

GOSPEL STANDARD BETHESDA FUND

Registered Charity 209376

Bethesda COVID-19 Update Saturday, 04 April 2020

We have included in this Update information on the COVID-19 situation within the Bethesda Homes and other items that may be of interest.

COVID-19

We are thankful that currently both the Brighton and Studley Homes are continuing to operate as usual residents and staff appear to be free from the virus symptoms at present.

At Harpenden, the three residents who were experiencing virus-related symptoms are currently no worse and are being cared for using recommended methods by Public Health England. Two further residents developed symptoms associated with the virus on Friday, 3 April 2020 and these are being monitored and cared for using the recommended methods. Families are being kept informed of the situation with their loved ones.

Staffing at Harpenden is challenging, as a number of staff are 'self-isolating' and others are either showing or have shown symptoms of the virus. In the Lord's mercy and we trust in answers to prayers, it has been possible to keep the Home functioning – it has been in proving the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither the cruse of oil fail (1 Kings 17:14-17).

Help needed

We are extremely grateful and thankful for the many offers of help from volunteers who have come forward at this difficult and challenging time.

As identified above, help is needed, especially from those with experience of caring, at the Harpenden Home and also at Brighton and Studley so that there is a 'bank' to call on if there is a change of situation in any of the homes.

Also 'pairs of hands' to help with 'household duties' are still needed.

We would thank those who have come forward to help and do pray the Lord will guide others to come and help Bethesda at this time.

Anyone volunteering, to help at Bethesda, will be given a full induction to the role that they will be undertaking. In the first instance contact the local Home Manager:

Brighton Home: Miss Sarah Williamson (01273 735735, sarahwilliamson@gssf.uk)

Harpenden Home: Mrs Debbie Scott (01582 761359, debbiescott@gssf.uk)

Studley Home: Mrs Sammy O'Dwyer (01249 816666, sammyodwyer@gssf.uk)

Alternatively, Adrian Topping, General Manager (adriantopping@gssf.uk or 07525067708 (m)).

Morning and evening readings

We would reiterate our thanks to those who have helped externally (digitally) and internally with the morning and evening readings at the Homes, as this is an important part of the ethos of Bethesda.

Although there have been 'some teething' issues with the technology, we are thankful that the morning readings have been possible through using the facility on our website. This has also allowed others to listen into the morning readings held at 10:30 am at Brighton and it is encouraging that a number have been able to join (externally) with the residents and staff.

In a few days if the Lord will, it is expected that the morning readings at the Studley Home will be available via our website as well, at 10:00am. We will post a note to say when this is available, so keep an eye on the page linked below.

At both Brighton and Studley, the afternoon readings are taken in-house and we do pray the Lord will help those of the residents and staff (Brighton) who undertake this for us.

The link to the facility on the Bethesda website is found at:

<https://www.gospelstandard.org.uk/Bethesda/Morning-Worship-Livestream>

Thinking of elderly friends

Although Bethesda's focus is on the homes and flatlets for which we are responsible, we are also mindful of the elderly amongst the causes of truth which we seek to serve.

We would bring to your attention the website Heritage Sermons. This website may be of interest to elderly (and not so elderly friends) who would remember many of the ministers who are now with the Lord and that laboured amongst the Gospel Standard churches and congregations.

The website can be found at: <https://heritagesermons.org/>

We would also encourage those involved with this website to continue in this valuable work and that the Lord may bless this ministry and venture of faith.

Although some elderly friends may be on this mailing list, others may not, and we would encourage anyone who is able to bring this website to the attention of others to do so.

Also at this time, when many of the elderly friends are unable to leave their homes, we would encourage you to take a few moments to think of those we know and perhaps give them a call, text or send a letter that may be a timely help to them.

Sadly, there are those who would prey on the vulnerable through so-called 'scams' and we would take this opportunity to raise awareness of this practice and where we are able to remind them of this danger.

If you can keep in touch with elderly friends then do remind them to be careful and watchful when approached about giving away personal details and/or being pressurised to buy something they do not want.

The following websites have, if needed, some useful supporting information:

Citizens advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/>

IndependentAge: <https://www.independentage.org/information/money/scams>

Staying in touch

For the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak, we will endeavour to remain in regular contact with those on this email list. Consequently, please can you forward this email to any of your contacts who may be interested in the contents of this document or may be able to help us. If anyone wishes to be added to the emailing list then please contact Adrian Topping (adriantopping@gsbf.uk)

If you are able to print this Update, please pass it onto someone who does not have access to the internet. This would be appreciated as it will help keep them in touch with what we are trying to do.

Finally

The trustees have laid the matter of strengthening our number before the Lord, and in the Lord's provision Mr David Stevens (Ripley) has accepted the invitation to become a trustee of the GSBF and join the Bethesda Committee. We wish him well as he takes on this responsibility at this difficult time.

We would also acknowledge the Lord's goodness and mercy in answering many prayers enabling the Homes to continue operating in these trying times. Your continued prayerful interest and messages of support are much appreciated and valued.

We would encourage you to continue to pray for Bethesda that the Lord would hear those cries for help in time of need and grant wisdom in those decisions that have to be made both now and in that way before us.

On behalf of the Bethesda trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Ridout". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

M Ridout
Chairman GSBF