

華倫敦中華基督教會 Chinese Church in London

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From the Church Board

Planning for Church Reopening

We thank the Lord for his protection for He is our refuge and strength during this pandemic. These last three months have been extraordinary. It is also the first time in our history that we closed our church doors to physical worship.

In March we wrote to you about physical church closure and moved all Sunday services online. Many virtual 'face-to-face' meetings have since been conducted online. Your pastoral staff and leaders continue to be in contact with you using various means including Zoom, and many cell groups continue their meetings and bible studies. COVID-19 did not stop us!

We would like to thank you for following the government's guidance and our Board's advice in the Important Notices we sent to you. In particular, we thank our pastoral and admin staff, volunteers and all leaders for all they are doing to provide church services differently and to care for our people. We know many of you are keeping in touch with each other and some of you have even taken a step further by reaching out to those who are in isolation and have needs.

This week on the 29 June, the government released the guidance, **COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of places of worship from 4 July** which provides detailed advice for reopening places of worship from 4 July.

It will be a great joy when we could gather to worship the Lord in our church centres but we cannot do this overnight. COVID 19 pandemic is far from over – the U.K. is still seeing a thousand new cases on most days. We have to remain cautious and will have to take time to plan carefully for everyone's safety, and in order to comply with government regulations. These measures include limiting the number of worshippers, social distancing, improved hygiene etc. in order to protect ourselves and to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic to our fellow citizens. We will be doing church differently once we reopen church premises for worship and for other events, such as weddings. An internal paper, together with a risk assessment, has been created at the board level (considering government guidelines and examples all over the world) and is now being discussed at the congregation council level for review and planning.

The church will remain closed for July while we plan and prepare, and we will do so in a responsible and safe manner. We will assess the risks, and may choose to delay opening if we do not feel that we are able to safely do so given the current social distancing measures and restrictions, taking into considerations the resources (including volunteers) available to help implement these measures and to maintain high-levels of hygiene standards each Sunday. We will inform you once we are ready to reopen our church premises, and would also appreciate if you could kindly fill in a survey to help us plan for reopening and for doing online services better: **For English Sunday Services, For Cantonese Sunday Services, and For Mandarin Sunday Services**. You will also find the link to the survey below the online Sunday Service screen or below the YouTube channel description on our website www.ccil.org.uk.

Please join the Board, your pastoral staff and leaders in prayers as we plan and prepare to reopen our church.

"But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one," 2 Thess 3:3