



# The Methodist Church

## Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District

Chair of District: Revd Helen R Kirk  
498 Crewe Road, Wistaston, Crewe CW2 6PZ  
01270 668262  
email: [chair@chestokemethodists.com](mailto:chair@chestokemethodists.com)

18 March 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

*'Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ'*

I wanted to write to you all across the District at this unprecedented time when all of our worship and activities have been suspended across the Methodist Church and along with our society, our families and friends, we face this deeply anxious time.

I would encourage you to continue to do a number of things:

1. Stay safe and follow all of the Government guidelines on hygiene and social distancing. These are not impositions on our freedom but ways of keeping those most vulnerable in our society safe.
2. Although the Methodist Church has suspended all worship and activities across the Connexion, we have not ceased to be the Body of Christ so I would encourage you to:
  - Pray regularly – there are various online resources that can be helpful in this for example:  
<https://www.methodistprayer.org/morning>  
<https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/morning-prayer/>  
Please pray for our leaders, our nation, our church and those in most need at this time.
  - Worship – the Methodist website is providing a 'Worship at Home' resource that can either be used online or printed and given to people. Other resources are being provided by Family Friendly Churches <http://www.ffctideas.org.uk/Corona.php>
  - Care and be kind – ring people up regularly; donate to those who are working with the most vulnerable i.e. Foodbanks, homeless shelter etc. For generations we have cared for our communities now is not the time to stop but the time to be resourceful in how we offer such support.

At this extraordinary time, we are going to have to find creative ways of being church. I, and others are hoping to find ways of offering online and written prayers and reflections to be available at regular times as well as hopefully engaging with local radio stations.

The District Officers Group will meet virtually at regular intervals to deal with issues raised across the District and to liaise with the Connexional team. I am aware that a number of churches have concerns around issues of finance and lettings etc. and this will be on the agenda when we come together this week.

This crisis has highlighted the gaps that are present in our society. The next weeks will not be easy; however, in all things we remember that we are beloved children of God.

We do not know how long this situation will last and there is no doubt that we will be changed by it as a nation and a church and so I would encourage you to remember the words of St Paul:

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8: 35, 37-39)*

If there is any way I can offer support please get in touch at [chair@chestokemethodists.com](mailto:chair@chestokemethodists.com) or 01270 668262.

Please be assured of my prayers.

Helen