

THE GRAPEVINE – Issue 28:24th Sept 2020

Dear Friends,

I awoke early last Sunday with a nervous knot in my stomach. This was the first time that some were to gather for worship in our building since the Lockdown in March. I was anxious, wondering if I could still 'get back on the horse' after so long just filming from my living room each week. I had learnt new skills over the weeks but had I retained the old ones. There were so many questions running through my mind. Would worship with all the restrictions feel like worship? Would all the safety measures put in place keep those attending safe? What would it feel like? Would it work? Would the blend of videoed music and live spoken word enable us all to have an encounter with God?

I have to say, looking back on it all I needn't of worried. God was in control. I was back where I wanted to be, where I felt at home, doing what I felt called to do, leading worship amongst God's people. It was good to be back to some sense of normality. Perhaps a new normal, but one that retained enough of the old to be comforting, and something of the new that was challenging but also enhancing. And regarding safety, it felt safer than my trip to Tesco's each week.

Gavin and Terese Williamson give their reflections on our gathered worship

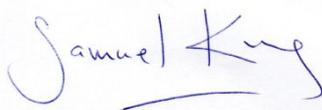
'It was great to meet together in Church last Sunday. In the service the music was recorded on the screen, and we were able to hum along and with our body language express worship to God. Not being able to sing out loud with words did feel a bit awkward initially and also in conflict with the call to worship and the desire of a believer to freely worship, but we still found this to be a beneficial act of worship. The readings, prayers and message were all 'live' and it was great having an 'in person' message. Technology is very useful, but there is a certain added quality to meeting in person and although we were few in number, we were united in spirit and I think everyone felt blessed by being there.'

The Bible talks about the blessing of being together (Psalm 133) and also the multiplied effectiveness of collective numbers. The Church building itself has a chief purpose of being used as a place to join together with the purpose of worshipping and meeting God. It was good to put this purpose into action last Sunday. We enjoyed the service and look forward to being able to meet again in the near future.'

Assuming that government and BU guidance doesn't change over the coming weeks we plan to gather for worship from Sunday 18th October onwards. **If you wish to join us you will need to book through Jenny Woods each week.** Our gathered worship will run in parallel with our usual recorded worship for those who still need to self-isolate.

N.B. I am away on holiday in Scotland from 28th Sept -11 Oct. I am very grateful to Ros, Adrian and Jenny who will be coordinating our usual recorded worship broadcast while I am away.

God's richest bless



Samuel King