

Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Corner of Gregory Boulevard & Sherwood Rise, Nottingham NG7 6JN Minister: Andy Wilson
Church Office Tel: 0115 9604 304 Email: minister@mrbc.org.uk Website: www.mrbc.org.uk

Wednesday 1st July 2020

Dear friend,

As a church we have been working towards starting using our buildings from Sunday 12th July. The staff team considered carefully what actions needed to be taken to prepare the buildings, and a risk assessment was completed. We received detailed guidance from the Baptist Union of Great Britain on Tuesday 30th June in response to the Government guidance issued on Monday 29th June. Based on this guidance, we have decided **not to open the church buildings from the 12th July**. This will allow us more time to both consider and implement the following principles identified in the guidance

- To give priority to the safety of both church membership and the community.
- To be sensitive to the needs of all those who will be affected by our decisions.
- Be Baptist in our decision making, which means consulting as widely and prayerfully as possible.
- Accept that this is a marathon and not a sprint.
- Communicate clearly as widely as possible.

We have travelled a good distance on a number of these principles, but we want to take the opportunity to have further detailed discussions on the new guidance as a deaconate, and to widely consult the views of the membership about the form that our church will take over the coming months. To help with this consultation, we have included a short questionnaire that we would like you to fill in and return in the stamped addressed envelope.

It is important to outline what services in church would involve, under the current Government regulations, as they would be very different from the ones at the beginning of March:

- There can be no Singing with any music played being recorded.
- A one-way system will be used around church with sanitiser being used on entrance and exit.
- We will exercise 2m social distancing. In practice this means that there will be a pew with people on followed by 2 empty pews.
- Because we will be keeping at 2m face masks will not be mandatory but may be worn.
- Offering would be placed in a basket on entry to building.
- Children and young people would stay with their parents/guardians.
- No shared items such as clipboards & book bags.
- Worship service lasting about 40 minutes.
- Communion would be very different.
- There will be no drinks after the service and no opportunity for mingling.

The fact that we will not be holding a service in the buildings on Sunday 12th July will be a disappointment to some, but can we please be prayerful and spend time sharing these matters together. If there was something you want share immediately, then please speak to a Deacon, Dave as Church Secretary or myself as Minister before our telephone deacons meeting on Wednesday 8th July.

With my greetings and prayers at this time.

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To Summarise:

Sunday 12th July is not the start date of using the church buildings and none has been identified

The buildings remain closed for general usage at this time

Funerals will continue at the graveside/crematorium only. Current numbers allowed is 30.

Given that the maximum number that is allowed at a funeral service is 30 mourners and the restrictions that will be in place within the church setting no funerals will go in the buildings currently at Mansfield Road BC until further easings of measures. The large capacity of the buildings may give false assumptions to people as they consider funerals before lockdown.

Any of the weddings booked will be facilitated by the staff of the church if not postponed

Currently there are two services that have been booked in for a year or more which would like to continue. Through the risk assessment that has been carried out and in respect that there is no alternative setting these will be facilitated by the Minister and Church Co-Ordinator together.

There is a restriction of 30 in total which includes all the participants and stewards.

No new wedding bookings to be taken without further Authorised Persons being recruited

As Mansfield Road Baptist Church, we have our own Marriage Registers. With the current pandemic we have become very restricted for Authorised People who can authorise weddings, as existing ones can't attend. Until new people are recruited, we are not able to commit for future weddings. This to be considered urgently.

No bookings of the buildings to be taken until a decision for the start date for our worship

It is important that we do not put ourselves under pressure within the church buildings by taking bookings into the future anticipating that matters around the pandemic will have been sorted out. To this end no requests will supported until after our activities as a worshipping body together into the future are arranged