministry was different than expected due to the COVID-19 lock-down in March. Since mid July Saint Andrew's has opened the doors for worship again. Obviously with smaller numbers because there are still members that are vulnerable and therefore not leaving their homes. The fact that Malta's main business, the tourism has declined to perhaps 10% makes a difference on our numbers of worshippers. Visitors are usually a very vital part of our worship especially during the summer holiday seasons.
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- The purchase of a new Manse is in the last stages. Buying property in Malta takes between 3 – 7 month usually. Due to the COVID situation huge delays have occurred when it comes to official documents. Within the next week we shall be able to forward the papers for the approval of the I.P. and CoS Head-Office. We hope for Rev. Bestsi to be able to move within the coming 2-3 month latest.

- **COVID -19 situation**

With the a country wide lock down, even between Malta and Gozo, plus for a while with the highest numbers in new COVID cases in Europe we are blessed that non of our members has been affected so far.

As in all congregations:

the financial struggles for our church and also missions are obvious as no services were conducted nor any other activities could be held. The country wide economical effects of Corona has a great influence in the usual generosity of the people.

Worship



We hope that soon we can return completely to our worship schedule.

The services in Gozo have not been possible yet. Even the ferries weren't running for months.

Worship & Social Media

In the mean time we established a new page on our website called "At home with Jesus" where daily encouragements and Sunday Services have been uploaded. We

have also included the uploads on our facebook page. Rev. Betsi is still posting regularly and all in all the group has been very active since. In fact our facebook group has been growing almost 20 % in the last months.

Activities

Fellowship (former Home Group)

The group meets Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. in the church hall. They will pray, have discussions, read the bible and enjoy fellowship. During the lockdown the group continued with online studies. Recently they resumed to their weekly meetings in the church. This is an open group where all are welcome.

Local Preacher

Saint Andrew's is supporting 2 students at their participations Cliff College in Calver, UK. Diana and Christa shall complete their online studies end of September.

Charities

Due to the current situation we weren't able to organize any fundraisers for either of our missions yet. The Annual Pasta Night, which was the biggest event had to be cancelled. We have to find new ways to support our missions.

See all missions of Saint Andrew's below:

- * Sister Catherine in Tugwashanye, Zambia since 2005
- * Dar Teresa Spinelli since 2005
- * Malta Microfinance since 2013
- * Blue Door English since 2013

The last two missions grew out from our "Out of Africa... Into Malta" project which had started in 2011

- * "The Foodbank" since 2015

The last project has been registered as a foundation as Foodbank Lifeline Foundation since October 2018

- * International Presbytery Mission

Elders Retreat

Since a few years we do meet for a retreat which strengthen us as KS and is highly valued by all. It gives the Kirk Session a sense of closeness, unity and strengthens us in our roots.

Currently we are looking for a retreat house that has opened it's doors so a weekend in November can be organized. With Rev. Betsi we will look at the current and past situation Probably a new 5 year plan for Saint Andrew's will be worked out with the aims and targets for the growing and future for our people in Malta and Gozo. As usual is will be a busy time with prayer, worship, work and fellowship.