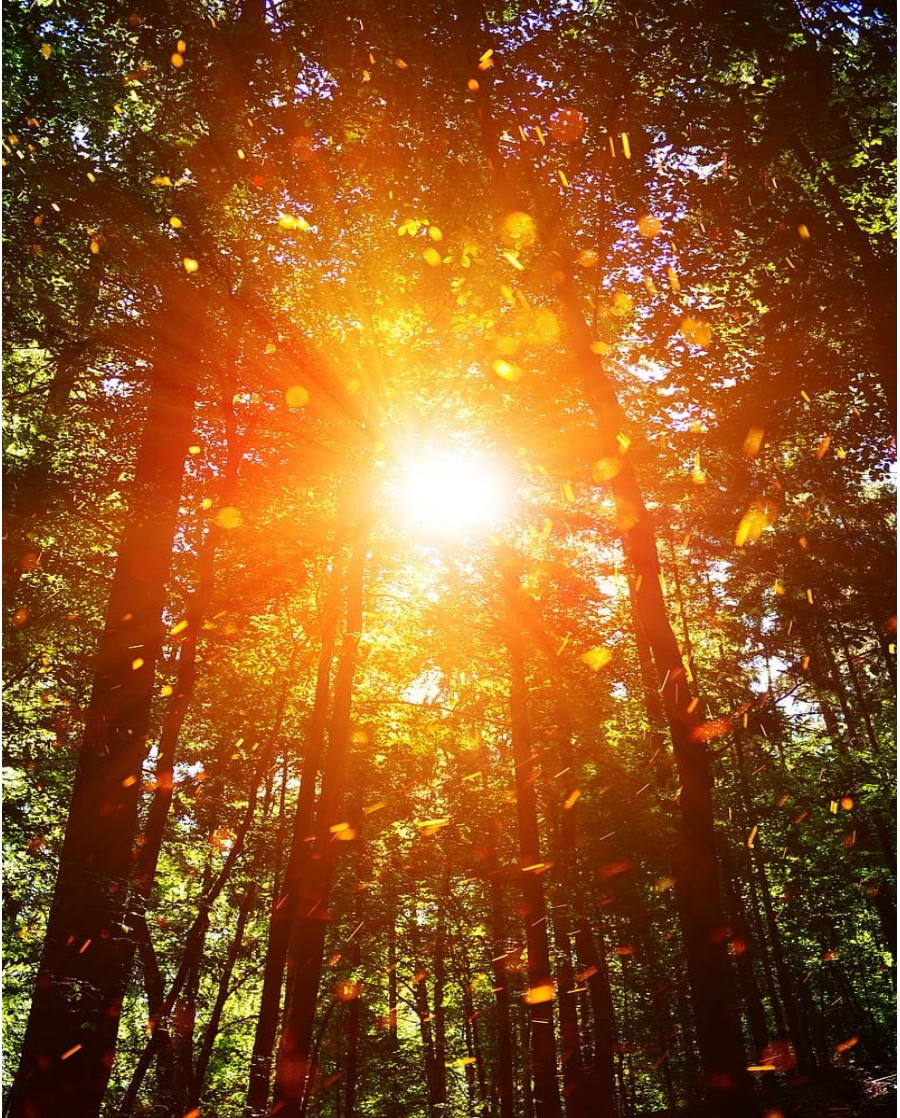




The Baptist Church,
Brierfield

July 2020



We meet in a warm, friendly atmosphere to praise and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

Please do join us.

Sunday Services

10:30 am Streamed on YouTube - check our website for the service link.
<https://www.brierfieldbaptistchurch.org.uk>
(until we are able to meet in Chapel again!)

Midweek Activities as announced.

Secretary – Mrs Angela Higgin

52 Sandiway Drive, Briercliffe, Burnley, BB10 2JS
telephone: 01282 414979 email: glyang52@virginmedia.com

Do you have something you would like to be included in next months newsletter? Please hand anything you would like adding to Richard I'Anson or Kathryn Hughes, or by email to newsletter@brierfieldbaptistchurch.org.uk



Confusion

(A short message by Philip Rowland)

In the Book of Ecclesiastes there are those immortal words – “There is a time to be born, and a time to die.” We have been going through a time of forced separation, and soon we shall be coming together again. It will be a time of rejoicing, and yet possibly a time of confusion for us.

I remember being off sick for some time when I was younger, and then coming back to work. Everything was familiar, yet everything seemed to be different. We shall be coming back into our building, but not everything will be just as it was. As in the office where I worked, even the slight reorganising of the files caused confusion when I returned, so we shall have to become used to different ways of doing things.

Solomon when he wrote Ecclesiastes looked around, and found that all was vanity, or meaningless, or confusion, depending on which translation you are using - but in the end, he found what was important. It was the certainty, the unchangingness of God. When all the world was uncertain, he found certainty.

We may well have to do things differently in the future. No longer will anyone be able to say, “But we’ve always done it like that!” Keeping our eyes on the Lord, we shall find new ways. When Jesus was speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), the conversation turned to worship. She pointed out that Jesus, as a Jew, worshipped at the Temple, while she, as a Samaritan, held that Mount Gerizim, where both Abraham and Jacob had built altars, was the right place of worship.

But Jesus pointed out that true worship was not tied to location or customs because God was to be worshipped not by ritual and rite tied to a place, but in the Spirit, and in truth, because He Himself was a Spirit. Our Chapel, our ways of doing things, must not become idols that take our attention from the Lord whom we worship. Just imagine, after Pentecost, those early Christians still used the Temple for worship, but no longer to offer sacrifices, because that old system had been done away with. It must have been confusing for them. It may be confusing for us for a while. But let us have patience, keeping our eyes on the Lord, who alone is worthy of worship, and we shall not go far wrong!

Philip

Rota Page

The rota page is basically the same as for April/May – except for the preachers and Vestry Prayers, but could I ask all members of the congregation to check the page so we don't have any gaps in Door Stewards and Service Leaders. - Angela.

Re-Opening Plans

Now we have been given permission to re-open and hold services again, a broad outline of the plans we are hoping to use in compliance with the new 1 metre rule, is listed below :

Services will be held in Chapel – and the church will be operating a one-way system. Social distancing seating will be marked out - please wait to be shown to your seat.

Hand Sanitizer will be available both upstairs and down. There are 3 toilets downstairs.

Offerings (plus accumulated envelopes) can be placed in box(es) situated on the radiator as you enter Chapel.

Hymns – we may have Hymns or play the tunes for you to follow in your head, or we may have recordings of Hymns. No Bibles – if you wish, please bring your own.

Sunday school will be taken by younger people and small children in Primary, older children in the lounge . Just two groups.

There will be no coffee after the service, and no communion services until restrictions allow. If you wish to chat after the service please do so outside observing social distancing of 1 metre.

Please be aware that the above are only plans at present and may change after the Officers meeting on Tuesday 30th June.

Open Air Service

Please note the Open Air Service scheduled for the 19th July has been cancelled, with the agreement of all Brierfield churches.

Food Bank

Thankfully Pendle Council made arrangements for the Food Banks in Nelson to receive funding/goods in order to keep them afloat during the current crisis. This funding was for a limited period and this is now coming to an end. Could we ask people to start thinking about collecting items for our chapel to contribute once we start to meet again.

Preaching Plan Secretary - Vacancy

Kath Rowland has very kindly completed the Preaching Plan for 2020 with very few services now requiring a preacher, even though she should have stood down at the proposed AGM in May. The church urgently needs someone to take on this role as Kath will definitely be standing down at the end of December. Please think and pray about this important role, and contact Kath, David or Angela if you would like more information and/or a copy of the duties of a Preaching Plan Secretary.

Do You Need Help?

Could we remind any member of our church family, that should you need any help, to please contact any of the Church Elders or Officers who will do their best to help or will try and put you in contact with someone who can.

Prayer Matters

I hope by the time you read this that we will have recommenced live services, or at least are about to. As we meet together, it will not be quite as usual. Many things will have to be done differently, and we will still have to recognise Government restrictions on what we can and can't do.

But what we can do at last is meet together. Maybe not with shaking of hands, but with a meeting of eyes and an expression of greeting which will acknowledge all that God has done and is doing for us. We will jointly be able to sit under the gospel as it is read and expounded to us. We will be able to pray, and add our Amen. We will be able to worship our Lord together.

But all this will need some reorganising. We may be confused at first, but must learn to have patience with one another. As far as possible, we must bear one another's burdens as we hear of them

So let's pray:

- Firstly, that God will still be with us in these unprecedented times;
- That the Lord will give us direction, and help us to be patient with each other;
- That the Lord will be with those who are leading us in worship at this time;
- And finally, that the Lord will bless us as a church family, and help us to support each other in His Name.

May I remind you that if you have an urgent need for prayer, such as sickness, or one of the problems of life, please contact Philip on:

Email: philip.rowland@virginmedia.com

- or by Mobile Text (please do not ring me): 07546 350 409
- or by phoning Kath on 01282 697005.

Your request for prayer will then be passed on to the other members of the Prayer Chain.



COVID AND THE CARE HOME: A WAKE-UP CALL FOR THE WEST

It was reunion day at the Chênes Verts nursing home in the Parisian suburb of Gif-sur-Yvette – a long-awaited moment for residents and their families who had gone two months without any visits. It had taken staff almost three weeks to work out how to safely re-open the doors of the care home in this new world, one governed by Covid-19. But finally, on 11 May 2020, the first three visitors were able to see their loved ones face-to-face, and the emotion was palpable...

BMS World Mission worker Christine Kling has been visiting the Chênes Verts nursing home regularly since becoming a part-time chaplain there in 2017. Amongst her other pastoral responsibilities, she counts her visits to residents in their 70s and 80s, many living with dementia, depression, or other serious health conditions, as an important part of her job. In the West, our interest in nursing homes is likely related to whether we've ever visited one, had a relative move in or perhaps worked in the sector. But recently care homes have been front page news, with questions raised over whether they have been woefully underserved by governments in the Coronavirus pandemic.

Refreshingly, Chênes Verts has always been front page news for the residents of Gif-sur-Yvette. "The care home is the only one in the town and everyone has known a relative or a friend staying in it," says Christine. Many people's childhood memories include singing Christmas carols to its residents. The care home is at the heart of the community – a rare position for most care homes in Western culture. Christine lists underpaid staff, the difficulties of the job itself: the pain, long hours, night shifts and a lack of recognition as just some of the well-worn issues many Western countries have yet to address. But the arrival of the Coronavirus forces us to confront them.

Indeed, we've been required to confront many things this year. And as Chênes Verts prepared to welcome back visitors for the very first time, we could become inured to the talk of strategies, of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), of five-step plans and coded alert levels. But take a step back, and it's heartbreaking to think of a world where something as simple as an aged parent being visited by a son or daughter must now be handled like a military operation.



Christine mobilised a group of volunteers to sew 40 surgical gowns from old bedsheets for the care home staff. More gowns are still needed, as PPE is in short supply.



The risks to health of opening Chênes Verts care home back up were high, but the emotional toll of refusing family visits was just as high a price to pay.

So, on 11 May, visits were by appointment in a dedicated room. Social distancing measures were in place, of course, along with temperature screening and the compulsory wearing of masks.

“The elderly residents didn’t always understand why they could not touch their visitor, why it was only one relative at a time and for 30 minutes,” says Christine. “There were expectations and stress from both sides after having waited for so long – a lot of emotions – so we had to be sensitive and caring.”

Irma, a care home resident, had been a member of the French Resistance in her youth.

An initial screening test set the opening of Chênes Verts back, as it revealed asymptomatic cases of Covid-19 among residents and staff. Ten of the residents were discovered to have contracted the virus, and devastatingly, three passed away in one weekend. Thankfully, a number of others are on the road to recovery. “Death is very much part of care home life,” says Christine. “Every six months we have a memorial service to remember the ones who left us.” But, in the context of Covid-19, death feels different. “After having fought for two months to keep the residents safe, the staff feel like we’ve lost a battle.”

How does Christine offer up support in such difficult times, and how can we as Christians do the same? “Fear, grief and stress characterise the overall mood in France,” explains Christine. “In a secular country where death has been ‘sanitised’, managed by experts at hospitals, care homes, etc, for many years, this crisis has been some sort of awakening in rediscovering human vulnerability and finitude. For the time being I am listening to the staff and residents when they want to speak, to acknowledge their pain and grief. If people want to pray, I offer prayers.” And as Christians offering comfort in uncertain times, we have the additional promise that we will never be alone.

“The Holy Spirit, the comforter, the helper, is with us always, teaching us how to love others as Jesus loves us,” Christine says. She’s been reading John 14 with her church, and is very aware of both the challenges and opportunities created for Christians in the West by the Coronavirus crisis. “Covid-19 might be the new challenge for the Church to reach out to the ones in need, to dare to care.”

The care home is just one place where Christians can share this love and serve the local community. Indeed, reunion day at Chênes Verts was only possible thanks to the bravery and help of volunteers who stepped in to co-ordinate the visits, sew gowns and gather enough PPE. “The first day of the visits was a very special day. The laughter behind the masks and the sparkling eyes provided moments of happiness but also a little balm for the heart,” says Christine. “When it is possible to come together again, we will remember this day at Chênes Verts.”



		Preacher	Door Steward	Morning Service Leader
5 th July	10.30 am	John Caddy	G. Leeming	G. Fogg
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>David Leeming / Janice Greenwood</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
12 th July	10.30 am	Stephen Wells	S. Dunham	N. Leeming
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>Philip Rowland / Peter I'Anson</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
19 th July	10.30 am	Howard Ellison	D. Driver	M. Lewis
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>Nigel Leeming / Kath Rowland</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
26 th July	10.30 am	Colin Scholes	R. Bolton	K. Rowland
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>Donald Leeming / Janice Greenwood</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
2 nd August	10.30 am	Geoff Hartley	E. Wilkes	D. Driver
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>David Leeming / Peter I'Anson</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
9 th August	10.30 am	Geoff Jackson	C. Leeming	B. Baldwin
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>Philip Rowland / Kath Rowland</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
16 th August	10.30 am	Philip Rowland	D. Mullarkey	R. Hartley
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>Nigel Leeming / Janice Greenwood</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
23 rd August	10.30 am	David Livermore	C. I'Anson	S. Greaves
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>Donald Leeming / Peter I'Anson</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		
30 th August	10.30 am	Tim Doggart	K. Hughes	B. Driver
	Vestry Prayers:	<i>David Leeming / Kath Rowland</i>		
	6.00 pm	No Evening Service		

**PLEASE NOTE ANY PART OF THIS PAGE MAY CHANGE
AT SHORT NOTICE**