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Dear Friends,

We live in rapidly changing times the announcement of a potential new vaccine, with others on the way, is a really exciting development. I am sure we are all praying that there will soon come the day when something approaching normality will be restored. Glimmers of hope in these dark days are so important in providing a hope that the enormous burden we have all had to carry will soon be lifted.

However, in the meantime we still have to contend with restrictions that the Government has introduced which impact on our communal life and I write to reflect on the potential impact of these for our Christmas celebrations. Obviously if the current lockdown is extended through December any celebrations will be severely limited. If, as the Prime Minister hopes, the restrictions are eased and we return to the tiered approach then we will operate within the limitations.

This means that we will not be able to host the same number of services as usual if we are to maintain the Covid security regulations, some of our normal pattern will be impossible due to social distancing so Church Council at its most recent meeting opted for a pattern as follows. This though may change if the situation does but, to be realistic, this is what we would expect

On December 20th in the morning there will be a Carol Service at church. It will comply with the regulations in place. It is likely we will have to sit 2m apart and singing may be restricted as it has been. We will still have the familiar and try to be authentic. This service will be streamed as usual.

At some point later in the day it is my hope we will hold a carol service on Zoom. This will enable participation, we will be able to sing and through the use of breakout rooms there will be an opportunity for fellowship. The timing is now

uncertain as there is an initiative encouraging us all to sing carols on our doorsteps at 5.30 that evening and I need to talk to folk to see whether we might want to work round this. We will keep you posted

Church Council decided with heavy hearts that any services on Christmas Eve would be a logistical nightmare so we anticipate the usual will not happen.

Then on Christmas Day there will be a service at 10am as usual followed by morning service at 10.30am on the 27th.

As to normal services once we are allowed back we will re-instate the booking procedure to seek at seat for Sundays that those who notify their wish to attend by the end of Wednesday will have priority. It would be our intention to reopen on the first possible Sunday

In view of the current lockdown we have had to rethink collecting gifts for vulnerable children in the Aylesbury area. Rather than giving a gift, if you would like to make a donation please send a cheque for whatever amount you wish, payable to *Aylesbury Methodist Church* with the words '*Christmas Gift*' written on the back. This should be sent to the Church Treasurer Roger Kirk at 77 Aylesbury Road, Aylesbury, HP22 5BT to arrive by 25th November. We will then convert money collected into toy shop vouchers and Family Centre staff will distribute to children in need in the area.

Finally can I share with you that anyone who is in need of shopping or other support we have a number of folk willing to help. Please contact myself or Pauline Noble (484940) if we might be able to assist

We journey forward in hope, abiding in the comfort offered by our Lord.

Blessings
Richard