



Christ Church Stocksbridge

Crane Moor Methodist Church

Green Moor Methodist Church

Sunday 2nd May 2021

Dear

Greetings to you at Christ Church, Crane Moor and Green Moor!

It seems like many of us are getting our second jabs and most have had their first. Though of course it will be a few weeks until our younger adult members are offered theirs. So I am hoping that here at Christ Church we will be able to begin to meet at church soon, when the government says we can, and when the Leadership Team agrees that it is right to do so. Won't this be good? We might not be able to sing hymns, but we will be able to meet, worship, pray, read the bible, listen to music and share our faith together, hoping that we will soon be able to sing too. As I write this the Leadership Team at Christ Church meets in a few days and so there may be a report from them on how we might proceed. I suspect it won't be until June at the earliest, but at least there is a future in sight.

Meanwhile we have some birthdays to celebrate this week.

- Rowan Wild on Tuesday 4th May
- Jennifer Harrison on Friday 7th May
- Marjorie Hance on Saturday 8th May and
- Sam Reale, also on Saturday 8th May.

Happy Birthdays to you all!

As I write this I have been making the last arrangements for the funeral of David Bailey in Ripon on Wednesday 28th April. I have asked his daughter-in-law, Marion, to think about whether it might be helpful or not for us to have Dorothy's new address there, as some might want to send her a card. I will be speaking of David and Dorothy's faithful membership and service here in Stocksbridge, and hopefully one or two from here will be able to join me there for the service. I will take your love and good wishes and tell you more later.

We hear lots of talk about "The new normal" and what will it be like. Churches across the land have begun to think about what it will be like when we emerge from the pandemic. I know we all feel that we have rediscovered the power of connection, and the importance of personal contact.

Churches have also been thinking about how we focus on the real essentials when we do start to open. We are being encouraged to think about it. Here is what the Methodist District Mission Team is suggesting we think about as a few starter ideas. It's not all relevant to us, and it's not everything, but I think it does help us to think about things in a fresh way.

- Spring clean your calendar. Don't restart everything straight away. What matters most right now?
- Pray for your hairdresser. And ask how has lockdown been for them?
- Ventilate. Let some fresh air in. Let some fresh ideas in
- Do something because the newest person in your church suggested it
- Live your vocational bucket list. What have you always dreamed of doing? What are you waiting for?
- Guests first. Who do you need to invite to your first church gathering?
- Start planning a summer street party. Partner with another local organisation
- What can you see now that you couldn't see before Covid?

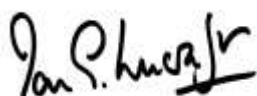
We know that some of you have already begun to have a break away, and I know that more of you are thinking what might be possible for you. If you are managing a time away then I hope that you have a refreshing but safe trip. Gwen and I are hoping to see Daniel and his family for a couple of days near London as we take the caravan for a week to Dorset for Andrew and his family over the Spring school break at the end of May. We are planning to come back in between taking and fetching it, but we might get a couple of days in it ourselves either side of that; our own safe bubble.

Thanks to Christine Utting, who is now sorting out the pulpit supply. I will be having one Sunday off over the Spring break, and Simon and John and their teams will be leading worship, normally around once a month each. We are a way yet from being able to invite external preachers. The replacement camera for the church is on order to sort out the one in the roof that has failed. We will then be ready to deliver regular streamed worship from church on Sundays. And it will be more possible to invite preachers.

Thanks to David Thomas who takes great care of the church, and has just repainted the notice board its lovely bright blue.

I had a really friendly meeting at church last week with Ben Lloyd, the new pastor at The Ikon, which was formerly The Hub. It was good to meet him and agree that wherever possible we will work together. It's going to take him a while to settle in after the pandemic, and get to know his congregation.

Gwen and I send you all our love and best wishes.



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