

## Summer 2020 update Weoley Hill URC

### *Emerging into the New Normal*

As we are gradually emerging out of lockdown, and churches can make plans to open again, we intend to resume worship in Weoley Hill Church at the beginning of September. These will be shorter, simplified services that match the online service and printed sheets (which we will continue to provide) for the foreseeable future.

Following an extensive risk assessment, meetings of F&B and the Elders and a 'practice' service, we feel that we can aim for those who are able to gather for worship in the church on Sunday 6 September, including communion. As currently required, only the choir will sing, distancing will be observed, the collection plates will not be passed hand to hand, and numbers will be limited, along with other precautions.

**Communion:** The people who prepare the elements will wear masks and gloves; the bread will be cut in advance and both bread and cups will be spaced out on trays. We will use the central aisle to go to the altar to take the elements, then return to our seats via the side aisles, maintaining safe distances from each other. Anyone who cannot manage this will be served where they sit. Communion will then proceed as usual. Serving everyone where they sit has not been ruled out, but we will try taking the elements from the altar first.

**Questionnaire:** Please fill in the questionnaire, which asks about how you have worshipped recently, returning to worship and other activities, and including those who can't return yet.

We recognise that, depending on circumstances, some people may be unable to re-join us on 6 September, or may be advised to stay away a little longer, and we would like to know how we can best include you if that is the case. This has a wider future application as well, since any of us may be kept away from church by injury or illness at some time. And, of course, we must take account of the possibility of a further period of restricted activity or lockdown.

We have had audio recordings of our worship for a long time now, and for the past few months we have provided an online worship for those who can access it, along with a printed sheet, so we are gradually expanding our technology repertoire. We can apply for a grant to help expand further.

Please let us know how we could best include you:

- 'Live' worship that you could follow via laptop, tablet, smart phone or some other device. This would be captured in a very basic form such as placing a laptop or tablet near the altar.
- A digital audio-visual recording of worship, delivered later online, or via DVD or USB drive

- An audio only recording as at present
- Some other way—do you know what some other church is doing? Or perhaps you've been involved with an online class or activity that seems to work well and might work for us.

It may take some trial and error before we know what works best.

**Risk assessment and safety provisions:** Precautions include no-touch hand sanitiser dispensers at the doors, a one-way system from the car park door (the front doors to remain closed), internal doors left open during worship, no refreshments after worship, cleaning after worship including occupied pews, doors and door handles, etc, no hymn books or service sheets. A full list is available. We are advised to wear face coverings in church and if you normally use a cushion, we suggest you bring one from home or take a cushion from the back to take home and bring back every Sunday. Service sheets can be emailed or delivered in advance.

Our usual fellowship activities such as the Lunch Club and the Friendship Group are not likely to resume during the remainder of 2020 at the least. Suggestions for safe fellowship are very welcome, as are suggestions for ways to hold Bible study or discussions. And, sad to say, this probably means no Harvest or Christmas lunches—unless good weather makes a Harvest picnic possible.

Please fill in the accompanying form and return it to Cheryl by email, post or hand delivery.