

Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020



GROWING IN LOVE for God & each other

As we remain at home, we as church continue to be connected and I would like to give you an update on what we currently are doing.

Through our connect groups we are in contact with more than 150 people from our church community. The connect group leaders are in contact with their group to find out how each of us are and if we need anything. Weekly they are in touch with me, Alex and Maralyn. It is through these groups that we are able to help one another, pray and be reassured that we are not alone.

The connect group leaders are also enabling each of us to join in with the Prayer Course. This is our focus for the weeks ahead. The course is a brilliant opportunity to become more confident in prayer. If you have access to the internet than I would strongly encourage you to get involved in this so we can learn and spiritually grow together. (more details on how to access the Prayer Course will be shared by your Connect Group Leader).

I hope you are enjoying the services we are running online. They take a lot of work and I am incredibly grateful for your patience and your contribution as we have all had to adjust and learn! Some of these videos are being watched by many people (our Palm Sunday Service had 792 views)! It is truly brilliant to see and hear so many of us involved in these services. Thank you to everyone who read, made art, prayed and supported this. The music group from the 11.00 am service have been able to sing and play 'together' by the wonders of technology and the fantastic work of those recording and collating. We look forward to many more opportunities to create ways to worship together, remain united and reach out to others.

Easter weekend saw both our youth (ages 11-16) and children (5-10) engaging in church activities. Parents are enabling them to access the groups on 'Zoom' (video conferences) on Sunday mornings. These are important times, although the activities look mostly like fun, they are providing forums for our young people to remain connected with the church family. Our children have also experienced loss and many changes over the past weeks; it is vital that they are encouraged in their faith and grow in fellowship with one another.

The PCC will continue to meet monthly via video call as will the Standing Committee. As church we are also in partnership with Copthorne Village Support Group (CVSG). CVSG provides a helpline for those who need support in addition to the provision from the Government. Please ensure you use this service and encourage others to do so especially if you hear of people who need delivery of medicine, shopping or other forms support.

Finally, I would like to encourage you with the ancient blessing from the Old Testament. When Aaron blesses God's people before they go back to their own tents with the words: **'The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace.'** It has been a month since we were advised to do church differently. It is in our own tents (own homes) that we have our gatherings, yet we are one Church. May we know at this time the Lord's rich blessing and favour upon our families, our children, our grandchildren, our friends and may we in turn bless our communities in prayer and worship with that same ancient blessing.

Yours,

Wim