

26 March 2020



To our COGS Family

Thank you for your prayers for the first half of my study leave, which I still hope to conclude at some point. But for now, it's good to be back with you, even at this strange time.

The news and seemingly daily changes are disturbing, but I want to encourage you to keep your focus on the solid and unchanging God. Psalm 46 begins, *God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.*

God is dependable and he has not abandoned us. The Psalm continues, we are commanded to: *Be still, and know that I am God.* This unprecedented time will give us the opportunity to be still and know God even better. I would urge you not to let this opportunity go to waste. In order to make good use of this opportunity, see the resources we have below.

The key way to connect as church family during this time is via our Website www.goodshepherdfourmarks.org.uk where we will have:

- Updated information and news
- **A daily prayer sheet** that you can print or read on-line to be used to pray in your household in the Morning and/or the Evening. As you join in remember that we are doing this together and pray for the rest of our church family. The Lord's prayer begins with 'our' not 'my', like many other prayers, it is prayed with our church family, even if we are not physically present together.
- **Sunday services**, we are posting a new Sunday service video on-line each week so that we can meet as family in worship.
 - **Children's resources for worship**
- **Watch the video on Sunday and join us for coffee together @ 11am this Sunday (25th March) via Zoom.** Click the link on our website for more information.

Be the Church.

- Do keep in contact with each other, don't hesitate to ring (use Skype, or other media) and have conversations with others – check they are OK and pray with each other. If you're struggling for contact, feel free to ring me or any of the staff – we can't get to you at the moment.
- Keep in contact with neighbours, offer help and don't be afraid to receive help.
- *Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, (1 Peter 3:15).* Some in these uncertain times are turning to God and need us to help them connect to Him.
- Consider joining the prayer chain, if not already.

Needing Help: If you are in need of help and have no contacts to ask, please do email Matt COGSOffice@gmail.com or phone me if more urgent on 01420 563344. Do note that the church office is closed, and Matt is working from home.

Offering Help: If you are able to offer help, then, again, email Matt COGSOffice@gmail.com

In the meanwhile, I am praying for you all. Stay close to God, pray for each other.

Every blessing. Yours Howard

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6