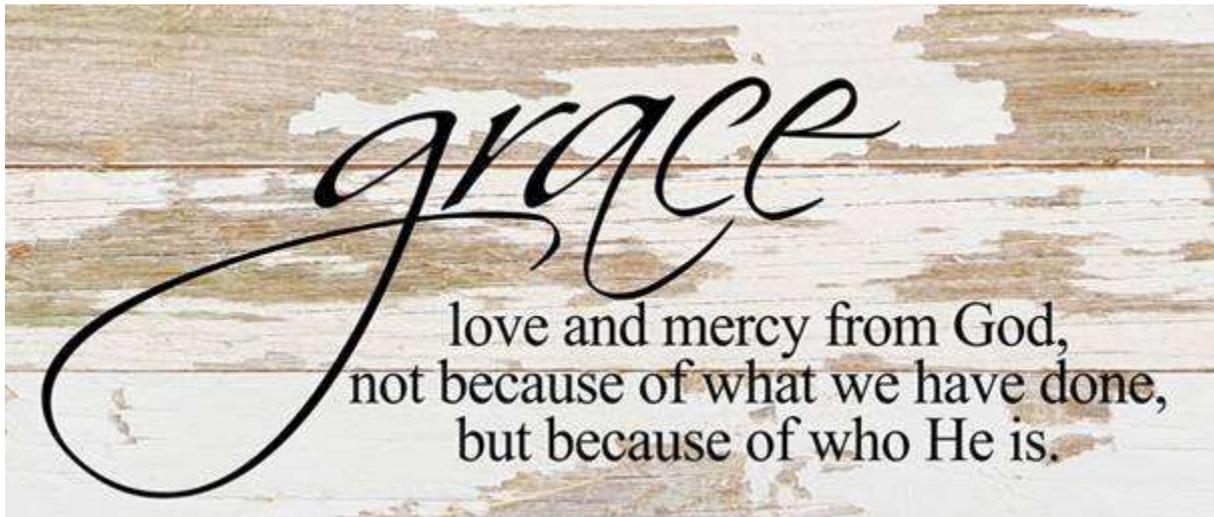


Hi All



As we have been reminded today, we should be forever thankful for the grace and mercy given to us by God.

We are now in the month of August, another month ahead of uncertainty, in terms of the COVID virus. Where and what the month may entail we do not know. The world waits in hope for normality to return. Praise God that we have a Hope in Him - **Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.**

Simon Marshall, one of the writers in the most recent Partnership Perspectives writes the following:

Much of what is articulated about the ending of the lockdown is hope for the wrong things. It is little more than a desire for a return to the status quo ante – a hope which in biblical term, is no hope at all.....The psalmist, having encountered God, the source of all hope, can now look to a future where

All the end of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord. All the families of the nations will bow down before him - Ps 22v 27

(it is well worth reading the full article which should be available on their Website from the 2nd August)

As you are aware, we are planning on opening up Duke St Church on the 30th August. There have been a few people who have decided to stay at home/continue watching on zoom. We have arranged the groups and the weeks in which you will be able to attend. Please make a note of the group you are in and the weeks to attend. If you have been missed off the list of those attending or down to attend, and feel this is not right for you and will be joining from home, please let us know as soon as possible.

The government is in the process of changing the guidance on the wearing of masks, including for places of worship. This means that when we begin meeting together at the end of August, everyone who comes into the church building will need to wear a face covering. I know many may struggle with this, but, unfortunately, this is something we need to follow at this point in time.

Even with this change to face coverings, we will still be adhering to the 2m social distancing.

Whether we can gather is still subject to changes that the government might make with regards to being able to meet in a public place indoors, and also subject to local government advice.

As a reminder...

We would love to encourage everyone to come and join us as we return to church. However, we do understand that there might be those still shielding, those in vulnerable groups, who still might wish to still connect using Zoom.

Our aim is that the church service will be a hybrid one, in that there will be those physically attending and those watching the live streaming of the service on Zoom.

It goes without saying that it will be a very different service and environment to what we once knew - we need to be realistic with how it will now be.

Our Plan is to have a single service at 10.30 when up to 30 people will be able to attend. We wish to create a culture of care and understanding while in attendance and try to make it easy for those in attendance to follow the Government Guidelines.

In order that we follow our risks assessments and follow the guidelines, we will need to ensure that those wishing to attend can do so safely. Therefore, we will be placing people in 3 groups of about 15 people. Each Sunday 2 of these groups will be able to attend at a time. These groups will then rotate round allowing all those in a group to attend 2 out of every 3 Sundays. (those taking part in the service will be in attendance no matter what group they are in)

Once you have been placed in a group, please remain in that group. If you happen to be away one week you will still need to follow the weeks your group is able to attend and not decide to attend a different week that has not been allocated to you.

There is a possibility, that if we find people don't attend their group and we have spare seats, or if people know in advance they will be unable to attend their given week, we could look at the possibility of inviting people from a reserve list. We would try to aim to offer the place(s) to others. We would therefore need to know by **Friday lunchtime** if you are unable to attend church the following Sunday.

It goes without saying that this new set up will take time to get used to (if we ever do), but it will be reviewed on a regular basis. We don't know how it will all work out but seek to come together and worship God and support and encourage one another.

When arriving, please don't gather together outside. This may mean staying in your car and waiting for a bit if you can see others are just arriving/walking into church (we are not sure what the parking will be like and will just have to wait and see).

Church will be set up ready for your arrival, so please take a seat as soon as you arrive allowing others to arrive without any pinch points. Chairs will be set out in either, single chairs or in groups of 2 or 3. Please ensure that you sit in chairs according to your group size,

i.e. a couple should not sit in a block of 3 seats (unless told otherwise). Once seated, please don't swap to different chairs.

All songs will be projected on the screen as we are unable to sing. Please bring your own Bibles with you as we will not be able to use shared books.

We will still be sharing in communion together - pre-cut individual bread and individual glasses will be provided.

Care will be needed when leaving the building. Please be mindful of pinch points and don't gather on the street outside. There will be a short opportunity to speak with those around while you remain in your seats.

In order to facilitate track and trace we will be keeping a register of all those attending. This will be kept for 21 days then destroyed (GDPR)

You need to be aware that if there is a case of COVID 19 of a church member in attendance then this could mean all those in attendance with them needing to self-isolate for 14 days. It could also potentially mean the church would close for short period of time.

We want to be able to meet together to worship God and share fellowship with one another, despite the abnormal environment we will be in. God requires a right heart and one that is ready to worship. His temple is within us and not the church building.

We want to be a witness to the local community and join many other churches in re-opening. We want to continue building up one another and keep our Worship of God central to our aims.

Below are the allocation of the groups, and which week each group will be meeting in the building

August

30th **Group 2 + 3**

September

6th **Group 1 + 2**

13th **Group 1 + 3**

20th **Group 2 + 3**

27th **Group 1 + 2**

October

4th **Group 1 + 3**

11th **Group 2 + 3**

18th **Group 1 + 2**

25th **Group 1 + 3**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Jez, Tom and Rebekah Ruth and Kelly, Alexi and Jaxon Mark Bill, Rachel and Daniel Elaine Ivan	Jez and Tom Chris and Alison Bob and Dorothy Sandy Grant Dave Colin and Ruth Nancy Stephen and Jennie Lorraine	Jez and Tom Victoria Tony Sue Weir Gaudence Ken and Evelyn Paul Zoe June
13	13 (15)	9 (11)

Every Blessing

Jez & Bill