

28th May 2020



Dear Friends,

Romford Baptist Church is still very much alive and together. We praise God for one another and also for all that we have been able to do during this lockdown season. We have as our text for the year says to be a Holy People. We need to seek to do that at this time and to remember the God who is in control. We have often been reminded of those words of that old song:

I know who holds the future, And he guides me with his hand;
With God things don't just happen ev'rything by Him is planned.
So as I face tomorrow with its problems large and small,
I'll trust the God of miracles, Give to Him my all!

We wanted to take a moment to update you about things with the church. We have continued to meet on Sunday morning and evening online with some 300 computers signing in. We have continued to gather over Zoom online for prayer meetings, the virtual Meeting Place and Wednesday at RBC online where we have been doing the prayer course. New skills are being learnt and honed by the pastors at this time as they have learnt to create and edit video, how to do webcasting and skill up on what can be done on Zoom. Creating a service now takes far longer than it does with a live congregation. Thank you for your kind comments and gracious response as we navigated our way into this new online world.

The Youth and Children's activities have also continued online. Each week there are Youth and Children's activities available along with Zoom gatherings online for the young people. The mid-week youth quiz has been really popular.

We have tried to stay in touch with people through phone conversations and it has been wonderful to hear how many are also phoning others from the church to ensure everyone is OK.

Unfortunately, as you will be aware, there is much we have been unable to do during this time and to not have The Meeting Place open and also have many staff furloughed has been hard on them and all of us. We look forward to a more normal way of life in the future, but in the meantime, we will do all we can to support one another.

The good news is we have been able to keep the church buildings going for ministries such as the foodbank which is now very vital to more people, the helpline, filming and webcasting the services and also for the blood donors to have sessions.

As we look forward to coming out of lockdown, you will know that even church will need to be different to the way it was. The leadership have been hard at work drawing up a detailed action plan on how we will be able to meet again and maintain social distancing. We will need everyone's co-operation in order to maintain this. We know that the earliest we will be able to

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meet will probably be early July, and maybe later if the government further delays. Once we have a clear idea, we will communicate with you all again, but we are also aware that there will be many who will not feel comfortable meeting in the church that soon. In the meantime, do keep worshipping with us online. If you do not have internet and would like to see a service, we are making the evening service available on DVD (you will need a DVD player to view it.) If you would like to receive a DVD please phone the church office and request. Please note that we are unable to do this for everyone as it takes a lot of time to create DVD's so we are prioritising people who do not have internet access.

We are grateful to all who have continued to give their offerings and tithes to the church at this time. We are as many organisations facing financial pressures. There are several ways to give to the church including online at www.romfordbaptist.org.uk/giving. The BACS details for the church account are: Romford Baptist Church. Sort Code No. 83 04 25 Account No. 19354486. You can also post a Cheque to the church or put your offerings aside and bring them in when you come back to church. Thank you.

We have not been able to hold Church Meetings during this time, and will probably not be able to do so for some time yet but the Leadership Team are still meeting monthly by Zoom. We will try and keep everyone up to date as well as we can, and at this time some exceptional decisions may have to be taken to keep the church going. We will keep such decisions to a minimum. If you have any specific questions though, please do contact either Hayley, Samuel or Ian. We will try and answer as best as we can.

Please continue to pray for Parkside. If you look at the media, you would be led to believe that all homes have been places of mass infection of the virus. I am pleased to say that at the time of writing, Parkside has remained Covid-free. Please join with us in praying that this will remain so. Like all of us, residents have struggled with not being able to welcome visitors or see their families. But they have been able to have time together in the house and our brilliant team of staff have done all they can to keep the spirits up.

Remember, we do have the phone line each morning on Monday – Friday 01708 743382 (option 1) running from 9.30am-1pm if you have any concerns or needs. We will try and support in any way we can. Also, if you need pastoral or prayer support, do let us know, although we are unable to come to your home, we are very happy to chat and pray for you over the phone.

We hope that this has been helpful in keeping you in touch.

Grace and peace.

The Leadership Team

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