



RBC Newsletter

January 2021

Dear Church Family,

Happy New Year to you all!

Firstly, I would like to thank you so much for your amazing Christmas gift. Ian and I were overwhelmed at your generosity in such difficult times, and will enjoy spending the voucher in the coming weeks. We had a very nice Christmas, although it was quiet without the family this year. I hope that, despite the Tier 4 restrictions, that you have all had a pleasant Christmas, that you are being careful, and keeping safe and well.

Sadly, as you will all know from the news, the situation with regard to Coronavirus in our area has worsened. The number of cases is still increasing and with the new, more easily transmissible variant, the leadership team at RBC feel it is still not wise, with our very vulnerable congregation, to re-open the church building for services. So we will continue during January as we have over Christmas, and during the previous lock-down, to just provide recorded online services on our website, and via CD for those who have no internet access. We will review the situation in a month's time, when hopefully, the effects of the Tier 4 restrictions will have had chance to take effect, and maybe some of our more vulnerable members will have been vaccinated.

Our first event of 2021, our **Prayer Breakfast Zoom** meeting will take place on **Saturday 2nd January at 9am**. Those who have participated in this previously will receive an invitation with a link to the meeting. However, we are always delighted to have others to join us for prayer, so if you would like to 'come' to the meeting please let me know by email and I will send the link to you too.

Our **first online worship service of the year on Sunday 3rd January** will be our annual Covenant Communion service – an opportunity to renew our covenants with the Lord and with each other.

While we are not meeting together in person, please do remember we all still have a pastoral responsibility to look out for each other in the church family. So **please keep in touch with each other** and especially please take some time to occasionally phone or email those who you know live alone – and also those who may not live alone, but who do not have Christians in their family, and therefore who will be desperately missing Christian contact when the church is not physically meeting.

In last month's newsletter we announced a **Day of Prayer for RBC**, and asked if you would spend some time praying for the church and for some specific matters, which I notified to you separately. I would like to thank you for praying, and to let you know of

some answers, and also some insights, scripture and prophetic words from God that have subsequently been notified to me.

- Praise God! We have a **New Finance Team Leader** – Paul Kingham has agreed to take on this role from January. (Our grateful thanks of course to Paul, and to Eric for all he has done in this role over many years).

- The **process of changing RBC into a CIO** (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) has now been concluded and will take effect from January 1st.

- We have had an encouraging **contact from a couple who are moving into the area** in the New Year who would like to join our fellowship and get involved with our outreach work in the community.

- This word was brought on the Sunday previous to the Day of Prayer:-

"I love you, don't be afraid, I'm walking with you, we'll get through this, you and I."

"Received at the beautiful beginning of a new day, it was a lovely reminder of the value God places on each one, individually, and how we can experience peace and security even in the midst of great trials as we slip our hand into His and trust in Him."

- Another **word of encouragement**, that was passed on to me, to be shared:-

"Because God erases the sins that he forgives, they no longer exist. Therefore, although you should remember the mistakes you made (in order to refrain from making them again), Guilt and Self-loathing should have no place in a Christian's heart. Once you have laid your sins before God and have received His forgiveness, leave them laid down and resist the temptation to pick them up again, for that is neither useful nor what God wants for you."

- An insight following the experience of an answered prayer:- Sometimes we are surprised when God answers our prayers – even the small, 'unimportant' ones- so perhaps we should be more expectant - *expect God to intervene when you ask Him; act and speak in anticipation of His answers; as though You know He **is** answering and **will** answer – because **He does** do so– and far more often than we recognize!*

- Finally, a Scripture, with some thoughts: **Genesis 12: 1-3 The Call of Abraham.**

-Re our demographic – Abraham was old when God called him; his story proves he wasn't perfect either in character or actions – yet God still used Him anyway! Most of us are older people, and we know we are not perfect either – but if we are willing to be obedient God can use us anyway too!

-Re the future – Abraham had a choice – he could have stayed where he was – where he was comfortable and safe – or he could be obedient to the call – stepping out of his comfort zone into the unknown not knowing where he was going or what the future held.

Is God giving us a choice as well for our post-Covid future? – to try and keep church much the same as we have already experienced, or to step out with God into the unknown – into what could be an exciting adventure with Him?

-Re The promise – God's promise to Abraham included blessing, land, and descendants – if we are willing to take a step of faith into what might be an exciting adventure, maybe that could also include blessing for the church; more influence in our community and more disciples for the Kingdom?

Certainly lots there for us all to ponder and pray about. In the meantime,

May God bless you richly in 2021;

May He keep you safe and well in His loving care, and may He provide for all your needs.

Your Pastor and sister in Christ, **Fiona**