



As promised, the Church Leadership Team have given consideration to the question of reopening the premises for public worship following July 4, 2020, and in the light of the statements relating to this from the Government and from Baptists Together.

Sadly, we have concluded that it would be premature to re-open as we would be unable to do anything that approached being a 'normal' Baptist act of worship. Some churches have a tradition of whole services of spoken liturgy, but that tradition is not ours and the opening words of the Introduction to "Coronavirus: Guidance on church worship" (Baptists Together 29/6/20) make this clear:

**Some things are explicitly prohibited in all cases as follows:**

- **Congregational and choral singing.**
- **Sharing food or drink.**
- **Anything that brings those from different households closer together than 1m, except for during an emergency and when brief closer contact is necessary to facilitate an essential act of worship. . . . Please note that the ideal distance remains at least 2m between those from different households. Between 1m and 2m is acceptable only when 'mitigations' (extra measures) are in place, such as face coverings. Though not demanded by Government guidance, we recommend that face coverings are used by all those attending church regardless of the distancing, as this will give enhanced confidence in their safety in church. Young children and those with respiratory conditions are excluded from this as in all cases where face coverings are otherwise expected.**
- **Any contact between people such as handshakes, hugs or the laying on of hands.**

Another, much longer document, deals with how premises are to be made safe prior to and following usage.

Therefore, until at least September we will continue with the current programme of weekly videocasts and Zoom sharing on Sunday mornings (the videocasts are viewable on YouTube at any time after their 'premiere' on a Sunday morning). In coming to this conclusion we are aware that most Members will want to meet together again in the building as soon as possible but without risking anyone's health. We want also to ensure that those who are shielding due to age or underlying medical conditions are not excluded. If you have any thoughts, requests, or helpful suggestions then please forward them to us at [clt@wbbc.org.uk](mailto:clt@wbbc.org.uk). Just to help, here are four questions that our friends at Heaton Baptist Church have been asking themselves: (1) What have you enjoyed most about lockdown? (2) What have you missed most during lockdown? (3) How has your view of church changed during lockdown? (4) What do you think should be the main priorities of the church moving forward?

We are running a marathon and not a sprint. As we are reminded in Hebrews 12 (TPT): **"We have all of these great witnesses who encircle us like clouds. So we must let go of every wound that has pierced us and the sin we so easily fall into. Then we will be able to run life's marathon race with passion and determination, for the path has been already marked out before us."**

*The Whitley Bay Baptist Church Leadership Team*