

Church Family Newsletter 24th April 2020

Dear Church Family,

I hope this finds you well in this continually difficult time. As the weeks seem to linger in many ways it gets increasingly difficult for people being so cut off from family, friends and community. Some updates for you this week.

Practical needs are being met.

To encourage you, from what I have seen in the way that our churches and community have responded, the practical needs of people are being met as far as we know. Food and medicine is continuing to get to people who need it at great effort and enthusiasm from amazing teams of volunteers. Thank you so much for all of you who are helping neighbours, and even strangers through this, it really shows the love and care of Jesus through doing this.

Do contact us to see if we can help if you or anyone you know needs practical help in our villages.

Relational and spiritual needs is now our main concern.

Our bigger concern now is not so much peoples' practical needs, but relational and spiritual needs being so cut off from people and church. **If you or anyone you know is struggling with loneliness through this, or struggling with faith, email me back so we can help connect people together through this and encourage faith, hope and trust in God.**

There are a number of ways we are connecting people to each other and God through this:

- **Our online services** on Facebook and Youtube. For all past services and to find our new weekly service at 9:30 every Sunday, and click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDtsdqyqX6S8yZZI5S-pK6Q>

Over the next weeks we will be back in the book of Acts and see how a scattered church created opportunity to reach out to new people in new places. My prayer is that it might inspire us as we are a scattered church right now.

- Many of the **Homegroups** are now continuing to meet remotely either by email, video or phone. Homegroups study the scriptures and share lives with each other. If you would like to join one of our Homegroups right now, email me back and we can make something happen!
- From next week we will have regular **devotionals** being emailed out, something short to encourage us and help us to look to God during the week.

Congratulations to Ed!

Ed is now a Forest School level 3 instructor! After a lot of work (practical as well as 40,000 words of assignments, no less!) Ed has just heard back he has passed his training and now is a forest school instructor, which is fantastic for him and fantastic for us as we develop our youth and children's work in new and exciting ways. We want to get children outdoors, learning and caring for nature and helping them to be inspired by our creator God.

More details to come on this!

And finally...

If you have any ideas or feedback about how we can continue and grow our ministry and mission during this time, let us know! This is all new and we are trying lots of different things through this, and you might have other things we can try.

One of the issues we have had is the music in our online services, sadly we are quite restricted in what we are allowed to stream under copyright licence and traditional choral music is difficult to find permission for. It is an issue lots of churches are having and I am looking to find greater variety. I know many of the choices are new to many of you and hope that you find encouragement from them.

For more modern worship, Youtube has loads, and if you click one video often lots of other music will follow. This channel has a lots of great worship music in a church style:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SovereignGraceMusic>

To get your more traditional choral hit each week the BBC has a program with some of the songs of praise back catalogue to watch at any time:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000hk9c>

With my prayers,

-Brendan