



**Staying Connected 9 – Pastoral Letter.  
Week Beginning Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

*'... when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:6-8)*

Dear friends

Last Sunday marked the day when the Prime Minister explained to us how the Government were going to start leading us out of lockdown – and outlined a timescale during which different organisations / businesses etc might begin to function again.

However, we are wanting to be very cautious about this.

You will hopefully have received with this week's 'Staying Connected' material, a letter from me on behalf of the Circuit Leadership Team, to explain that we – along with other circuits are not preparing a preaching plan for the June – August quarter.

We are deeply concerned about the fact that despite a fall in the number of deaths relating to Covid-19, the numbers are still very high, and the risk of further infections is likely to increase with the restrictions being eased in the way they are.

This undoubtedly will leave many of us disappointed, saddened, perhaps frustrated, and with questions about when and how we begin to function as a gathered church.

The circumstances surrounding Jesus's conversations with His disciples – and His subsequent return to heaven – raised similar concerns for them. There was a lot that didn't seem clear, they were anxious, and had many questions. To continue Jesus's ministry without Him was a big ask. But they were not going to be left alone. And neither are we.

Thursday 21st May marks Ascension Day. Just before He was taken up Jesus said in effect that they didn't need to know all the details about when the Kingdom would be restored to Israel. All they needed to know is that they will receive power to be witnesses. And sure enough – at the right time He gave them His Holy Spirit. In the meantime they continued praising and worshipping God.

So often God calls for patience. And it is often when we are less in control – when it all seems unclear – that He is most able to fulfil His plans.

As we wait, we continue to worship. We continue to encourage and bless one another. And we pray together that God will guide us and give us what we need at the right time.

God bless you all, and as ever I pray that you will know His presence each day.

With best wishes,

Adrian

