

BROADSTONE BAPTIST CHURCH

THE WAY FORWARD (UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2020)

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20–21, ESV)

It's been six months since the whole church had the freedom to meet face to face. Ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, along with not having a building large enough to gather, bearing in mind social distancing requirements, means that regular, all church, face to face gatherings are unlikely to take place this side of Christmas.

Although that might sound like bad news, and it is grievous, there are some glimmers of good news.

The latest government recommendations mean that up to six people, from different households can now gather indoors, so long as they are socially distanced. This opens up the possibility of our small groups beginning to meet up. That could take several forms.

- You could invite someone to join with your family to watch the livestream on Sunday morning (so long as you don't exceed the six person rule).
- Six people from a home group or care group could meet together to join the Zoom prayer meeting. You could then have a time of prayer together in your small group.
- The elders are giving consideration to holding a daytime prayer meeting in addition to the evening one.

In addition, churches can still have as many people gathering for worship as their facilities will allow with social distancing. You would have to stay in groups of six (socially distanced if you are from different households) and you mustn't speak to someone from another group, or mingle before or after the service, but this opens up the possibility of having two groups of six meeting in our hall for our live stream on Sunday morning.

Youth work can also start as it comes under the category of education. We have all been affected in various ways, some of our older folks through loneliness, some of those working because of reduced income and fear over job losses, but our young people have suffered also. Not only have they had school disrupted, and social interaction with friends restricted, but they haven't been able to have their normal youth ministries at church. We've been able to run quizzes, and I'm thankful to those who have organised them and attended. They've been really fun, and it's been great to connect. However, we want to look at restarting our youth ministry, and at the moment

we have the opportunity to do that, although it will need wisdom due to limited building resources.

The building project is progressing. God willing the new building will be finished in mid December. We won't be able to move in straight away as we have things that we need to do to get the building ready for use. However, when the building is ready, probably early to mid-January, we will be able to have more groups of six, socially distanced, meeting for our livestream and for communal prayer.

Obviously, all of this is assuming the current restrictions stay as they are (as of 23rd September).

Please continue to support the leadership through prayer as we navigate our way forward. It would be lovely to see you at one of our Zoom events, either the prayer meeting or coffee and chat after Sunday live stream.

If you have specific prayer requests, please let your care group leader know, and please be assured of our prayers for you.

Continue to look out for one another. Keep looking for that city that hands have not raised, keep longing for that country that sin has not stained.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Tim