

# GOSPEL STANDARD BETHESDA FUND

Registered Charity 209376

## **Bethesda COVID-19 Update Saturday, 02 May 2020**

We are mindful in writing this Update that it may be shorter than previously as the situation mercifully and thankfully in the Bethesda Harpenden Home has stabilised. Nonetheless, looking back over the previous Updates, we would acknowledge the good hand of the Lord towards the residents and staff in all our Homes; especially as we read of the impact of COVID-19 in other care homes.

If spared, in the years to come, we believe that this period will be an Ebenezer in the history of the Lord's dealings with the Bethesda Homes.

Although, as mentioned, we have been brought through the COVID-19 outbreak at the Bethesda Harpenden Home; we are still aware of the need to act prudently and responsibly before the Lord, and Bethesda will continue to be vigilant in undertaking its infection control procedures throughout all the Homes.

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 grateful that currently residents at both the Brighton and Studley Homes continue to be free from COVID-19 symptoms

At Harpenden, we are thankful to report that the three residents who were confirmed to have COVID-19 are now recovered from the virus and back to normal. Of the two who have had symptoms of the virus, one is recovering and continues to regain strength whilst the other remains poorly.

Of the other two residents, who have been previously mentioned that do not have any apparent COVID-19 associated symptoms, one is back to their normal self and the other continues to be poorly due to an underlying condition.

Four of the residents who have been poorly over the past weeks have been tested for COVID-19, three test results have come back negative for the virus and one more result is awaited.

The other four residents in the Home, mercifully have been kept from any symptoms of the virus and remain asymptomatic.

Although many of our residents are elderly and of a 'good age', we would acknowledge the good hand of the Lord in restoring those who have been poorly and pray, if the Lord will, that those who are still laid aside will be restored to health.

Staffing, as previously reported, has been challenging in the past weeks across all the homes and especially at Harpenden. We are thankful that those staff who have recovered from illness or have been self-isolating are now able to return to work. This has certainly relieved the pressure of staffing the Home. There is also a small number who are being furloughed due to the government's self-isolating guidance and we look forward to the time when they are able to return to their duties.

It would be remiss, not to acknowledge, once more, the Lord's appearing over the past weeks and also to thank the managers and staff who have ensured that the loving care provided to the residents has not, at any time, diminished.

### **Funeral of Mr David Keeling**

In the Update (April 18, 2020) mention was made of the passing away of Mr David Keeling, aged 93 Years, in the Harpenden Home. We have now received details of the funeral arrangements and the funeral service will be held, God willing, via the internet on Wednesday 6th May 2020 at 11:00 am. The service will be conducted by Mr Gerald Buss and broadcast from the following website: <https://www.ripleysbchapel.org/services>

The interment will follow the service and be attended by close family only at Welwyn Cemetery. The committal will be taken by Mr Adrian Pickett.

A copy of the service sheet is available in the [Bethesda Publications](#) page.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."  
Matthew 24 v 44

### **Help needed**

We would thank those who have come forward, over the past weeks, to help Bethesda at this time.

We do not know what is before us, only the Lord knows, however we do pray that if the need arises for further help in the future then individuals may be constrained to "come over and help us".

### **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. This is very much appreciated by us all.

It has been encouraging to see the number of people listening to the morning readings, in addition to the residents in the Homes. We have heard from some of those who listen and who have found the morning readings helpful at this time.

The trustees are prayerfully considering what can be done, if the Lord will, to continue to provide access to morning readings after the lockdown.

If you know anyone who might be interested in listening into the morning readings, then do pass the website details to them: <https://www.gospelstandard.org.uk/Bethesda/Morning-Worship-Livestream>

### **Meeting to discuss the options for the Studley Home**

As mentioned last week, the trustees are looking to move forward the discussion on the future options for the Studley Bethesda Home.

The decision, by the trustees, to reconvene the meeting to consider the options for the Studley Bethesda Home was not taken lightly and we do trust that this was done in the fear of the Lord. The trustees are sensitive to the prevailing conditions hence are looking, if the Lord will, to holding the meeting in June 2020.

The trustees wish to encourage people – particularly from the local area – to be involved in the discussions relating to the future direction of a Bethesda Home. The meeting, it must be emphasised, is the start of the discussion process and the opportunity to share, in the fear of the Lord, the trustees views and provide additionally, immediate and subsequent, feedback before any final decision is made. Even when a decision is made then there will be timescales that will have to be handled sensitively, compassionately and in a correct manner to ensure due regard is given to all the individuals involved.

Although dates are being proposed for the meeting in June 2020 to consider the future options for the Studley Bethesda Home, consideration will also need to be given to the impact of lifting the 'lockdown' in the next few weeks before making, God Willing, any final arrangements.

### **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 anyone who may be interested in being kept up to date on Bethesda. If anyone wishes to be added to the email list then please contact Adrian Topping ([adriantopping@gsbf.uk](mailto:adriantopping@gsbf.uk))

### **Finally**

The trustees are acutely aware of the impact of COVID-19 on being able to physically meet with our family and friends. As we look forward to that day when we may once more return to the House of the Lord, so there are many who are looking for that time when they might again be able to visit the Bethesda Homes.

We will be monitoring the information coming from the government on the lifting of the 'lockdown' and considering the implications for Bethesda together with the strategy to open the Homes once more to visitors and yet at the same time safeguard and shield residents and staff in the Homes.

We would encourage you to continue to pray for all those involved in Bethesda (the trustees, General Manager, Home Managers, staff and residents) 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