

Dear Friends

This week saw the introduction of some easing of lockdown restrictions. We wonder what this has meant for you? Perhaps you have been able to see family or friends, albeit at a distance, for the first time in many weeks or maybe life is much the same as it has been since the start of lockdown in March. These are confusing and difficult times and we need to pray for wisdom and clarity in the weeks ahead as we all decide just how this will look for us.

Angela and I usually add our own thoughts to this newsletter every week, sometimes we read something that seems appropriate or we have a thought or story to share. With these collected ideas the letter takes shape. This week however, we both came across the same article that we wanted to share with you as it sums up the confusion that most of us are feeling at the moment.

The author is unknown:

## **We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat**

*I heard that we are all in the same boat, but it's not like that.*

*We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat.*

*Your ship could be shipwrecked and mine might not be, or vice versa.*

*For some, quarantine is optimal – a moment of reflection, of re-connection, easy in flip flops, with a drink or coffee.*

*For others – this is a desperate financial & family crisis.*

*For some that live alone, they're facing endless loneliness.*

*While for others it is peace, rest & time with their mother, father, sons & daughters.*

*Some are bringing in more money to their households.*

*Others are working more hours for less money due to pay cuts or loss in sales.*

*For some, not getting on with family, domestic abuse is rife – we never know what goes on behind closed doors.*

*Some were concerned about getting an egg for Easter while others were concerned if there would be enough bread, milk and eggs for the weekend.*

*Some want to go back to work because they don't qualify for support and are running out of money.*

*Some are home spending 2-3 hours/day helping their child with online schooling.*

*Others are spending 2-3 hours/day to educate their children on top of a workday.*

*Some have experienced the near death of the virus; some have already lost someone from it and some are not sure if their loved ones are going to make it.*

*Others don't believe this is a big deal.*

*Some have faith in God and expect miracles during this 2020.*

*Others say the worst is yet to come.*

*So, friends, we are not in the same boat.*

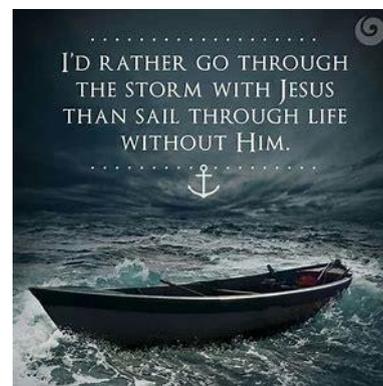
*We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.*

*Each of us will emerge, in our own way, from this storm.*

*It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance - not just looking, actually seeing.*

*We are all on different ships during this storm experiencing a very different journey.*

*Please realise that and be kind.*



Kindness was the focus of mental health week a few weeks ago and is so important as things begin to change. We are all trying to look after ourselves in the best way that we can and we must not feel under any pressure to do anything that we are not ready for. It is frustrating if you are keen to “get on “and you feel that you are being held back by the fear and anxiety of others but we are all experiencing this unprecedented situation for the first time and dealing with it as we feel comfortable. There is no right way, so as well as being kind and understanding to others who may see things differently to you, please be kind to yourself.

On a similar theme Angela writes the following:

I really feel for our young people and children at the moment. This should have been the start of the last nursery/school/college/university term of the year. The term when little ones visit ‘big school’ for the first time; when some find out whose class they will be going into in September, and which friends will be in the same class with them; when teenagers start to prepare for that (scary for some), transition to secondary school; when plans are put in place for going off to university, grants applied for, accommodation sought, cupboards raided for pans, utensils, bedding etc – leaving home for the first time.

Instead, most are still at home, being schooled by parents increasingly under pressure. No exams to sit, no end-of-term discos, no graduation ceremonies. Everything that has been routine, expected, anticipated, made them feel safe and secure, has been thrown up in the air by the pandemic.

The little ones who have been allowed to go back to nursery, and the Years 1 and 6 who may be back in school this week, have returned to find the classroom a strange new world to negotiate, with hand sanitizers, lots of new instructions to remember, and no hugging!

So in your prayers this week please remember all our families, whatever their circumstances are in relation to their education; for parents, nursery and school staff, especially those involved in Little Saints nursery, All Saints school, Totley Primary, Rowan school and King Egberts , as they work together to make their environments safe and secure, not only medically but emotionally as well.

We will eventually emerge from lockdown but before then the PCC will have some decisions to make. We imagine that such a meeting would be a virtual one but as yet there are no plans. In the fulness of time, we are expecting the diocese to set out guidelines and a timetable for that time, as yet unspecified. Please hold this process in your prayers and share any thoughts with us so that the opinions of the church will inform eventual discussions.

I received this from a friend in the USA. Please hold them in your prayers.

***As you may have read, seen and heard from various sources, the United States is in a state of upheaval and unrest, not only with the coronavirus, which would be enough. I and many others, are saddened and afraid as we look at what has us so divided, certainly not united. I ask all of you to pray with us as we sort all of our troubles out and find our way back, or forward to somewhere we can't see now inside of this mess.***

***It hasn't helped to point fingers, though there may be blame to assign. It hasn't helped to worry, though there is plenty of that to do. It hasn't helped to be upset, though we are. It hasn't helped to talk about it, though there is much to say and is being said. We just keep repeating the cycle.***

***There is a solution for everything. We have to dig deep and find it, not come up with fixes that are only obvious band-aids. I don't know if there is a will for that here - so far, there doesn't seem to be. Maybe that is my request - that you align with us in finding a will. There's a lot in the old saying, where there is a will, there is a way.***

***From Jane (North Carolina)***

On a lighter note we send our very warm congratulations to Peter and Diana Purkiss, who celebrated their 58<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May. They were able to spend time outside in the sun with their daughter Elaine at Mickley Hall. This was the first time they had been able to spend time with her physically since lockdown began. We hope they all enjoyed this very special occasion.

We are also delighted to attach an interesting article by Maurice Snowden in which he explains how God revealed his plans for Maurice and Marjorie as they began their life together, We hope that this article is the first in a series as it shows very clearly the hand of God in their lives. We are reminded of the wonderful verse from Jeremiah 29:11 which gives us great hope.

***For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.***

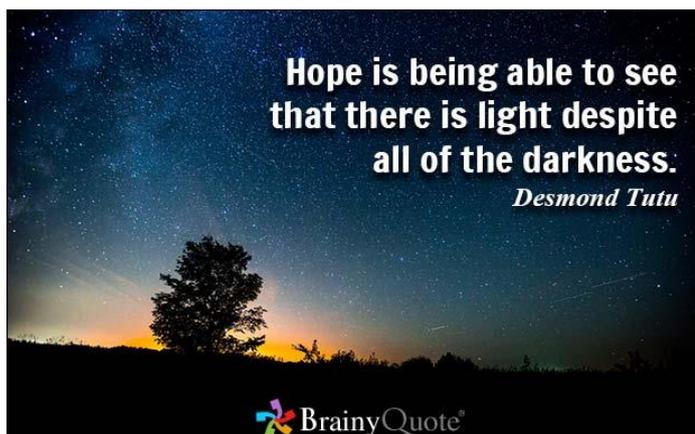
Also attached is a letter and photographs from David Kereto, following his appeal a few weeks ago. Apologies for not including this last week but as you may recall, last Wednesday's letter was written as Neil was having surgery to repair and re align his finger. We are delighted to say that it went better than the surgeons hoped and he has been back today to have the dressing changed and for some physio and it is healing well. There is a long way to go and a lot of physio to restore the mobility but we are expecting all to be well in time. Many thanks to everyone who sent their good wishes and for your prayers.

We hope you are enjoying the weekly quizzes. This week we have included one that your children or grandchildren might be able to help you with. For those of you who enjoy quizzes we can recommend Jays Virtual Pub Quiz which is live on You Tube on a Thursday and Saturday from 8.15pm. There are also pre-recorded "specialist" and quizzes for children. They are all free to join although Jay usually has a charity link but there is no expectation that people should give to the charity, though of course many do.

The link will take you to the page

<https://www.youtube.com/TheVirtualPubQuiz?fbclid=IwAR3RxXs3GpaLpj3NqD39Rsf1SkocwZMxDio2YaMDv57tltmn3iEMcvoVsoU>

Don't forget to join us for virtual worship on Sunday from 10am. There are resources available especially for children too at <https://www.allsaintstotley.church/>. We know it isn't quite the same as meeting together every Sunday but at least this way you get to wear your PJs to church!!



After all the beautiful weather it was a surprise to see the rain today but of course the gardens are in need of water so we can look forward to the summer flowers. It looks as though we might be in for a bumper crop of soft fruit too this year.

We hope that the week ahead will be a happy one for you.

With Love

Angela and Liz

