

Reformed Church BOX HILL

Grace Alone • Christ Alone • Faith Alone • Scripture Alone • Glory to God Alone

Thursday 19 March, 2020

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

As many of you will know, Australia's leaders have called for the nation to forego general gatherings of 100 or more people in communities across our country. In light of this, and in the interests of loving our neighbor and honouring our leaders, **please note that our normal Sunday gatherings in their present form will be suspended until the ban has been lifted.** Many of you will also be aware that the Prime Minister has also warned that this state of affairs may go on for the next 6 months. With this in mind, Session is still considering a long-term approach in relation to mid-week meetings and church life generally, and we will be discussing it as we meet tonight. Please do pray that the Lord would give us great wisdom, and that we would be able to propose solutions that enable us to effectively, safely, and lawfully continue to worship and grow together as the Body of Christ.

We are living through uncertain times, and no doubt many of you are troubled and perhaps discouraged. We as elders and deacons will be contacting each of you by phone as soon as we can to find out how you are going and seek to help and support you in whatever way we can. Please bear with us as we seek to contact our more vulnerable members as a priority. Please be assured of our prayers for all of you, as well as diaconal support to help with the physical needs of members. If you have an immediate urgent need, please let us know right away.

For the immediate future, we plan to put the following measures in place, although we may change and improve this approach in the coming weeks:

- Isaac will continue to prepare two sermons for us weekly, which will be recorded and uploaded on Saturday for your use on the Lord's Day in audio and, Lord willing, video format. We hope, pray, and trust that these recordings will be helpful. Isaac will plan on circulating a sermon sheet for children to use at home for families with children as they listen in.
- In addition to the simplified order of service presented on Isaac's recordings, Session sincerely encourages you to engage in family or individual worship especially on Sunday. This may be as simple as praying and singing in worship together as a family, as well as then using Isaac's sermons.
- Session will also be discussing ways in which we can more effectively minister to single or widowed members - please bear with us and stay tuned. In the immediate future, please make use of the recordings as a means of gathering in spirit with the people of God.
- Session encourages you to practice Family Worship on a daily basis if you do not already. Joel Beeke has a short but helpful book available on this topic, you can get a hardcopy at Reformers Bookshop

(https://reformers.com.au/products/9781601780584-family-guidance-family-worship-joel-beeke?_pos=3&_sid=f95739e66&_ss=r), or for kindle on amazon (https://www.amazon.com.au/Family-Worship-Guidance-Joel-Beeke-ebook/dp/B004Z1TW2M/ref=sr_1_5?keywords=Family+Worship&qid=1584509299&sr=8-5). Dr Beeke's book, as well as some others, are also available in our church library (please contact a member of Session to arrange use of library books).

- In some ways, the current pandemic presents unique opportunities. If you find yourself spending more time at home than is usual, Session would encourage you to spend time reading more of God's Word, as well as good literature that will help you grow in your faith. If you are unsure of what to read, please send a quick email to Pastor Isaac and he will be happy to make a few recommendations. There is also a Bible reading plan in the newsletter each week that you may wish to use, and older sermons on our website may also be of some use. It may also be a good chance to catch up on the RCBH Bible Memorisation challenge!
- As another word of encouragement, Session encourages you all as members to be in phone contact with one another. Why not pick up your copy of the RCBH year book and aim to call two, three, or more people a week? You can check in, see how each other are going, and encourage one another in your faith.
- Please note that all rosters excepting lawn mowing will be suspended for the duration of the lock-down.
- In the absence of a regular in-person service, please make offerings online using the following bank details (please note that the costs of running the congregation will continue even though we are not meeting, and that the Diaconal Fund may also come under greater than usual stress at this time, so we've included the diaconal banking details as well for direct offerings to support that work):

Account Name: Reformed Church of Box Hill Inc

Account No: 309 733 026

BSB No: 013 284

Deacon's banking details:

Account Name: Reformed Church of Box Hill

BSB No: 013148

Account No: 1967-88337

Grace be with you brothers and sisters, talk soon, and remember that the Lord is God! He will bring us through this season in His good and perfect timing, and has blessing in store even through the difficulties.

With love in Christ,

Ken, Albert G, Isaac, Henry, & Willem.