

### **The First Physical Connect meeting**

After a long break from being together in person, we are slowly moving toward the time when we will be able to meet in our connect groups again.

We realise what an uncertain time 2020 has been so far and although many of you have been meeting online, coming back together may be an emotional or even difficult time for some people. For more information about the challenges of lockdown an impact on our wellbeing, please watch the video between Karen and Rachel which can be found on the pastoral hub.

We have put together some questions to guide your first session, to help you all reflect on your time in lockdown and to discuss how you can move forward from this time both individually and as a group.

**Question 1:** Reflecting back of your time during lockdown can you think of 5 things you did in order to cope or make life a little easier?

**Question 2:** Was there anything that you felt God was teaching you during lockdown or anyway He was helping to develop your character?

**Questions 3:** What did you find particularly hard about lockdown? What was your main challenge?

**Question 4:** Did any good come out of lockdown? Can you name 5 things you were grateful for during your time in lockdown?

**Question 5:** How will you put what you have learnt into practice to make a difference in church and in the community?

Here are some bible verses you may want to include or reflect on as a group in your discussion:

*"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?*

*My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long "Where is your God?"*

*These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng. Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon- from Mount Mizar.*

*Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me- a prayer to the God of my life" Psalm 42 : Verse 1-8 (NIV)*

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"*  
Philippians 4: 6-7 (NIV)

*"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:*

*'For your sake we face death all day long, we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered'*

*No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels or demons, neither the present or the future nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our LORD" Romans 8 35-39 (NIV)*

*" I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NIV)*

*"Not only so, we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character and character hope. And hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us" Romans 5:3-5 (NIV)*

*"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish it's work in you so you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" James 1 2-4 (NIV)*

**Prayer**

LORD God, I thank you that even when everything around me changes you remain the same. Thank you that when I come to you, I can find peace, joy and feel whole even when circumstances might be difficult.

Thank you that I can come into your presence, however I feel and thank you for your never ending Grace and love that you pour out on our lives.

We lift up those grieving and poorly at this time. We pray for comfort healing and protection and for those who do not yet know you to be drawn closer during this time.

Thank you for your church, we pray for unity as we come back together, that will be will bound together in your love and for your kingdom to come on Earth as it is in heaven.

In Jesus name

Amen