



*Dear friends,*

As we readjust and come to terms with our 'new normal' for the time being I wanted to pass on a phrase my friend has coined: Time Rich. What a perfect way to think about these strange times that have been imposed upon us – whilst we cannot currently go about our usual daily, weekly or monthly business we are blessed with unexpected free time.

What does your free – or 'formerly occupied' – time mean to you?.....is it a positive? Or does it mean isolation or estrangement from loved ones? Is it a time to do more of the things you love, or is it time you will spend with the ones you love, trying to juggle work and additional caring commitments? Perhaps you are a frontline key worker with no option but to continue serving the public.

Whatever your situation, we must hold on to our sense of community – we are not alone, albeit unable to see each other in person for the time being. It's the season for re-thinking church and our roles – whilst remembering our commitments and responsibilities.

Below are some updates and resources that you may find useful at the moment. Please get in touch to share any tips or advice you have – let's share with and support one another at this difficult time.

*Philippa*

## *Spring Clean*

Being 'time rich' has its advantages. Over the coming weeks, perhaps your church or circuit could take the opportunity to:

- Review and update your volunteer role descriptions – checking if any new volunteers should have a DBS
- Complete any current DBS processes – or cancel them on the DDC system if they're no longer needed
- Make sure that your church is up to date with the Safer Recruitment policy and procedure
- Refresh your memory regarding the responsibilities of Charity Trustees – see the document attached with this newsletter, and this link: [https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/office-holders/managing-trustees/?utm\\_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=11242493\\_Week%20Ahead&dm\\_i=BVI,6OYRH,R4PA51,QPCAI,1](https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/office-holders/managing-trustees/?utm_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11242493_Week%20Ahead&dm_i=BVI,6OYRH,R4PA51,QPCAI,1)
- Identify any positive local initiatives or 'ways of working' relating to wellbeing or safeguarding that could be shared with the rest of the District – this could be in relation to training, events, useful information etc



## **Advice & support**

The Methodist Church's guidance about coronavirus, including information about current use of buildings, pastoral care, meetings, serving our communities and safeguarding considerations can be found here:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus/>

Information about 'remote' worship, useful posters and other related resources can be found here:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Please see the attached 'Wellbeing resources' document for support, useful websites and sources of advice. Information about local community support initiatives can be found via council websites, community groups and Facebook etc.

However, be aware of scams at this time of particular vulnerability – this article is useful:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51964507>

### **Dealing with safeguarding issues**

During this time, please continue to report any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns in the usual manner. Your DSO, church and circuit safeguarding officers and ministers remain available for support and advice.

Issues may continue to come to your attention from providing pastoral support, providing essential services (if your church falls into this category) or from communication with people online.

### **Training**

**Foundation & Advanced Module training courses are cancelled until further notice.**

**Foundation Module – Train the Trainers briefing:**

**This will be run online as a live streamed event. Details can be found on the District website.**

### **DBS**

DBS checks are still being processed by DDC. Temporary changes have been made to the document checking process, in response to coronavirus. Information is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>