



Dear All,

***EVEN THOUGH** the fig trees have no blossoms,  
and there are no grapes on the vines;  
even though the olive crop fails,  
and the fields lie empty and barren;  
even though the flocks die in the fields,  
and the cattle barns are empty,  
**YET I will REJOICE** in the LORD!  
I will be **joyful** in the God of my **salvation!**  
The Sovereign LORD is my strength!  
He makes me as surefooted as a deer,  
able to tread upon the heights. (Habakkuk 3:17- 19)*

I hope you are all well and in good health. As we begin our communal journey into our second national lockdown period, we are writing to you to be in touch. It is a deeply challenging and difficult time for us all, especially as the glorious, partly sunny days of autumn are fading away gradually. Yet without hope and new opportunities. it's more essential than ever to be together in this time as a church family. Our prayer for us all is to be able to find hope and strength in God of our salvation, may we have as surefooted while we tread upon the heights a head of us.

In a positive note, we are more ready this time as there is much that we have learned from the first lockdown. To be patient with ourselves, to be realistic in our expectation knowing that this time is demanding on us more than we are actually think, to notice our feelings and to be aware of other people around us despite keeping the distance. Learning the art of "BEING" more than "DOING". All these are good lessons we need to continue building on them in this second round.



Last Tuesday we met online as a ministry group in Zoom, to reflect on “as our God is with us, how could we, in this time of uncertainties, be with God, each other and our community? Some good ideas emerged from that meeting; we will share some of them with you in this letter. As part of being with each other Lynne and Revd Adel are planning to share with you a weekly message of encouragement and support, such as this one, so watch the space.

### Sunday’s worship

As a church, we plan to provide opportunities for people to worship online. Morning prayer via Zoom application on Sundays at 10:30 am (the link of the service will be sent by email during the next week and more details in the newsletter, Facebook page and the website).

**This Sunday** we will hold a short Remembrance Service outside in the churchyard at 10.45 am (gathering in from 10:30 am) and will observe the two-minute silence at 11 am. Whilst public services in church must stop for the time being, we are grateful that the new guidelines allow churches to open for individual prayer. Do please use the Parish church building for private prayer between 10.30 and 11.30 am each Sunday, ensuring you follow the guidelines.

### Pray & Fast.

On All Saints’ Day, the Archbishops wrote to the clergy and lay ministers of the Church of England. Within the letter, they are calling for us all to make this month of lockdown a month of prayer. They are also inviting those who are physically able, to consider fasting in a way appropriate to each of us every Thursday, in the same way that we cheered for the NHS during the first lockdown. We are invited **each Thursday to fast and pray** for our nation, for its leaders, its health and essential services, and for all those that suffer. If you’ve not fasted before, a typical fast would be



to refrain from food during the hours of daylight (feel free to decide for how long), and to use the time that you would normally spend to prepare and eat a meal, to pray instead. You may feel that there is little you can do to help others during the pandemic, but even if you cannot fast, each and every one of us can pray. Lynne and Adel plan to hold a short service of Evening Prayer (by Zoom) on Thursdays in the coming weeks

[Here](#) you can find some prayer resources offered at Church of England website

### **YET I will REJOICE in the LORD**

The prophet Habakkuk was puzzling with a very relative question to us here and now, when all familiarity of life seems to disappear what can God's people do? We don't know when this current lockdown will end, or whether it will need to be extended beyond the 2nd of December. We are not certain whether we will be able to worship inside our Church building at Christmas. **YET** what we do know is that we are utterly loved by our heavenly Father, He is mighty and faithful saviour and we shall live through steadfast trust in Him. Here some words from Psalm of prayer by David:

*But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. (Psalm 5: 11)*

Let's carry on Being with God through prayer and worship, being with each other by supporting one another through prayer, telephone and email contact and being with our neighbours and community. We are the body of Christ in Old Windsor and our primary vocation as Christians is to pray and to serve one another. Thank God for each and every one of you!



*May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all, now and evermore. Amen*

Yours in Christ,  
Revd Adel Shokralla  
& Lynne Thorogood

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