



## Viewfield Baptist Church

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Dear Viewfield family,

It is with great sadness that, as per the government and Baptist Union of Scotland guidelines, we have suspended all gatherings and events in our church buildings. I realise that this is very unsettling and difficult for everyone and I would ask you to continue to be gracious and patient with us as a leadership team as we seek to work through all the challenges that this brings.

### **Light of the world**

I have been reflecting upon our verse for the year from *Matthew 5v14*: *"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden."*

We could reflect on some of the words of the Westminster Catechism that say:

***"Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."***

I love the song that we sometimes sing which is a clear declaration of the desire to glorify God with all our hearts. ***In my life Lord be glorified; In your Church Lord be glorified.*** That is our desire at Viewfield Baptist Church - that God would be glorified. Through our thoughts, our words, our actions, our ministry and mission, that God would be glorified as we seek to worship him. The way that we do ministry and mission will take a different shape in the coming weeks but God is at work building and growing his church.

Clearly we glorify God as we worship him, as we seek to fulfil our God given mission, and as we seek to be a Church without walls.

Jesus says ***"You are the light of the world."*** In these words, Jesus commands the Christian to be like him. Jesus himself said in John's Gospel Chapter 9v5: ***"While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*** Consequently, when Jesus commanded his followers to be the light of the world he was demanding nothing less than they should be like himself.

As Christians, and as the Church we are to glorify God the Father, by reflecting the light of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. ***"We are the light of the world."***

When Jesus said this he was saying that:

- Our light is to be seen. ***A city on a hill cannot be hidden.*** This reinforces the fact that we are to stand out; to be different; to be seen. As believers we are to be conspicuously different.
- We are to shine for God's glory. ***"Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. v16"***

People are to see our good deeds. In Greek, there are two words for good. There is the word *agathos*, which simply defines a thing as good in quality; and there is *kalos*, which means a thing that is not only good but that it is also captivating and beautiful and attractive. The word that is used here is *kalos*. Our good deeds should be captivating, beautiful and attractive.

These good deeds are not to draw attention to ourselves but to God.

**“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.”**

In my life Lord be glorified. In your Church Lord be glorified.

As we consider Christ: Light of the world.....you stepped down into darkness. Like Christ, we are to shine in the darkness. Jesus says:

***“You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”***

## **Viewfield Baptist Church – shine brighter than you ever have!**

### **Church without walls**

Today I read this quote: *“With church doors shutting across the world it’s time to show people it’s not about the building – we are the church.”*

The building may be closed, but we are the church and it continues to grow and thrive as Jesus is building his church. These are days of opportunity for us and the gospel throughout history has spread fastest through the most difficult of circumstances.

What are some of the practical ways that we can continue to do ministry and mission in these uncertain days?

The three core activities of worship, community and mission will continue in different ways. It is an opportunity for extraordinary creativity as we discover how the Lord is leading us to be church in these days.

- a. **Worship-** We will be holding a weekly live stream on Facebook live at 1030am on Sundays via the church Facebook page. This will also be recorded and uploaded to our church website. CDs will also be available to those who need them. Please bear with us and be patient with us in case of any technical difficulties. The pastor will also produce Bible study questions and notes that will be distributed for personal study. We would also point people to the Bible in a year resource produced by Nicky Gumbel. <https://www.bibleinoneyear.org/>
- b. **Prayer-** In the absence of small groups, an online prayer meeting will be held weekly on a Wednesday at 730pm on Facebook live. We will also seek to distribute weekly prayer points via the bulletin, which will be posted online and via email. Please commit time to pray for one another and the needs highlighted. I have committed to daily praying for every person and household who are part of our church family. You are being prayed for. Charles Spurgeon said: **“A prayerful**

***church is a powerful church.***” E.M.Bounds said: ***“The church upon its knees will bring heaven upon the earth.”***

c. **Pastoral care-** I want each one of you to know you are deeply loved and cared for. As a family we may not be in contact face to face but there are many ways that we can care for one another. Keep connected with your small group and friends. The Pastoral care team will be regularly in touch with people over email, social media, phone and text. As your pastor, I will try to keep in touch via these means. Keep connected.

**d. Mission- “You are the light of the world”**

You are the light of the world and your mission field is your street and your neighbourhood. Also there are so many opportunities to be a witness and light through your presence on social media. However, let us be wise in what we say and what we do. Let’s honour Christ and bring glory to his name. These are days of opportunity before a watching world. Two resources that we can use for mission are those highlighted below.

- Experience Easter- A resource that we can definitely use leading up to Easter and during Holy week is Experience Easter, which this year includes a booklet and a new website. The resource allows people to explore the true story of Easter through its emotions of hope, compassion, friendship, anxiety, pain and new life. This is a great resource to send to others and to encourage people who are isolated, alone and searching for answers. Check it out at: <https://eastermeaning.com>
- Try Praying- This is another resource that you can continue to use. The desire to reach out to God is basic to many, many people. Try Praying is a resource for people like that: no church connection or interest, but open to find out about God. The Try Praying booklet or App is a 7-day prayer guide and is now being used by many to pass on to friends and family with a few words of encouragement, ‘Why don’t you try praying for a week and see what happens in your life?’ <https://www.trypraying.co.uk/try-it/>

With much love in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Rae

***Philippians 1:3-5***

*“Every time I think of you I thank God for you. I have joy in my heart every time I ask God to help you. I thank God for the joy we share in telling the good news from the very first day until now.”*