

❖ HOME CHURCH  
Piney Grove Baptist Church  
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*The Forbes family*  
*your missionaries to*  
**GREAT BRITAIN**



August 2020

Charles Spurgeon said, "Great sinners redeemed make great singers." Here in the UK, however, there has been no congregational singing since Prime Minister Boris Johnson locked the country down on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March. The message was clear, *stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives*. Unlike the Hollywood movies that show rioting and looting during a national lockdown, people did indeed stay at home, only going out to work, buy groceries or take one hour's exercise a day.

Three months later the lockdown eased, but the elderly were told to stay inside. Some of the elderly have been at home, and for the most, alone for five months now. This has greatly affected their mental health and some may never go out again. Churches were allowed to open at the beginning of July but only under strict social distancing rules, no singing and today everyone must wear a mask. These rules don't apply to pubs or restaurants, and it is clear that there is a discrimination against churches. Of course, we are all being told that this is in the best interest of our own safety.

It is predicted here in the UK that at least 20 percent of those who attended before the pandemic will not return to church. More pastors will leave vocational ministry over the next 12 months than any time in recent history and that churches will go back to house churches.

We opened the doors to our church on the very first day we could and thus far 90% of our people are gathering. Even with the rules we need to follow, our people were eager to praise, pray and proclaim the name of Jesus. We have subsequently found out that we are the only evangelical church open for miles. A lot of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have gone to online only and plan to stay that way until 2021! Having "church" as and when we feel like on our own terms is becoming the norm. I believe, however, that this is not church! Church is a gathering of born-again believers, encouraging one another until the Lord returns. This may just be the great falling away that we know is coming. If it is not, then it is definitely a time of being shaken.

We value your prayer and thank you for standing with us in ministry here in the UK. We are encouraged and well, knowing that God is still sovereign over all things and Jesus is still on the throne.

Graham Forbes

**NEHEMIAH 2:18 "...LET US RISE UP AND BUILD..."**

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