

Dear Church Family,

*'For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."'*

*2 Corinthians 6:16b*

Our present crisis has underlined again and again that the church is not a building but a body of people.

In the light of the continued and continuing uncertainty about the safety and advisability of mass gatherings I think we need to keep remembering that although buildings may be closed or their use severely limited the church is as open as it ever was.

Paul tells the Corinthians they are the temple of the living God; God walks among them; God is their God and they are God's people.

Anywhere and everywhere, mainly scattered or simply gathered with our family or 'bubble', we are church.

In the closing verses of the book of Revelation John's vision is of a new heaven and earth. John hears a voice saying, *'Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and God will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'*

Tellingly, a little later, John says *'I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.'*

Our destination is a world beyond buildings where neither we nor God 'need' a special place for 'worship' because all of life is an expression of our oneness with our Creator and a renewed earth.

~

### **Congratulations:**

Advance notice that Stuart and Avril Roberts will be celebrating their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on Sunday 23rd August!

### **One-Off Service**

As we won't be starting services in the building in September and 'normal' church is still some distance down the road we are planning a one-off service to give people an opportunity to get together.

Initially we had thought of this being outdoors but having considered the regulations, which apply equally to outdoor gatherings, we have revised our thinking and will now be holding a one-off service inside the Main Hall on Sunday 6th September at 10:30. The amount of work it would take to set up and break down an outside gathering and the dependence on the weather have contributed to this decision.

Of course there will be some necessary safety measures; these would include:

- Registration and contact tracing information
- Specified seating
- Masks worn by all
- No singing
- People guided in and out - and sadly no hanging around
- Hand sanitiser on entry and exit
- One way system
- All doors and windows open

- Toilet protocols - for emergencies only

The service would be relatively short and include only spoken contributions from the front - eg Bible reading, talk, testimony and prayers. We will use some 'on screen' material and recorded music but there would be no singing; no refreshments and no separate children's or young people's groups. This means any children attending would have to remain with parents at all times.

Of course we would love to see as many as possible, but we would ask people to consider their vulnerability in line with the factors which indicate an increased risk of being seriously ill if the virus is contracted - the factors are:

- Age
- Gender (men are more vulnerable than women)
- Ethnicity
- Pre-existing Medical Conditions

If you would like to attend the service please reply to this email. To enable us to organise the hall please include the following information for everyone attending in your family group or 'bubble':

- Name(s)
- Address(es)
- Telephone Number(s)

We will need all the above information for contact-tracing purposes in the event of a positive case of Covid-19 among people at the service.

The online service will go out as normal on that day.

We will be continually reviewing any changes to government guidance and the possibility of meeting together on a monthly basis.

### **Month of Prayer**

We are planning to hold a month of prayer which will probably begin next month. Subject to all appropriate protocols we hope to make the Prayer Room available for people to sign up and take part.

This is in the early stages of planning but we want to engage people in prayer and offer the opportunity to be in our building even if we are not meeting in large groups at the moment.

We would also encourage Prayer Walking and praying at home as part of this initiative.

### **Online Media**

Our next online service will be available this Sunday... please refer to the HBCC Family Facebook page for more details.

All services can be found on the HBCC Facebook page and some are also on YouTube.

<https://www.facebook.com/Hesketh-Bank-Christian-Centre-137989929662209/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI-q5TmlygGFnooTXluT6kg>

The Wednesday Devotionals and Friday Focus will continue but the after-service Zoom Catchup is taking a rest for the month of August.

### **Life Groups & Small Groups**

Many of the regular groups have continued to meet virtually throughout Lockdown and as some restrictions are being lifted. Whilst groups may be taking a break during the main school holiday period we want to actively encourage all groups which are able to plan to connect via Zoom into the Autumn.

We will be connecting with existing Life Group leaders to explore the possibilities of using the larger spaces of the buildings on site for socially distanced meeting when groups are ready for that.

Some of you have expressed an interest in either reconnecting with a Life Group or connecting with one for the first time so we will be organising some groups for this Autumn.

If connecting with a small group online is something you're interested in doing immediately, please can you contact either Stuart Taylor or Steve Barrett (contact details below) - and they will work with you to find the best arrangement possible.

Stuart Taylor - [stutaylorhbcc@gmx.com](mailto:stutaylorhbcc@gmx.com) 07739 236815

Steve Barrett - [stevenbarrett7@gmail.com](mailto:stevenbarrett7@gmail.com) 07703 798279

### **Stories, News and Celebrations**

If you have some news, a story, or if you would like us to share special birthdays, anniversaries or occurrences in our weekly bulletin....send details to the church email address at [hbccentre@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:hbccentre@tiscali.co.uk)

### **Giving**

There are still ongoing expenses as a church community even though we are not meeting in the building. Many of you give regularly and very faithfully and we're so grateful for your continued support. If anyone would like to make any one-off gifts you can do this through online banking.

Bank Sort Code: 40-24-14

Account No: 10429627

Finally, if you need help or support during the week, you can reach us on the numbers below:

Mark-07526 989665

Linda-07732 074420

Steve-07484 268297

Alex-07701 042458 (Youth and Young People)

Steve - on behalf of The Leadership Team 13.08.2020