

## Bulwell United Reformed Church



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**Secretary:** Ruth Maddison, 95, Piccadilly, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 9FL *Telephone:* 07773335443

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**Children, Family and Youth Worker:** Eleanor Rice: 07480113252

Dear Friends,

We hope you are continuing to stay well and plot a positive pathway through these interesting times of ours and we thank everyone who has been leading and participating in the life and witness of our congregation over the past year. Below is lots of important and detailed information, but the essence of it all is that we are thrilled to be able to announce that we are reopening soon on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 10.30 am**. We are so looking forward to welcoming you back and being able to worship together in person again. What is more we see this as the first steps to being able to fully open in the not-too-distant future. We very much hope you will feel confident and safe enough to join us as soon as you are able. Now please read on:

The Elders have taken a very careful decision to reopen, considering the Government's roadmap to allow for example, all shops to open, restaurants and pubs allowed to serve customers sitting outdoors, gyms and spas can reopen and community centres no earlier than 12<sup>th</sup> April.

Dates are one thing but the driving factor must be public safety. Before reopening, the Elders have robustly reviewed and revised thoroughly our Risk Assessment (this is available on the website [www.bulwellurc.org.uk](http://www.bulwellurc.org.uk)) and made sure that we can implement it robustly - the pandemic is not yet over.

This letter is to remind you of the information about the procedures we have had to take, in order to do open sensibly and safely. Many of us have now had our first vaccine jab and some of us even the second but we still ask you to read this letter carefully and then decide if it is sensible and safe for you to return. After what seems a long time it will be good to gather together again! However, if you are not able or not want to attend, we have outlined below the measures we have put in place to ensure that you can still access worship materials and fellowship.

Our worship services will continue to look different and the new church 'experience' may take getting used to again but we have done our best to follow all the guidance we have been given from the National URC and the Government.

1. If you decide that it is appropriate for you to attend church, then we would ask that you let us know that you will be coming. With strict distancing guidelines, we have limited the number of seats to a maximum of 50. We cannot accommodate more than this. Please text or ring Ruth on 07773335443 to indicate if you are intending to come – and how many will be in your bubble. We can then set the chairs out appropriately.
2. It is compulsory to wear a mask/face covering whilst inside the building. These should only be removed briefly whilst communion is taken.
3. When you arrive please follow the directions of the stewards and the signs which are there for the safety of all. We will be using only the ramp and not the steps at the front of church. If you require the lift, then please enter by the side door and a steward will guide you from there.

4. You will be asked to sanitise your hands when entering the building. It is also recommended that you bring sanitiser to clean your hands before taking communion.
5. Please remain a metre away from others at all times. Tempting though it will be, please do not shake hands or hug others.
6. Stewards will show you to your seat. Families will be able to sit in their bubbles. Please remain seated and do not walk around the building to chat to people.
7. Services will be family friendly, but if you have children with you please bring quiet toys/books for them if you feel they will need them. We cannot provide toys for them.
8. The services will be shorter than normal, lasting 30 – 40 minutes.
9. Please bring your own communion. We have become used to using an assortment of food and drink for our communion. It can be water, juice, coffee etc in appropriate containers and bread, biscuit, cake etc. If you do happen to forget to bring anything, we will have a few, hygienically prepared, elements available for you.
10. We will not be passing an offering bag around but there will be a plate by the doors for your gifts. These can be placed there before or after the service.
11. At the end of the service, please remain seated and the stewards will show you out, starting with those at the back.
12. The toilet will be available upstairs. The accessible toilet is downstairs. Please follow stewards' directions to get to these.
13. We are unable to serve coffee before or after the service. However, we will continue to meet on ZOOM at 11.45am for virtual coffee time. This has been really good and we encourage you, if you have the technology, to join us there. Please speak to Kevin or Eleanor if you need help in accessing this.

Colin will continue to provide written services, which will include communion, for you to use at home. These will be e-mailed, delivered or posted to you. The 10.30 am service at church can be accessed via ZOOM. Eleanor will still have her 10.30 Facebook service, and, as already mentioned, ZOOM coffee time will continue at the later time of 11.45am. Please let us know if you need help to access any of these.

Whilst we are having to follow these strict guidelines, we are hoping that as the roadmap unfolds we will gradually return to some form of normality and look forward to meeting again as our exciting, lively, loving and worshipping Bulwell URC.

### **Children and Young people**

We shall also be restarting our children and youth groups downstairs. Eleanor will be contacting those with children shortly to remind and inform them on the procedures for children and youth.

We, as Elders, are very much looking forward to meeting together again and excited by the very bright and uplifting, spirit filled future we see for the church.

May God bless you all, The Elders

