

# Pastoral Letter from The Rev'd John Saxon - Feb 2021



Dear friends

It seems that 2021 is starting very much where 2020 had left us – in a state of tight lockdown, socially isolated from many of our family and friends and with uncertainties about the future security of our children's education, our economy and, for many of us, our jobs. Yet, as our Prime Minister and other officials have told us, help is coming in the form of vaccinations. By the time you are reading this, many vulnerable groups and care/medical professionals will have been immunised. It is hoped that 2021 is the year when our social freedoms will be restored along with many other norms of behaviour and function in our society. What do you hope for? Albeit in a very different way we have just celebrated Christmas and the birth of Christ and soon it will be Lent with the journey to Easter and Christ's death and resurrection.

In the bible, we read of God's love for his creation, seen ultimately through the gift of his son Jesus, and hear the countless stories of faith in the lives of people who have put their trust in that love. At this time though, it would be very easy to counter with the continuing gloom of the pandemic and ask 'Where is this love in the world now?'

However, for Christians, Jesus is the Hope for our world; a true Light to overcome all its darkness. A Christian life is never promised to be easy and trouble free, but it does promise the gift of God's love, if we but put our trust

in his son our saviour. Christian hope is not some vague notion that things may get better in the future; it is the word used to describe the faith we have that God's reign of love will finally prevail. Christian hope is the orientation of

one's life towards the faith that trusts love alone will conquer the pain, despair and frustration of our daily lives. A famous passage from the bible about love is from the Apostle St Paul, 1 Corinthians 13. He ends this passage with:

*'And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.'*

So, what do you hope for? Along with many in 2021, it will no doubt be for successful immunisations, a suppression of the virus and a return to a better kind of normality. However, this year plays out, may you and I know the certain hope that love will prevail and live lives in faith and trust for this.

With all good wishes for 2021

John

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