



## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Dear Friends,

You will have seen that as the lockdown restrictions continue to be eased, it is now possible for places of worship to re-open for services as well as private prayer. Re-opening is subject to detailed risk assessment and all activities, of course, have to follow strict social distancing and other safety measures.

The Church Council has been considering whether Leaside should re-open for services now, or wait a little longer. Taking all factors into account, we have decided, in line with the other churches in HAEBEA, to exercise caution and not resume services in the Church for the time being.

In reaching this decision we have taken into account the age and vulnerability of the congregation, many of whom have been shielding, and the people who would be available to carry out the necessary duties which enable services to take place. While the number of Coronavirus cases has fallen, the risk posed by the pandemic is by no means over, and Leaside's priority continues to be the safety of its congregation.

We have also been encouraged by the positive response to our on-line services and other devotional material. We will therefore continue with the on-line "Zoom" services which enable us to share in fellowship, prayer and worship, and will encourage others to join in by phone if they cannot join on-line. If you haven't used "Zoom" before, it's quite straightforward - please contact Kathryn for the log-in or phone-in details. We will also continue to provide devotional material on paper and on-line through the website and Facebook page.

It is important to be aware that when services do resume in the Church they are likely to be different from the traditional worship we are used to. There are currently restrictions on singing, sharing of sacraments as well as on fellowship and refreshments. We will, of course, have to comply with social distancing and many other safety measures.

We appreciate that while some people are keen to get back to services in the Church, it may be a long time before others are comfortable to return. Our intention is therefore to continue to relay our services to those who are unable or choose not to attend, even after the Church re-opens, so that they still feel part of the Leaside family.

This time of transition gives us all the opportunity to give prayerful consideration to how our worship might change in the future. And also how different ways of doing things might develop Leaside's mission and outreach.

We will review the situation at the beginning of September, when we will also set a date for the Church Meeting postponed from July. At that stage we will also consider when our other regular building users might be able to return.

These arrangements will be kept under constant review as the situation continues to evolve and advice changes. Rev. Kathryn Taylor is available at any time for a conversation on 01920 463125.

God is with us all in our time of need.

Leaside Church Council

July 2020