

Dear friends,

Hello again. The weeks are flying by: it is hard to believe that it is, as I write, 108 days since the lockdown began. And I think this is having a big effect on us. I have been to a couple of online meetings for church leaders over the last few months. In May we were asked how we were feeling. There were lots of options, but the top two answers were "energised" and "inspired". The same question was asked this week and now the top two answers are "exhausted" and "inadequate". I think these feelings are caused by a combination of busyness and uncertainty, working out how to cope with the present demands and to plan for the future. The coming weeks will be challenging for us, as we work out how we gradually move towards meeting more in person. We can be grateful that we have such a committed, gifted and faithful team of leaders, in the staff, the MLT and the Standing Committee.

But behind these human abilities and character is the hand of God. To see what is happening in purely medical or human terms is a mistake. God is working out his purposes in the world, and he is working in his people. Here is a great prayer for us, from Paul's letter to the Romans:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15: 13

What do we do? We trust in Jesus Christ. That is, we remember him, his character, his work, his presence with us. Maybe we could read part of a gospel again - seeing how he calmed the storm, or raised the dead, or found the lost, or forgave the sinful. And seeing him, we trust him, we repent and put ourselves into his hands. And what does God do? The Holy Spirit fills us: God himself indwells his people. And what results? We are filled with joy and peace, even in turbulent and painful times. We overflow with hope! We find ourselves confident that all will, in the end, be well and our present troubles, serious though they are, are light and momentary, in comparison with our future in Christ.

Peter

This week's news:

Please pray with us as we think about our **church services** over the summer. We are planning to have an all age service at 10.30, starting at the end of July; a service that will welcome some into the church building, and be available for those worshipping online at home. We need to get it right as people come to that service, and wisdom as we consider when to begin any other services.

If you think you could help us by **stewarding** at the 10.30 service, we would be very grateful. We fully appreciate that those who are vulnerable may not feel ready to do this yet, and we would want to encourage people to continue to follow the government's guidelines. Please ring Cecelia (648 2404) if you think you would like to help.

And please pray for Danielle Williamson and Ben Taylor. They are **getting married** at Christ Church on July 25th, the first wedding since last summer. They are grateful that they are able to get married on the day they had originally planned, although it will be a much smaller service than they had anticipated.

Do join us as we **pray** this week:

To join in Morning Prayers

From Tuesday 14th July to Friday 17th July from 9.00 to 9.20.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81715073830>

To join in Pray at Home

Although the Hub course, the Generosity Project, has finished, we will continue to pray each Thursday evening from 7.00pm till 7.30pm.

To join us on Thursday 16th July

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87929525889>

This week will include prayers for our Mission partners, Barnabas Fund.

Do keep on listening to Flame radio (**1521MW**). Our morning service is replayed at 6.00pm every week, and a shorter version of the previous week's sermon is on their Sunday morning show as well.

Pray for those who have been bereaved, including the family and friends of Margaret Jones and Caroline Harrison and remember our mission partners, Barnabas Fund.