

Dear Friends

29th March 2021

This time last year we were experiencing our first lockdown, a new experience that we were still trying to get our heads around. I suspect that, at the time, few of us thought that this Easter we would still find ourselves in lockdown.

It has been a difficult and challenging year as we have had to find new ways to do so much, and as we have been denied our buildings and had to get used to new technologies. On the whole we have coped very well, and we are now much more proficient in things. (I recently had a look at our first Viral Church and realised how far we had come!). We have watched over one another in love and care, even when it has had to be from a distance. We have discovered what it means to be a Church in the community.

So where do we go from here? Things are gradually beginning to move towards a form of normal. All being well we will soon be able to go out and shop again (and get a much-needed haircut!), and at Pentecost we will reopen our buildings to celebrate the birthday of the Church. But what will our Churches look like in a post Covid world?

Easter is of course all about resurrection, Jesus rising from the dead. But it was more than that, it was a complete reimagining of the relationship between God and humankind. Gone was the blind obedience to the Law, in came a relationship with God. The resurrection was a new beginning, a rising from the ashes of what went before into something new and powerful. It begins at Easter and finds it's full bloom at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples with power.

What will our return be? Will it simply be a resuscitation of that which was there before, learning nothing from the last year? Or will it be a resurrection, breathing new life into the church as we take the lessons that we have learned and look to grow from them?

I hope that together we can begin to reshape church, taking the best of what was and mixing it with the best of what we have learned, to create something through which we can make the Gospel, the good news of Jesus, the hope of the resurrection, known to more and more people.

Have a blessed Easter.

Paul and Kina