

Tuesday 8th June, 2021

Dear friends,

It won't be long now until we're able to gather again in the building to worship and witness to Jesus Christ and we're really looking forward to seeing you all there.

Thank you for completing the survey. It has been a truly useful exercise and has helped the Deacons make more informed decisions, which will be a blessing to us all in the long term.

We're seeking to make decisions led by the Holy Spirit and which honour Christ amongst us. That has meant we've tried to be prayerful and courageous in our decision-making, wanting to consider the church community as a whole and attempting to act in a way that reflects Christ's love for each of us.

There are still a lot of unanswered questions and because of this we thought it'll be good to make you all aware of our general plans for the way forward and ask once again for your prayerful and practical support.

At the time of writing, we are still waiting for official advice from the government about what the next easing of lockdown (post 21st June) looks like for churches. We believe this will be circulated after the 14th June which will then require the BU to evaluate and offer their guidance to us following this. Until then, we have to wait and make many of the decisions after these announcements.

The survey has revealed that there is still a lot of caution amongst us, understandably so and many still want to make use of church online. We hope to be able to address all these concerns by ensuring the building is Covid-secure and that we have a live streaming online experience for those who will continue to worship with us in this way until they are confident to return to the building.

We are planning and preparing for as many scenarios as possible. It may be the case that the government postpone the relaxing of all social distancing regulations. If this is the case, we still plan to return to the building for worship though attendance will be restricted, but with online provision for all to continue to engage in some way.

Work is still going on with the internet connection to the building which currently does not support live streaming. We also have some work to complete for the standard Reoccupation Checklist, which includes a deep clean and ensuring Health and Safety regulations are up to date.

With all this in mind, and if all continues as planned we expect to return to in person worship in the building in July (most likely the second half of the month). What the exact provision will include is still unclear and so further details will follow as soon as possible. It is dependent on so many variables.

We believe it is important that we are all encouraged to return to the building for gathered worship and this remains a priority to organize and do with integrity. We will be following the guidance given to us and respond with what is best for our context. It is not a straightforward task with so many issues raised along the way, and it is expected that our return to the building will be a transition for us all in numerous ways.

We can also expect in the months ahead, not only some opportunities to gather to worship together but to build friendship and witness together too – as this is what Christian community encourages.

As always the Deacons and I are very appreciative of your many kindnesses towards us knowing how challenging this is for every one of us. Please do continue to pray and connect with one another for mutual encouragement and we'll look forward to seeing each other very soon.

Please get in touch if we can answer questions you may have.

Yours in Christ

Nathan