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Letter to the Church - 24th March 2020

To the Church Family at KBC,

I wonder how many times you have heard the word 'unprecedented' over the last few weeks. Countless times right? Which is incredible because I am not sure I ever heard it used more than a handful of times prior to this event. I am sure you know what it means but just in case - it is an adjective that means 'never been done or known before'. In the context of the coronavirus outbreak we talk about unprecedented events and the responses and measures taken to fight it as unprecedented - without previous instance, never known before or experienced. Unprecedented. But if I am honest I am getting a little tired of hearing it being used and I can't help but wonder why those using the word, don't mix it up a little, try some of the synonyms like unequalled or unmatched or unrivalled or extraordinary or outstanding or striking. They are all pretty good words, that would fit but instead, it seems, we are sticking with 'unprecedented'.

So, let me remind you about another unprecedented event in human history, only I will mix it up a little. It is about the Father, who so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son. In an extraordinary event we remember as Christmas, the Son of God was born to a virgin, wrapped in clothe and placed in a manger. He grew in wisdom and stature with men and God and then at just the right time He came announcing, 'Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is near'. It was an outstanding message, no one had ever heard it before. As the people flocked to listen to Him and bring the sick to be healed, they witnessed the unrivalled miracles He performed. His own followers declared, 'Who is this man, even the wind and waves obey Him'. Throughout His ministry He displayed love, compassion, grace and mercy. He offended the sensibilities of the religious elite and stood up to those in power in a way unequalled in their history. To say His whole being was striking would be an understatement. Then because of their jealousy, fear and to fulfil the words of the prophets long ago, in an event of unmatched cruelty the religious elite plotted and had Jesus crucified. Little did they know that He is the way, the truth and the life and His death would swing a door of hope for all nations, wide open.

I know it's not a perfect exposition of the gospel, but it does point us towards hope in difficult times. Hope which Paul prayed for the church in Rome saying, '*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Spirit*'. Hope which I am praying for each of you today. And just in case

it has slipped your mind in these troubling times, there is much to be hopeful about. Hopeful that He is working for our good according to His purposes in all things. Hopeful that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength. Hopeful that He is at work in us and around us and for us because the Father is always at work. Hopeful that ultimately, He will make all things new. Be filled with hope and share your hope in the One who is good, with others.

Grace be with you

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### **Some Information for your Attention:**

#### *Sunday Services*

We will be live streaming our Sunday morning service this week via Zoom, please see the guide issued by Paul today and on our website. The service will start at 10.30 and will incorporate worship, prayers, sermon and time of response. Join us for this on Sunday and spread the word to others.

#### *Other meetings*

We intend to continue with other meetings streaming them online via Zoom, such as prayer evenings, Maundy Thursday Communion, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, so please keep an eye on the website for details. I am encouraging all Teams to continue to meet virtually at this time for other planning that needs to take place.

#### *Gift Day*

We have a Gift Day planned to raise funds to clear the existing mortgage on the Gun Hill Place manse. It will be approximately £50'000 when we get to June. However, we have taken the decision to postpone the upcoming Gift Day till later in the year. Can I encourage you to continue to pray and seek God about this asking, 'how can I sow into God's work systematically, sacrificially, proportionately and cheerfully?'

#### *General Finance*

For those who have been wondering how you can continue to uphold your generous giving to the work of the church, during these times when we are unable to meet together, can I remind you of the options available. The most efficient way is online direct to the church's bank account or alternatively via Paypal through the church's website (although they do take a fee).

#### *Reach out for Support*

Finally, and most importantly, during this time, please reach out for support if you need it. We are working hard, as a pastoral team, to ensure that everyone is connected, and no-one is isolated at this time, but we need your help. Stay in contact with one another, let us know if you need support and continue to pray for one another at this time.