



highworth community church | 26 june 2020

# CONTACT

registered charity no. 1080002

## HELLO!

So much may feel uncertain at the moment, but you can always rely on a delivery of *Contact*! Hopefully, you'll experience a little more connection to your church family as we navigate this time together. Bless you, dear Family.



## DEAR HIGHWORTH COMMUNITY CHURCH FAMILY

*by Sally Willson*

None of us imagined such a seismic shift in the way we would be able to be church this year.

There have been some lovely encouragements when new and unexpected opportunities have arisen for people to connect and get to know each other online or by phone, when they hadn't had chance to know each other before. We can see this new networking starting up without any top-

down organisation, which is how it should be. Do continue building these support networks.

The work of Food Collective has continued thanks to Alfie, Anita, and Ken. CAP work has had to adapt to interviews by phone. Our Sunday morning worship, bible study and other courses have migrated online as far as possible. There have been advantages to meeting

online despite being physically separated from you all.

However, because we've not been able to meet together face-to-face, you may well be feeling you've been left to navigate alone through this very difficult time.

For some, pressures of work or juggling family life have multiplied, making time to think and reflect or link up with new people even more difficult.

Whatever your individual experience has been in this last three months, it feels like everything that can be shaken has been. Whilst so much is up in the air, we have realised we are not actually in control. We need to rely totally on God, and we are learning to lean only on that which is unshakeable.

As the church leadership, we have, of course, been grappling with all the paring back and have been seeking God with the trustees and our oversight team for the way ahead. With the announcements this week of a gentle easing of lockdown, we are cautiously anticipating seeing more of you face-to-face in the months ahead. Some of you will be much more cautious and reticent than others, especially if you



## COVID-19 AND ABUSE

By Val Savill

As the HCC Safeguarding Coordinator, I'm concerned to read in the national press that the police report higher levels of domestic abuse during the Covid-19 period. The Christian charity 31:8 also observes that, 'Domestic abuse happens across all communities, regardless of any specific demographics, and this is true of church communities too. The church only becomes aware of an issue when a family hits a crisis and reaches out for help. What follows is often a sense of shock or disbelief, as the family in question were perceived to be 'OK'.'

So what can we do? If you have concerns about someone in your friendship group, I'd urge you not to let that concern go, but to follow it up with a gentle phone call or text to check in on them. If they disclose abuse, take time to listen without asking too many questions. It takes a phenomenal amount of courage to speak out about abuse and victims often think no one will believe them. Although the victim may be an adult, children may also be significantly affected.

If you'd like to discuss any concerns, you can contact me, Val Savill (07999 755712), or 31:8, who have a 24-hour helpline (0303 003 1111).

have been shielding. There are still too many unknowns further ahead to have concrete plans and strategies to present to you, and indeed we have no idea if we will be able to get back to meeting at Warneford. Will it be big enough, will they want us back etc etc? We want to take things slowly and thoughtfully.

We have also been wondering how we engage you all with reimagining church. We do need to walk out of this season different, more like Jesus, with more compassion for those around us who desperately need to know God's unconditional love. We can only engage with this gospel of action (go into all the world starting, where we live), by each of us continuing to be dependent on Holy Spirit in us and taking every opportunity to really understand and know the Word of God.

As a leadership, we would like to have a 'finger on the pulse' of what is happening with each of you, and so would like to ask you all to consider some questions and give us some feedback. Even if the feedback is more questions

we would like to know what, if anything, you are thinking and processing.

Are you just clinging on by your fingertips until life returns to something resembling what we knew as normal?

Alternatively, are you taking the opportunity to completely reevaluate all you once held as precious?

What have you found the most difficult thing to negotiate in this season?

What, if anything, has been an unexpected bonus or positive for you?

What has God been saying to you personally which you want to grab hold of and not lose in the days ahead?

Is there anything you have sensed God laying on your heart about what church might look like in the season ahead?

Is there anything you feel we could be doing to help everyone feel connected?

Your experience and thoughts matter, so please get back to us by whatever means suits you.

**thirtyone:eight**  
Creating safer places. Together.



# BIG WEEK

05 to 12 July 2020



## Monday

An opportunity to pour out in RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS. Perhaps bake a cake for a neighbour, deliver flowers or mow their lawn. How you bless is up to you!

## Tuesday

UNITED CHURCH PRAYER STREAM, from 7pm to 7:30pm, live on the YouTube channel 'Hope for Highworth'. This is the channel we will use for our Big Sunday service.

## Wednesday

MEAL BLESSINGS. We will be blessing some of our community with Indian meals to our community. Please contribute financially, if you can, towards our £300 target. We will also need a small team to transport food.

## Friday

HCC PRAYER NIGHT, streamed live on YouTube, starting at 8pm.

**B I G  
S U N  
D A Y**

**Welcome  
to  
H O P E**

**12  
JULY  
10:30AM**