

14 Challenger Quay

Falmouth

Cornwall

TR11 3YL

Wednesday, 6 January 2021

Dear friends

Happy new year!

What a difference a week or two make! Up until Christmas, we were in Tier 1, basking in relative security, and confident that we could operate in many of our chapels safely. After a quick trip through Tier 3, we are now in lockdown, and the position has changed dramatically. The rates of transmission of Coronavirus in Cornwall have risen dramatically, and the new variant is racing through our communities. As we are in lockdown, all non-essential shops, businesses, and sports and leisure facilities have closed. In such circumstances, and with great regret, the Circuit Leadership Team met this evening and agreed that it was no longer appropriate for us to continue to hold services in any of our chapels.

This will come as a disappointment to those who feel safe and secure, but for the time being, we need to sit alongside those in our communities who are not feeling at all safe. Some of you may have received your vaccination, but most have not, and most preachers have not. We have a responsibility to follow the Government's instruction to stay home whenever possible. We are not setting a time limit on this: we will re-open our chapels when it is the right time to do so.

A message to preachers: if you are invited by any church to lead worship during this period of lockdown, you should decline. None of our leaders of worship should be placed in a position where they have to choose between their own instincts and safety, and their loyalty and commitment to the role.

We do hope that you will understand the need for these measures, and will support your leadership team as they endeavour to guide us forward in these challenging times.

Please make every effort to follow the rules, stay safe and well, and remember, you can follow our excellent online services on YouTube. On 17th, the Circuit online service will be a Covenant Service, as we will all be missing this special act of worship during this month.

Sometimes, seeking the way forward can be like looking into a fog. We don't know which way to turn, or how far to go. This season perhaps feels like that to us. Yet, if we look back on our walk with God throughout our lives, we will find the evidence that God knows the way he wants us to go, even when we don't. Let's hold onto that in trust.

This, this is the God we adore
our faithful, unchangeable friend
whose love is as great as his power,
and neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last
whose Spirit shall guide us safe home.
We'll praise him for all that is past,
and trust him for all that's to come.

Joseph Hart StF 67

Every blessing to you for 2021.

Love

Andrew

Rev Andrew Mumford

Superintendent Minister

Falmouth and Gwennap Methodist Circuit