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20<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear friends

### 'Groundhog Day'

I wonder if you've ever woken up during this pandemic and tried to remember what day of the week it is? Being stuck at home during COVID-19 has often been compared to 'Groundhog Day', the 1993 movie in which Bill Murray's character, Phil Connors, relives the same day over and over again in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. On 2<sup>nd</sup> February one of our children messaged on the family WhatsApp group 'Happy Groundhog Day'! It made us all laugh thinking of the film and the reminder of how it echoes our experience of these days.

I found what I think is good advice for us all experiencing Groundhog Day, on a university website caring for students' wellbeing. To break the tedium and tiredness this counsellor wisely advised:

- Stay connected
- Stay active
- Stay motivated
- Stay structured (and unstructured)
- Stay informed (up to a point)
- Stay kind to yourself

Each of us can work out what that might mean for us, and perhaps being kind to ourselves, congratulate ourselves on actioning one or more of the above.

I really like the way the counsellor repeats the word 'stay'. In the way it is written it conveys the image to me of being in a safe place, a good place, a healthy place, a comforting place, and it has huge echoes for me with Jesus's words '*'Abide in me as I abide in you ... I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them will bear much fruit.'* (John 15.4,5)

I can think of no better place for mental wellbeing at this time than ‘abiding in Christ’. A former Bishop of Liverpool paraphrased Jesus’ command like this:

*‘Abide in me. Cling to me. Stick fast to me. Live the life of close and intimate communion with me. Get nearer and nearer to me. Roll every burden on me. Never let go your hold on me for a moment ...’*

May our faith in Jesus be our resting place to carry us through these days, finding the kindness of God, being kind to ourselves and kind to others. As we do that, I suspect days will feel less like Groundhog Day and more special, unique and full of good surprises.

With my love and prayers.

Kip

### **And finally, some snippets of news and prayer suggestions**

- **#SHOWTHELOVE** Laura Munro spoke about this great initiative during the online service last week. Many of our young people have been making green hearts to display in the Simon Peter Centre windows. You can find more information about it on the church website.
- **COFFEE AND CHAT** each Sunday 11.30 am on Zoom. To receive the link please email Julia: [curate@stpeters-woolton.org.uk](mailto:curate@stpeters-woolton.org.uk)
- Barbara Brown who died recently at the age of 97 was a much-loved member of our church family. She lived in Woolton all her life, and many of you will remember her and her sister Muriel (who died 18 months ago) as regular worshippers on Thursdays and Sundays until recently. She will be buried in the churchyard on Wednesday 24th February at 11am. Due to Covid, numbers are restricted at her funeral service but anyone wishing to pay their respects to Barbara as she makes her final journey is encouraged to stand on Church Road up towards the church lychgate (socially distancing of course) to say their goodbyes. It will give the family huge comfort to see as many of us as possible supporting them.

The service will be live streamed and the link is available for anyone who would have liked to be at the service in church: <https://vimeo.com/513513399/d3bf2ce9b8>

- **PLEASE PRAY**  
for all those who are unwell at this time, in hospital or at home and for those caring for them.  
for the families and friends of those who have died recently, especially Stanley Andrus, Flo Ashton, Barbara Brown, Diane Eustance, Jim Ferryman and Audrey Neile.