

Weekly Notes for Sunday 12 July 2020

Hello everyone,

Can I just say that although the rain is good for the garden, it's so lovely to have some sunshine back!

Thank you again for your support and prayers for Elspeth. We think she's heading in the right direction now and looks like she's beginning to heal well.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please remember dear Doris Phillips and her family in your prayers. She is back in hospital and is very poorly.

The funeral of Brian Beech takes place at our church on Thursday afternoon. Please remember his wife, Kay, and their family as they mourn this painful loss.

Please also pray for the undertakers, Paul Whittle and everyone else involved in the coordination of this funeral under pandemic conditions.

Please pray for Footprints Café – the staff are doing an excellent job in complying with Coronavirus guidelines and keeping everyone safe. We pray they can build on this great start with customers feeling confident they can return safely.

And we pray too for other local businesses just opening up again in these altered and strange times.

Please do remember to let me know of any prayer requests.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Paul Whittle wrote this week ...*This week's Synod session on risk assessments highlighted the need for churches to make review and evaluation an ongoing process, whether you decide to reopen soon or not. There is no 'full stop' after the decision. It is also important to remember that deciding that your church either doesn't want to reopen, or finds that it simply can't open safely at the current time, is not a failure or even a negative: continuing to offer alternative ways to pray and worship together, and continuing to adapt these, is the best option for the church at this time. All the documents you need are on the Synod and URC websites.*

The Elders are very grateful to Adrian Moxon and Julie Robinson for carrying out a thorough risk assessment on our buildings. Their report is helping Elders to make some informed decision making about reopening - what/when/how.

As you know, Elders have decided NOT to open for private prayer.

With respect to Sunday worship, Elders have agreed we cannot open until it is safe for EVERYONE. We are NOT going to open for worship for the foreseeable future. We will revisit this decision in September therefore we will be opening no earlier than October but it is more likely to be longer than that.

We have also agreed that at this stage, it is not safe nor practical to hold church meetings whether in person or via Zoom. Elders are able to make decisions on behalf of the church but if anything significant were to come up, a zoom meeting would be considered.

WORSHIP

Tomorrow's Zoom service is being led by Rev Deborah McVey

Like before, if you need the link or login details, please call Maggie and please be aware that the full (audio & visual) recording of this service will appear on our church website. Please try to join Zoom before 10.30am to get settled in.

July services (via zoom) ...

12 July Rev Deborah McVey
19 July Rev Paul Whittle inc Holy Communion
26 July Go4th

Please let me (Maggie) know if you know someone who doesn't have access to the internet who would like a transcript printed from the zoom services. We currently deliver paper copies to 5 people.

ONLINE

Don't forget there is a rich selection of resources on line as highlighted in previous emails - children's activities and worship, church virtual services, Paul Whittle's blog, the URC websites, some wonderful Christian music & songs on YouTube, prayers focussing on Coronavirus, etc. Have a browse – www.urc.org.uk & www.urc-eastern.org.uk.

A PRAYER FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

In this time of COVID-19, we pray:

When we aren't sure, God, - help us be calm.
When information comes –
from all sides, correct & not, help us to discern.
when fear makes it hard to breathe,
and anxiety seems to be the order of the day,
us down, God.
help us to reach out with our hearts,
we can't touch with our hands.
help us to be socially connected,
when we have to be socially distant.
help us to love as perfectly as we can,
knowing that "perfect love casts out all fear."
Help us, O God, that we might help each other.
In the love of the Creator,
in the name of the Healer,
in the life of the Holy Spirit
that is in all and with all, we pray. **Amen**

Please remember to share this email with others you know who don't receive email.

Stay safe and keep well everyone! And thank you so much again for your ongoing support.

Maggie

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