

Dear Friends

I am writing on what has been described as freedom-day, but I cannot remember a point when the weight of scientific opinion differed so much from the policy of the government. I know that many people will be concerned and anxious about the dangers new freedoms present. At New North Road we shall be approaching the situation very cautiously and the deacons have agreed that all our covid restrictions will remain in place during August and that the only change we will be making is that people can sing behind their facemasks. People don't need to wear facemasks when they are seated because the seats will still be spatially distanced.

I convey that news with some sadness but also note that there are good things happening on Sundays including the thanksgiving for Baby Rose, the daughter of Bardia and Atiah last Sunday. The opportunity to meet and mingle out of doors on the path outside the church is one many people appreciate.

The only other change we anticipate making is that we will be celebrating communion on Sunday the 15th of August.

I also have to regretfully say that there will be no church meeting in August because of the Covid restrictions.

This will be the last pastoral letter until September when we hope there will be a new church magazine. We shall not be sending a printed order of worship during August. This means that there will be no weekly mailing via post or via email.

In the meanwhile, I commend to you other ways of staying connected including our website www.newnorthroad.org.uk, our what's app group and the Zoom gatherings for prayer and worship each week. You are welcome to call me on 07852 490034 and I am glad to visit if you would like and am happy to sit in a well-ventilated room or your garden, especially in these bright summer days.

These are the themes for Sundays in July and August

July 25th Four gospels, One story

August 1st Stewart Naylor is preaching this Sunday which is very good.

August 8th Yorkshire day postponed. 'God's own country'

If you have good photographs to share of any dimension of Yorkshire, please do send them to me.

August 15th Jesus at the table, the Emmaus Road. Communion

August 22nd Scripture and Song; Isaac Watts.

August 29th Desert Island texts. Scripture and your testimony.

September 5th Evangelism 1. Who should tell? Romans 10 vs 8-15 Church meeting

At the moment I am mindful of so many things that are discouraging, the rising covid infections, the cut in the overseas aid budget, the divisive borders bill and the racism expressed after the Euro's final but I am also reminded there are many reasons for hope; the resourcefulness of so many people in the face of adversity, new children coming into the world, the courage and resilience of people living with problems and pain, the beautiful song that is shared in Church, the brilliant sunshine and the beauty of the hills.

I will miss writing the pastoral letter each week but will be using the time to share in preparing for our new magazine.

God bless

Your friend and pastor

Mark