



Friday Fellowship News No 11 12 June 2020

CHURCHES TO OPEN?

AS you may have heard the Prime Minister announce this week, the Government is relaxing rules related to church use.

In theory, and subject to local context, it 'may' now be possible for people to go into a place of public worship, if open, for Private Prayer only – not in groups and not for a service, or led prayers. It 'may' also be possible for very small funerals to be held in a church building.



Despite the announcement, we are still awaiting clarification from the Government and the Church of England as to some key ingredients to enable us to make a decision locally. Issues such as what level of cleaning is required, and how often, whether private prayers need to be 'stewarded' and, the ages of volunteers who may be able to help with both.

The Covid-19 Task Group I mentioned a few weeks ago will be looking in detail at the various Guidance to come in the next few days. We shall then make a recommendation to the Standing Committee and PCC.

As soon as a decision has been made we will let you know. We would greatly value prayer as opening for private prayer may sound simple and straight-forward – but it is nothing of the sort!

12 IDEAS TO BEAT COVID-GLOOM!

WITH more time on our hands than normal, now's the moment to dig a little deeper to refresh our spiritual life. And there's lots out there to help you – some created especially with this season in mind.

Here come 12 valuable resources for you to choose from and in no particular order. Enjoy and be enriched!

Want to do better with the Bible?

Top of the tree has to be [The Bible Course](#) from Bible Society. This superb series of 8 videos gives an overview of the Bible's 'big story', and particularly shows how the Old Testament points to Jesus. The small cost involved is well worth it.

Also from Bible Society is [Lyfe](#), to help individuals and small groups discover a deeper life with God. It draws deeply on the Bible and spiritual practices that have inspired and sustained Christians throughout the centuries.

Or how about seriously adding to the Bible verses you have tucked away in your mind. Here the [Bible Memory App](#) could be exactly what you need. It even has tips to improve your memory.

Want to do better with prayer?

To discover prayer through fresh eyes – and explore everything from 'Why Pray' to 'Adoration' to 'Unanswered Prayer' – the [Prayer Course](#) has no equal. The 8 sessions each have a 20-minute video plus questions to explore further. Don't keep it to yourself as this is also perfect for a 'virtual' small group.

When it comes to putting prayer into action, there's a choice from two excellent Bible-based meditations. Both help you to 'pray the Bible' daily based on Lectio Divina. This dynamic way of reading the Scriptures follows the four-step approach of Reading, Meditation, Prayer and Contemplation.

One is from [Bible Society](#) with free downloads based on the three year lectionary cycle. The other is [Lectio 365](#) an app from 24-7 prayer which tends to have a more topical approach and reflects the core values of the 24-7 prayer initiative.

Want a daily boost?

There's a free phone line – 24 hours a day – with prayers, hymns and their story, a message from the Archbishop of Canterbury and more. Called [Daily Hope](#), this is designed for those stranded by not being able to access an online church service – so be sure to share. But all are welcome. Check it out on 0800 804 8044.

For a short daily Bible-based audio message, CWR have [Life Every Day Extra](#) featuring Jeff Lucas. It has no shortage of wit, wisdom and practical application.

Want to enjoy a feast?

With the major Christian worship and teaching festivals not able to take place there is – or will be – some excellent online resources.

Right now there's a huge archive of seminars, celebrations, fun and more from [Spring Harvest at Home](#) with every age group in mind.

On the way is a rich choice of Bible teaching, celebrations and lectures from the [Keswick Convention](#) which goes on line from July 13 to August 2 and, no doubt, will stay there for some time.

Want the joy of your grandkids getting closer to God?

With much grandchildren contact happening through Zoom or Facetime there's the opportunity to add a God dimension.

[Scripture Union](#) has developed excellent lockdown resources to 'reach out while we can't go out'. These include 'Make and pray' for children, with craft and loads of great ideas to inspire children and young people to engage with the Bible. '

[Faith in Kids](#) have materials to be used at home – useful for home schooling – and to help you teach children at a distance. They also have ideas on how to keep Junior Church children involved and well worth passing on to others.

Want to check your 'spiritual balance'?

Now is the opportunity to take a longer look at how your spiritual life is going. From CWR, their self-diagnosis evaluation on [Keeping Your Spiritual Balance](#) offers a great opportunity to affirm what's good and to take some steps forward where needed.

READINGS & MESSAGE

THE Bible Readings for this Sunday are Romans 5: 1-8 and Matthew 9: 35-10:8.

I will upload some brief reflections on the **Matthew** reading to our church Facebook page and, on our YouTube page.

BIBLE READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

THESE are opposite. It is good to hear that a few people are using these regularly.



I'm also delighted to hear that a number of folk who usually attend the 9am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion Services are quietly, and reflectively, reading through the service each Sunday, starting at 9am, in their own homes – but connected to each other by the Spirit!

Fri 12:

Psalm 100

Jer 9:23-24

Acts 4: 32-end

Sat 13:

Psalm 23

Josh 10: 1-15

Luke 11:37-end

Sun 14:

Psalm 45

Rom 5: 1-8

Matt 9:35-10:8

Mon 15:

Psalm 30

Josh 14

Luke 12:1-12

Tue 16:

Psalm 36

Josh 21: 43-22:8

Luke 12: 13-31

Wed 17:

Psalm 34

Josh 22: 9-end

Luke 12: 32-40

Fri 19:

Psalm 31

Josh 24: 1-28

Luke 12:41-48

With my love and prayers
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