



The
United
Reformed
Church

The Free Church (United Reformed) Saint Ives

Market Hill Saint Ives Cambridgeshire
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WEEK 1 OF FREE CHURCH WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

20th March 2020

Greetings all,

Elders met by conference call this week for the first time. One of the things we decided was to agree a task force to deal with the implications of the Corona virus. This will include Church Officers: Catherine Ball - Minister, David Duffett – Church Secretary; Esmond Edwards – Treasurer; Alan Curtis – Associate Secretary; Peter German – Convenor of Finance and Property. These people will be core group, but we will also consult Dr Christine Macleod as Public Health expert and Synod Advocate for Health and Healing; Christine Curtis – Safeguarding Advocate and Irene McCormick – Line manager of Admin staff; Barbara Duffett and Helen Ackroyd – Pastoral Care. This Task Force is formed simply so that we can quickly make decisions where necessary. We will continue to bring all matters to Elders for ratification.

This is our first Weekly News bulletin in which we would like to keep in touch with all our church members and adherents. If you have news you want posted, or have needs you would like shared, please send them to us and we will pass them on.

No Worship Gatherings

In light of the requirement for local United Reformed churches to stop gathering for worship, Church house is offering Sunday services to listen to on-line. If you would like to join in, we can all worship at the same time around the country from our own homes.

United Reformed Church Sunday morning services are being offered from Church House from this Sunday through 'Devotion Emails'. At 10am on Sunday mornings, a service in both written and audio format will be sent by email to all who sign up for them. This will have the feel of a service on the radio in our style with well-known URC people leading worship. There will be prayers and hymns to join in with as we pray together. If you would like to sign up to receive the Devotions Emails you will simply need to go to devotions.urc.org.uk. If you would like them via hard copy, let me know and we can post them to you.

Another resource for joining with other Christians across the country has been suggested by Churches Together in England: to

Light a Candle of Hope

"At such a time as this, when so many are fearful and there is great uncertainty, we are reminded of our dependence on our loving Heavenly Father and the future that he holds.

Therefore, at 7pm (GMT) this Sunday, light a candle in the windows of your homes as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer."

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Church Secretary:
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Let us pray for one another during this difficult time.
"Cast all your cares on to Him, for He cares for you."
1 Peter 5:7

I would also like to send a weekly Devotions for Free Church members and adherents. I hope you find them helpful during this time period whilst we are not able to gather for Sunday worship. I am planning to follow the lectionary generally, as it helps us to maintain the Church Calendar and also to enable us to continue our journey of Lent toward Good Friday and Easter which is such a special time of the year. My intention is to have a Bible reading, a Reflection and a Prayer. Although we may not be worshipping together, I hope we are sharing at a distance and that we may all know God's presence with us by his Spirit.

As well as joining together, though apart, in worship, we may show our Christian faith by showing compassion to those in need in our community. If you have neighbours who are older or at risk then you may wish to ask them if they need help buying food or medicines.

Down our street, several of us are looking out for each other and sharing with each other. My neighbour gave me some Marmite; I gave some tomato sauce and potatoes to another neighbour. We also decided to have 'social isolation parties' by standing on our own driveways and chatting to each other.

You may have other experiences or stories to share. If you would like to give ideas or tell similar stories of neighbourly support, do send them in to Gail in the office, and we will add them to this Free Church Weekly News Bulletin.

This will be sent by email to all on our list and also by hard copy to those not on email. Probably we will need to keep the hard copy to two sides of A4 to keep the costs down.

You may also keep up to date by looking at the website 'www.stivesfreechurch.org'.

Please continue to pray for all those are suffering with this virus and the medical profession seeking to treat them and our political leaders for wisdom in their decision making.

With love and prayers,

Catherine

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