



CHESTER ROAD

Baptist Church

18th March 2020

As you know, the UK Government has asked *everyone* to take unprecedented measures to help combat the serious threat of Coronavirus. Those most at risk are older people, those with underlying health conditions, and those who are pregnant.

It's not just that we don't want to catch Covid-19, it's more that, without realising it, we don't want to be the one who passes it on to *others*. Love God and *love others* as you *love yourself*.

It's right that we as a church, and each of us as individuals, follow the clear Government, medical and scientific call to create and maintain social distance, reducing the rate of spread.

Therefore, with immediate effect, we have suspended ALL and any on-site activities, clubs, and meetings at our Chester Road church building. For now, there will be no Sunday services. No-one knows how long this will last for.

However, this does NOT mean the #GrowingCommunity that is Chester Road Baptist Church has stopped. We haven't! We've always known Church is not a building, it's the people. Now, over the next few months, we're all going to demonstrate this. For the time being, we will no longer *attend* church. Instead we will BE and DO church together #GrowingCommunity!

We recently explored a few of the 50+ *One Another* passages. It's more important than ever for us each to pray for *one another*, care for *one another*, encourage *one another*... "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love *one another*." John 13:35

We must each respect and maintain social distance between *one another*. Yet, social *distance* need not mean social *isolation*. Let's find ways to connect with *one another*. For example:

- Telephone people (and not just the same few). Let them hear your voice, and you theirs.
- Doorstep visits, maintaining safe 2 metre/ 6 foot+ distance
- Chat to neighbours over the garden fence.
- Use Skype or FaceTime to 'meet' with others.

Over the coming days and weeks, we'll have to use different ways to communicate together. Do we have your email address? Do we have your mobile number? Tell us anyway!

Chester Road Baptist Church, Chester Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5HU

☎ 0121 350 2779 ✉ office@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk 🌐 ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk

Chester Road Baptist Church is a Registered Charity (No 1134180) and a member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain

Pastoral care

Pastoral care is something we all do. Please take the initiative with *one another!*

Many of you are already in a small group. Great! Despite not being able to meet face-to-face, you can still care for *one another* via telephone, FaceTime/Skype/WhatsApp... Keep going!

We have 65+ people aged 70 or above. We're working fast on a revised pastoral care strategy that maintains 'social distance' whilst minimising social isolation.

The Mission & Ministry Staff Team are here to encourage and support you. Call, text or email:

- Danny Brierley m: 07840 046020 e: DannyBrierley@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk
- Liz Clayton m: 07596 225480 e: LizClayton@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk
- Carys Egner m: 07596 225460 e: CarysEgner@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk

Website

We'll keep updating the Church website www.ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk We're also working on providing you with a login and password so you can access our online community.

Facebook

If you're not on Facebook, now is a good time to be. Go to www.Facebook.com and search for 'ChesterRoadBaptist'. Then 'like' us, 'share' our posts. This is a public-access group that anyone can see. In addition, we're creating a separate private group so accepted Chester Roaders can share prayer needs and communicate with *one another*.

Daily Office – 'still and quiet my soul'

We've been following the Northumbria Community rhythm of Daily Office for over a year now at Tuesday's Early Bird Prayer and Wednesday's Midweek Communion. Now we can join with *one another* in Daily Office from wherever. Join us live at 6.30 am or 'catch up' any time after by clicking on to www.Facebook.com/ChesterRoadBaptist Use the enclosed simple liturgies.

Teaching

Take a break from Netflix and explore our back-catalogue of teaching. Available from: www.ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Talks We'll keep adding more.

Worship

Just because we can't go to a church building, we can, and must, continue to be a worshipping community. Starting this Sunday at 10.30 am, we'll experiment with livestreaming services, gathering together *online* for worship. Join us via www.Facebook.com/ChesterRoadBaptist

And finally...

There is no doubt, we are entering a hugely challenging time for us as a church. We're not alone. All churches are in the same boat. What matters more than anything is that we have the Spirit of Christ at work within us. Our circumstances may have changed, but God remains the same, yesterday, today, and FOREVER! Let's journey with one another.

May you experience Shalom, God's deepest, richest, most surprising peace!



Danny Brierley and the Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees)

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