

Abington Avenue URC

Secretary's letter - April 2021

Dear Friends

As I look out over Abington Park, anyone would think from the large groups gathered and the partying late into the night (and the resulting mess left for the morning) that the lockdown was over. However, it is not; we are just on a gradual easing of restrictions which, at best, will run through to 21 June.

Churches can open for public worship, and many did for Easter, but the national URC leadership remains very cautious in its advice.

However, it is for local Elders to decide and so I am pleased to tell you that we will open the buildings at Abington Avenue URC for public worship from **Sunday 18 April**.

This is going to be a special Sunday for us anyway as the Moderator of the East Midlands Synod, Revd Geoffrey Clarke, will be leading our worship, either physically or via video link.

I must stress, however, that restrictions will apply, much as in the previous gap between lockdowns, namely:

- social distancing will need to be observed on entering, leaving and whilst in the building
- masks to be worn throughout
- there will be no congregational singing
- the building will be fully ventilated whilst open (hopefully, the weather will be kind)
- households and bubbles may sit together, but otherwise we will be at least 1.5 metres apart
- hands sanitisers will be used on entry and your temperature may be checked
- stewards will be on duty to maintain order and distance etc.

The format of the service is likely to be different from previously so please come with a heart to worship God and an open mind to embrace what is different or new. The service will be broadcast as currently, but from the church building. We will probably start off with a format rather like services from the Manse, but we are sure that new forms will develop.

We recognise that some will feel that they cannot yet return, even if vaccinated. If so, please join us through the broadcast services (and our WhatsApp group bible study at 10:30 on Thursdays). Even if separated by distance, we are bound together by the Spirit of God in each of us. Please continue to pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ linked with AAURC.

May grace and peace surround you.

Vaughan

Vaughan Griffiths (Church Secretary)