

It's been great over the last few weeks to see people again in church – I was going to say face to face, but maybe that should be facemask to facemask! We're exploring ways we can experience worship together, and while at the moment we can't sign, we're discovering other ways to join together in praise to God. Sunday Club will also be restarting during the 11am service on 13th September, but as space is limited, please book in with Denise - denise.angell@virginmedia.com. We will also continue to live stream services on Cudham and Downe Church Facebook video page www.facebook.com/pg/PCDChurches/videos

For so long we've taken meeting people face to face for granted. The bible says quite a lot about face to face meetings with God. When Moses encounters God, as recorded in Exodus 33:11, he meets him 'face to face, as someone speaks to their friend', and this encounter is so profound that everyone could tell Moses had been in the presence of the holy, so much so that Moses wore a face covering so as not to alarm them. Nothing's changed, then!

In the New Testament, St Paul shows Christians that we do not need a mask when we encounter God in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:12-13). Why? Because Moses experience of the presence of God was only temporary, or fading, as Paul puts it. He contrasts that with how Christians today stay in the presence of God, because Jesus through his Spirit is with us always, reassuring us of his presence, whatever the outward circumstances, living in a right relationship with Jesus Christ – he becomes part of our 'bubble' – and Jesus works within us and through us as God is at work in our lives.

So, I hope you'll be able to join us in church over the Autumn – you might need to book in, as space is limited, and as I write it looks like face coverings (unless you're exempt) will be mandatory in church services. Let's not get hung up on these secondary issues like not singing or only receiving the bread at communion, mask wearing and no coffee or biscuits afterwards (I'm not selling it to you, am I, although sermons and services will be shorter!) – instead as the new 'term' starts, I invite you to focus on worshipping Jesus, who remains our risen, ascended and living Lord each and every day.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help in any practical or pastoral way - vicar@pcd.org.uk tel 01959540012. Rev John Musson