

Pastoral letter 3

Dear Friends,

These are very dark times and we all feel nervous and anxious about what the future might hold. While I am convinced that the Government is acting for the very best for us all, nevertheless it leaves us feeling very vulnerable and uncertain.

However, I want to say, in the midst of all this darkness there is plenty of light and there is plenty of hope. The light and hope come from the amazing community spirit which is already being shown. It is fantastic that organisations like Moreton Hall Directory are trying their very best to maintain a normal service and making sure that they deliver all their magazines even though there are restrictions in place.

I want to applaud the local shop which is staying open despite the fact there was a terrible attack on its staff only a few days ago. I want to thank the people in our hardware shops who are staying open so people can do all those DIY jobs that need to be done. And, of course, thank you to our police, ambulance and hospital services who are doing so much to keep us safe and to treat those who have gone down with this disease.

We live in a country with plenty of infra-structure, plenty of finances and resources and we should be thankful for all we have and do our very best to support them. More than that, people are taking the opportunity to do the best they can for those around them. It is interesting how my priorities have changed. I usually leave the personal emails till last but now I am doing them first. Every effort we can make to keep in contact with our neighbours and our friends by whatever means we can within the restrictions is a good thing. This dark time is building up community, not knocking it down. Therefore, keep doing what you are doing and, if possible, do more of it.

Of course, there are those who will spoil it and make life difficult for others. I would particularly want to say to those young people who are going round in gangs coughing in older people's faces we all feel nothing but disgust and contempt about you.

Over and above all this, there is the gift of faith. God has not abandoned us. It is still His planet. We are still His people. You will find Him in those activities which involve kindness, love, compassion, fortitude, strength of character, and good humour. The discipline of prayer has not stopped. Whether it is taking place in church, in my home or in other homes, we are still praying and we are still being protected.

I am very pleased and delighted by the response I have had to my various pastoral letters and, of course, the thought for the day videos which are going on. I am so grateful for all the positive comments and you will be pleased to hear that people as far afield as Northern Ireland, Spain, and the United States of America have been touched and affected by them. The videos will continue for as long as we can do them.

This Sunday there will be a live streamed service from Christ Church, Moreton Hall, and if you tune in to our Face Book page you will be able to join in the service we will be providing.

God's blessing on you all.

Revd. Canon Jonathan Ford.

Minister Christ Church Moreton Hall