

# Frequently Asked Questions

## THE CHURCH

- **So has the Church closed down?** Absolutely not! *We are* the Church and we are very much alive. God is with us in the Coronavirus. It's unprecedented and it is hard, but it is also, by God's grace, a unique opportunity for us to connect with God, His people and His mission in new and exciting ways.
- **How long will the Church be suspending all gatherings?** We are following government guidelines in suspending all gatherings. Unfortunately, it is impossible to say how long the situation will go on for. We will be sure to reconvene church as normal as soon as is advised by the authorities.
- **What will happen on Sundays?** During this time, we are looking to make some kind of Sunday service experience available through our website. Keep checking our website and we will keep you informed.
- **Will the baptisms go ahead on Easter Sunday?** Sadly, it looks unlikely that we will be meeting as a church family on Easter Sunday. The baptisms planned for Easter Sunday will be postponed until we can reconvene church as normal.
- **Does the Church have an answerphone?** Yes, but please be patient as it takes six rings before the machine clicks in! ☺ Someone will be checking for any messages at least twice a day.
- **What about the Church Meeting and Trustees nominations?** The Church Meeting will not be going ahead next week, and the Trustee nominations are therefore on hold until further notice.
- **How do we look after one another?** General advice...let's try and serve our immediate neighbours if we can and lead by example in our community. For those of you in small groups please consider your Small Group Leader your first line of support. If you're not in a small group and feel in need of support, please feel free to reach out to us, either [community@uptonvale.org.uk](mailto:community@uptonvale.org.uk), or leave a message on 01803 400403.

In addition: If you are in the government's vulnerable category, self-isolating and/or can't access communications with us via our website, it's important to let us know. You can email or leave a message on the church answer machine (see above). We don't want anybody to feel cut off and we will do all we can to support you through this season practically, and also with prayer.

- **Some of our 70+ are looking at three months self-isolation – how do we support them?** If you are fit and healthy, not vulnerable and are willing to make deliveries, or willing to make phone calls on behalf of the church, please let our pastoral team know: [pastoral@uptonvale.org.uk](mailto:pastoral@uptonvale.org.uk).
- **How do we stay informed?** For those people online, please make use of the church website [www.uptonvale.org.uk](http://www.uptonvale.org.uk). We are looking to update the content so that it contains helpful resources, including content from Sunday 'services', video-logs, discipleship materials for all the family, plus helpful advice on how to be church and remain connected at this time. For those who are not online, we will endeavour to get encouraging resources to you, so that you don't feel isolated. If you would like to receive these, please contact the church office on 01803 400403.
- **Is the office open?** No, volunteers should not come in and it will not be business as usual. Our staff team will be working from home when they can and can be contacted via their email. The answer machine is on and working, and messages will be picked up regularly.
- **What about opportunities to pray?** We can all pray all of the time but we are excited about exploring different ways we can learn to pray together even when we can't meet together. We are currently thinking about a daily rhythm of prayer that we might suggest to everyone at UV so that, even if we are on our own, we know we are praying with others about the same things. We also want to explore how technology might help us 'meet' together to pray without being physically in the same room.
- **Are there any ways of physically meeting that are still advisable?** Because we are called to love our neighbour and the nature of the virus is that we can inadvertently be carriers of it, until further notice, we do not want any of our groups or teams meeting. We will be constantly reviewing this decision to see if opportunities become possible for safe spaces, with appropriate social distancing for healthy people. However, you can still get out and walk together provided you maintain healthy distances between one another.
- **What are our contingency plans if staff are sick or quarantined?** Some staff are already self-isolating as a precautionary measure (with what is almost certainly normal germs and sniffles!) We are already putting into practice responsible measures for keeping well and will look to work remotely wherever possible. All we can promise is that we will do our utmost to keep serving the church family as best we can at this time.

- **What about the new Alpha Course starting at the end of April?** This course will not be going ahead. We still hope to have an Autumn course and, in the meantime, are exploring how we might be able to do Alpha online – watch this space.
- **How can I give my weekly offering if there is no church service?** Please click here <https://www.uptonvale.org.uk/Groups/333993/Giving.aspx> for one-off donations or to set up a regular standing order.

## **THE COMMUNITY**

- **Should I continue to donate to the Torquay Community Larder?** Yes, please! The need for donated items at the Community Larder is greater than ever! As the church office is going to be mostly closed, the best way for you to donate is to take the items straight to the Larder: Torquay Salvation Army, 29 Market Street, Torquay TQ1 3AF. The current opening hours are Monday and Friday, 10.30am-1pm. For more information go to [www.torquaycommunitylarder.org.uk](http://www.torquaycommunitylarder.org.uk).
- **How do I volunteer to help people?** Our pastoral team is putting together a programme of support for those in need at this time. If you'd like to be involved with this, reaching out to those in our community, do email [pastoral@uptonvale.org.uk](mailto:pastoral@uptonvale.org.uk), or phone the office on 01803 400403, and someone will get back to you.
- **How can I be a good neighbour?** Do you know of someone in your neighbourhood who is facing self-isolation? Or maybe a young family? Why not drop a note through their door explaining who you are, and with your phone number on, simply saying that you're happy to help them with any practical needs, or they can call you if they would like to chat! We must be aware of people feeling vulnerable, but many people would appreciate the thought and the opportunity to talk with someone at this time. If you are thinking of helping someone in our church family, our pastoral team is putting together a programme of support for those in need at this time. If you'd like to be involved with this, reaching out to those in our community, do email [pastoral@uptonvale.org.uk](mailto:pastoral@uptonvale.org.uk), or phone the office on 01803 400403, and someone will get back to you.

## **ME**

- **Can you recommend some good music to listen to?** Yes, there are many on YouTube, and Spotify if you have it, but we will add links to specific songs with our posts.

- **How do I get help to access messages on the website?** It's easy to feel cut off if you have problems using websites or accessing materials online. Don't fear! Help is at hand! Call the church office on 01803 400403 and a very patient person will be sure to phone you back.
- **What can I do if I am feeling anxious and would like someone to pray with, and for, me?** Please do get in touch with the church office on 01803 400403 and someone will get back to you.
- **What can I do if I am worried about my finances in these uncertain times?** Unfortunately CAP (Christians Against Poverty) are not able to accept any more clients but they do have the following link which might be a first step for help: <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you#coronavirus-and-your-money>.
- **What is the Coronavirus?** For all health related questions, go to [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19).
- **Am I at risk from catching the Coronavirus?** For all health related questions, go to [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19).