

19th March 2020

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Good Afternoon,

Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus God demonstrated His great love for the world. In His strength the people of BRUC have a strong sense of mission to lead people to fullness of life in Christ by being alive in Christ, reaching out in love and making disciples and in one way or another the Methodist/Uniting Church has been doing that in the Beenleigh region for over 150 years.

We have faced great challenges in that time but we have adapted so that we can remain connected to each other on our individual faith journeys and it's what we will continue to do as we face the current challenge of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This is an unprecedented situation. BRUC Church Council is intent on keeping people safe and supporting the authorities' efforts to slow the spread of the virus in the community.

We have encouraged physical distancing practices while maintaining social connectedness. We have asked our people to do the right thing and not come to church if they are feeling unwell with flu-like symptoms or if they are required to self-isolate for any reason. We have adopted additional hygiene measures in line with health advice and we have changed the way we greet each other and pass the peace.

By Tuesday evening Church Council had made the decision to cancel all fellowship and activity groups apart from Faith Life Small Groups and Sunday Worship until further notice.

On Wednesday morning, the Prime Minister announced that indoor gatherings of over 100 people would no longer be allowed and by Wednesday evening our Moderator, David Baker, informed churches that, "*face-to-face congregational worship services and meetings should cease effective immediately*" and further that, "*You (Churches) should... work on alternate means of connecting people for worship, prayer and discipleship gatherings.*"

Based on that advice **BRUC will not conduct services of worship, fellowship or activity groups until further notice.**

However, we are investigating ways we might continue to worship together and keep in touch with each other pastorally using alternative technologies.

Each Sunday morning, we will send an email which will contain a Zoom link so that we can all click on it and participate in the prayers, readings and message Karen has prepared. Karen will continue to prepare sermon notes and will provide a 'Word of the Day' which you can add to your daily devotions. If you find it more helpful, these materials can be posted to you.

You are encouraged to share the Zoom link and to facetime, call, text or email your friends to reflect on Karen's message and the devotionals as well as to catch up about each other's activities and wellbeing as you normally would.

Social interactions have been restricted but BRUC will be endeavouring to develop "Contact Groups" of about 10 to 12 people and while they would not meet face-to-face we hope the regular call from a Church Council Leader or member of the Pastoral Care Coordination Team will help to make sure that people do not feel as isolated than they otherwise might.

Please also let one of the Church Leaders know if you have any questions about these arrangements or concerns for yourself or your friends.

We will continue to actively monitor the situation and follow the advice of the relevant authorities. We recognise these are uncertain times, but throughout the evolving situation we will continue to look to God and to pray for our people who are at the heart of our response.

Thank-you for your patience while we determine our next course of action, which we will communicate as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Rev Karen Ross
Minister

Trevor Marett
Church Council Chairperson