



WISHING YOU THE BLESSINGS AND JOY OF EASTER FROM SAINT JAMES CHURCH

Dear Friends,

At the time of writing we are in a period of social isolation. Church services, meetings and activities have been cancelled, businesses are sending their employees home, and travel for so many people planned for March break has been stopped. Schools face three weeks of distancing and hospitals are bracing themselves for the potential of the terrible experiences already seen in Italy and China.

I do not know when we will be reunited and again worshipping together in our church building. I hope that we get to gather to celebrate the great Festival of the Resurrection, but all this will be decided with time and the careful attention to the public health issues we face and under the leadership of our Bishop. I encourage you to watch for updates on our website, email blast, twitter and facebook pages or via our 'phone tree.

But Easter is drawing near and we wait in this time of Lent, traditionally a time of discipline and self denial, for the central moment of our Christian Faith that 'makes all things new': When Christ rises from the dead we are asked to understand a new vision for human life- one not bounded or contained by fear, but liberated by love. In his resurrection we learn that death does not define humanity, that the sin that put Jesus upon the cross does not win out, that those who would suppress God's message of love and goodness and liberation, cannot contain or silence it, not by threat, death or the weight of a tomb stone.

As we come out of this difficult time in our society, there will be lessons about life that we should be taking: That our systems of work and pay have put the poorest at risk and that has to change- they must be liberated from the oppression; that selfishness and hoarding have highlighted greed and the lack of trust, faith in community and care for neighbour; that the opportunity that some of us have had for sabbath in this time has taught us that there is more to life and identity than work; that the ability suddenly shown by some to let employees 'work from home' should and could have been extended to those of differing abilities rather than denying them jobs; that the material comfort in which we live is fleeting and something as tiny as a virus can invalidate it all in less than a day; that practical care and attention for our neighbours can help alleviate loneliness and isolation. And primarily, that the Good News offered by the church as we look to the new life of Jesus Christ embraces all these messages, and is a story we need to tell so that all 'may have life and have it abundantly' (John 10.10).

I wish you all health, wellness and peace as we approach and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus- good news for all people, that leads us all to life and I look forward to being reunited as a worshipping community when we shall proclaim: Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Pax et Bonum,

Mike

Rev. Mike Deed (Rector)

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