

## Verses for today:

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.



Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

*Hebrews 10.19-25*

Dear Friend

The verses I chose above for today were the New Testament reading set for Morning Prayer today, and on rereading them I realised how ironic that the author is encouraging us not to give up meeting together, when at the moment meeting together has been banned!

Although we are unable to gather together, I hope we still feel connected with one another through the Holy Spirit. The way we have to be church at this time is not like anything else we have experienced in this part of the world in our entire history. However, in many places, where Christians face persecution, they are unable to meet freely and are forced either to gather in secret or to be “secret Christians” by themselves.

So, although we are having to observe very carefully “physical distancing” - which is a much more appropriate phrase than “social distancing” - we must never forget that we are one in the Spirit, joined by invisible yet powerful bonds of love and fellowship which unite us more strongly than any other ties. Although we may find ourselves living with such tight restrictions that we have little physical capacity for “good deeds”, we can still fulfil the royal commandments to love God, our neighbour and one another through our prayers and by being kind to those we live with, or if we live alone, by being kind to ourselves.

## **Something to make you smile** - a true story!

When I was at theological college one of the things we were taught was the art of preaching. One of my tutors said the following:



"The key to a good sermon is to have a memorable beginning, something at the end for people to take away with them, and to bring those two elements as close together as possible!"

### **And from the Internet:**

A Sunday school teacher asked the children just before she dismissed them to go to church, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"

Annie replied, "Because people are sleeping!"

May our great and wonderful God keep us awake even in the most boring sermons, and help us to get a good night's rest every night!

With much love and prayer

Simon