

McCracken Update

April Newsletter 2020



Dear Friends, this comes to you at a time when the word “unprecedented” tries to put some sort of perspective on the current **Covid 19 crisis** in our world today. Those who have previously been hesitant, have joined the virtual world out of necessity as the number of internet meetings and social media conversations have also reached unseen levels. People the world over have taken to their personal devices in order to keep abreast of the latest news and to connect with their friends and family. That news has been grim. So many people have lost their lives and many more traumatised, isolated and worried as the virus has spread at an alarming rate. At a time like this, it is overwhelmingly apparent that the world is not in control of itself and we live with great vulnerability and insecurity on a daily basis. As we approach **Easter**, surely it will be seen as one of the most significant periods in modern history. **What a time to glory in the Cross of Christ as we turn to our eternal God who alone offers hope and salvation now and forevermore.**



These weeks we are meeting virtually as a church via “**Zoom**”. With so few of us, it can lend itself to a good interactive time of sharing, praying and teaching. As the Covid 19 crisis continues, it looks like we will be meeting in this way for some time to come. An encouragement so far has been the attendance online of one guy who we haven't

seen at regular church for some time. Many other churches are reporting similar encouragements and we can but wonder if this type of meeting will have lasting implications for the church generally. **Technology is good but surely there is no substitute for actually being together!**

We had planned many of our usual ministries for Easter but, obviously, events have overtaken us and we wait for fresh opportunities to reach out later in the summer. In the meantime though, unplanned “socially distant” conversations have taken place with people here and there in our neighbourhood that wouldn't normally occur. Those usually at work are now at home and there is a strange, but healthy sense of unity in the air as we each try to keep safe and satisfied with the essentials. It has been encouraging to see neighbours looking out for one another. One lady, who owns a local coffee shop, has been distributing tasty brown bread in our estate, now that her business has closed. We look forward to it opening again!

Like many here, **David** was temporarily laid off from his job at the Leisure Centre. He was just about to complete his first six months and hopefully get a permanent contract. **Sarah** studies on for Leaving Certificate exams that may or may not take place in June. Her teachers have been setting up Zoom meetings these days too in an effort to stay connected while schools are out.

As a family and as a church, we value your prayers at this extraordinary time that each of us would realise our dependence on God and that this would stir all of us to fervent prayer for our friends and neighbours so that, by the grace of God, many would come to find their lasting peace and joy in Christ alone.

May God bless each one of us at this Easter time,

Jonathan, Nicola, David and Sarah

Praise

- For good health as a family and renewed spiritual vision.
- For continued togetherness as a church in difficult times, especially as we come to celebrate all that Easter means.

Prayer

- For new opportunities to open up with people during and following this pandemic.
- For those with significant concerns about their families and their finances.
- For Andy and Rachel, our co-workers, that they will continue to settle and be able to purchase a house soon.
- David, as he hopes to get back into employment soon and for Sarah as she sits exams and aims at college in the near future.
- The continued efforts of government and frontline staff as they lead and help us all through this crisis.



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