



'Staying Connected' 24
Week Beginning 30th August 2020
Letter

Dear friends,

I'm very pleased to send you this week's worship material, in which I have used one of the lectionary readings for Sunday 30th August, with St Paul's instructions and teaching on 'The Marks of a True Christian'.

I think these last 6 months have shown us some of the extremes of human nature. We have seen love, generosity, compassion, courage, service and sacrifice at their best, demonstrated by those on the front line, which has led to communities coming together on their doorsteps to unite in public gratitude – particularly towards NHS workers. But there have been countless others on the frontline too, without whom we would not have been able to function.

Many volunteers have joined together in amazing acts of kindness towards those who have been on their own, without food and unable to go out. We've seen the incredible courage of Sir Tom Moore, which inspired an extraordinary response from the general public who donated well over £32m for the NHS.

And in the face of injustice and discrimination, there has been a groundswell of voices saying 'enough!' We have seen the best examples of solidarity where human beings have stood together to effect change.

This time has shown us too that although our buildings have been locked, The Church is very much open, and God has not been taking a sabbatical. We cannot ignore that 25% more people have either 'attended' online worship, or googled how to pray since lockdown, who otherwise have never crossed the threshold of the chapel / church building.

But neither can we ignore how this time has brought out some of the worst of human nature, such as the hateful and violent responses to injustice, a refusal to conform to guidelines, intolerance, or words or actions arising out of frustration because we've not been able to do things, see others or meet together.

As we continue to learn new ways of functioning as God's Church, some of us will embrace the changes, others will be reluctant or resistant. Some will be frustrated that we are not progressing quickly enough, others will feel we are moving too quickly. We will all agree and disagree. It was ever thus. But the things we differ on need not be our downfall.

As God generously and faithfully calls us to join Him in building His Kingdom, we must be generous and faithful to Him. And if we take seriously Paul's teaching in Romans 12 we won't go far wrong!

With all good wishes,

Adrian