

Dear All,

All Church meetings and activities are cancelled

As we mentioned to you all yesterday, we convened an emergency Deacons Meeting last night, and sadly, in line with clear Government advice regarding faith communities and that of both the URC and the Baptist Union, we regretfully decided that there can be no more meeting together until further notice. This decision affects all our meetings and groups at our Church buildings, and indeed any gathering where any of us would be in the same place at the same time. This includes our Sunday Services, Church, Deacons and Committee meetings, Emmaus Groups, Thursday Forum, Tots+, Middle Group, Friday Lunches and Prayer Lunches and Groups.

As we are all acutely aware, these are strange, unprecedented times and whilst this is a lot for us all to accept, we are confident that by us all continuing to lean into God, along with establishing new ways of us being Church, we will be able to walk forward together in grace and love. Current thoughts and plans may well evolve as we move through this time together, but for now, here are some of our key plans. We'll write to you all again very shortly regarding some other matters.

Worship

To enable our worship as a Church, we wholeheartedly encourage you to sign up by email to the URC Daily Devotions if you haven't already done so. Very little information is needed on the URC website for you to do this. In addition to daily devotional thoughts and a prayer, there is going to be a weekly Service sent out by email in written and audio format every Sunday morning at 10am led each week by a different prominent URC leader. Here is the link <https://devotions.urc.org.uk/> Do let one of us know if you'd like any help setting this up. Of course, other resources and Services will be available online across the Denominations for those who wish to explore other options.

Additionally, I will offer a thought for the week and a suggested prayer which will include prayers for the world and our people. This will be sent out before Sunday each week. We will be working to ensure that those among us who don't use email will still receive, not only our letters, but also any recommended weekly worship and devotional resources. We warmly encourage you all to, whenever possible, spend time in worship at 10.45 on Sunday morning and in prayer on Tuesdays through Lent at 12.30. We think that this sense of us all connecting with God at the same time may be quite valuable. We respect that we will all tailor our own worship and devotional life as best fits our own circumstances and traditions.

Pastoral Care

Let's stay connected to one another using emails, letters, cards and of course, phone calls. Deacons will be supporting the wonderful care of our pastoral visitors in keeping in contact with you all. And we are sure that the many friendships within our fellowship will continue to grow throughout this season. We will be making a plan to care in practical ways where necessary too, more to follow on this in the coming days. It is probably appropriate to let you all know, that just as many of you will need to stay safe and avoid social face to face contact over the next few months, a good number of the Deacons, including the Secretary, Treasurer and Minister all fall into the Government's 'vulnerable and at risk' categories. But we will all continue to serve the Church as best we can in just slightly different ways at this very strange time!

We will write again soon, in the meantime may we assure you of our love, care and concern, encourage you once again to lean into our loving and faithful God and to pray for one another, for our communities and our world, especially all those in need, throughout this period of time.

With love and best wishes to you and your loved ones.

Every blessing,

Neil and Rob

On behalf of all the Christ Church Deacons