



March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Hi everyone,

Like many people, we have been trying as best we can to respond to the announcement on Monday evening from our PM. And the situation seems to be changing all the time. So who knows? By the time you have received this email, things will be out of date!

Anyway, what you will find is the latest info on various matters which we think are going to be of interest and importance to you. And before I forget: Happy Birthday Karen on behalf of all of us 🎉. We appreciate you very much.

### **Live Stream on Sunday**

This Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup> we are intending to live stream our Sunday morning and Sunday evening services from the Chapel but doing it through a combination of one live host (me or Karen) and then various pre-recordings (including sung worship, all-age, readings, prayers). This fits the current guidelines on Sunday worship, issued yesterday, which are very restrictive. But given our amazing tech team, worship bands, children and youth dept, we feel sure we will be able to bring you something very meaningful. So do please log on this Sunday at 10am and/or 6:30pm:

<https://guildfordbaptist.streameventlive.com/login>.

We are also exploring during this time the idea of a mid-week live evening service, probably earlier in the week so as not to clash with pastorates, so please do watch this space.

### **Church Office**

There has been some confusion about whether the office is open or not. So, let me clarify: the office is open, but it is happening remotely. In other words, Alysha is working from home, and all calls to the church office 01483 575008 will come to her. The regular office telephone line has now been successfully redirected. The office hours are as normal: 9:30am to 5:30pm.

The Millmead Centre itself is closed for the time being. All our staff are working from home, and we have written to them as elders to assure them of our commitment, our thanks for being so willing to adapt, and also our understating that in some cases fulfilling their work schedules is simply not possible at this time. Hopefully, things will return to normal in the not too distant future.

### **North Guildford Food Bank**

The Food Bank still needs food donations, particularly as there are now restrictions on how much food can now be bought. Charitable frontline work like theirs is still considered a valid reason for travel. Please drop food items off at Millmead on Tuesdays between 9.30-11.30am. Just ring the bell and then leave the items outside once you see a caretaker approaching. There is no need to enter the building.

The Food Bank is in particular need of:

Rice and cereal

Tinned vegetables/meat

Jars of pasta or curry sauce

If you prefer to give financially then the bank details are:

Bank: Lloyds

Sort code: 30-93-74

A/c : 66556468

Name: North Guildford Food Bank

Reference: Donor name

### **Food supplies for our Church Community**

We are aware that it may be difficult to purchase food if you are in self-isolation and not able to order online. We would ask that pastorates look out for each other as much as possible here. We are already seeing wonderful examples of people doing just this, helping set up online deliveries for others or shopping for those who can't get out. Thank you!

For those struggling to shop and not connected to a pastorate, please contact Ruth Cheah, who will look into getting food delivered to you. Ruth's email for this brand-new ministry is

[millmeadfoodconnection@gmail.com](mailto:millmeadfoodconnection@gmail.com).

### **Midday Prayer**

A reminder that we are gathering at midday Monday to Friday, to pray together just for 15-20 mins. It has been great to see people on Zoom, and I provide the link here so that you can join. Don't hesitate to ring someone up, if you are struggling to work out the technology:

[www.guildfordbaptist.org/dailyprayer](http://www.guildfordbaptist.org/dailyprayer).

### **Speak to your Soul**

Let's feed ourselves as a community at this time with the Word of God that brings *life*. Let's speak these words of life over each other, by sending in Scriptures, words of encouragement, prophetic pictures, song links, and the like, that raise faith not fear. Send them to [anika.wilson@guildfordbaptist.org](mailto:anika.wilson@guildfordbaptist.org) and she will put them on the website.

I hope you find this helpful and encouraging. As much as I too am finding this time bewildering, I am also truly in awe of the strength of our church community, and fully confident in God's grace to guide us. Speaking on behalf of all the elders and deacons, and the staff team, it is a privilege to lead you at this time, and we thank God for all those who are sharing this responsibility with us. Our pastorate leaders and our pastoral care team are just wonderful, and the innovations in the youth and children's department have been truly inspiring. I am surprised they have not needed my input on the technical side yet, but I assure you that I am fully up to speed!

I will write more soon, perhaps more reflectively. But in closing, let me encourage you to take one day at a time, stay attentive to the Holy Spirit's promptings (to ring someone, or send them a text), be wise in how much news you read, and stay rooted in the knowledge that your life is held tenderly in God's hands.

The Peace of the Lord

Ian