



St Mark's Church, Reigate

July 2020

Letter from the Vicar, Father Martin Colton

Dear Friends,

Usually in the July magazine I write about being refreshed by summer holidays, a break from normal routine and travel to faraway places. In past editions of the magazine we have drawn attention to climate change as the biggest issue facing the world, and emphasized the contributions we each can make on our own and together as a church. Last July, even the people of Wuhan had no idea that a pandemic was to become the most concerning worldwide issue of our time.

As we mourn those who have already died, and our long-term concern for the climate continues, we are now working together to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Some of us are experiencing the most severe break from our normal routine in living memory. Our plans for this year may be in tatters. Travel to faraway places has all but ceased. Churches are closed: public worship has moved online to Zoom, YouTube and other means. We are seeing just how creative people can be when faced with a new challenge.

People have quickly learned the norms of social distancing whilst helping each other: caring at a distance. We give thanks to those helping us, and the opportunity – if appropriate – for us to help others. Let us all encourage one another as we continue to face levels of social isolation undreamt until this year. Let us all look forward to those days when they come: when we once again meet freely with our families and friends and worship in our churches together.

Let us celebrate the key workers in our NHS, social services and care homes, and in science and engineering: working hard to find new ways to protect people from the virus. May they be inspired by the Holy Spirit in their endeavours.

In the meantime, we pray that we may be refreshed by the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Especially we pray for patience as we wait over the long term for an effective vaccine to emerge and to be distributed to all.

May you receive the comfort of knowing that – throughout this crisis – you are loved and cherished by our Lord and held in the thoughts of many who cannot yet meet with you.

With every blessing.