

Dear Grayshott,

April 2020

I have left the writing of this letter as long as possible in the current climate. The world has suddenly changed, and almost everything that we have taken for granted for as long as most of us have known, has been thrown up in the air. Those who have known wartime during your lifetime, know it is communities pulling together that gets us through. The individualistic, materialistic ethos of the consumer culture is really not going to work. We need to pull down the walls, and build the bridges. It is enormously heartening to see the efforts of local people initiating offers of help and support for the vulnerable in our society, and the superb response to the Nextdoor and Facebook appeals.

The implications of this virus are going to be huge for thousands if not millions of households and businesses, and fear of how we cope financially is going to be a massive factor for many. Let us remember that it is not long after the floods, and more and more rain comes in off the Atlantic. Local businesses around the country are going to be hit, less by the virus, than the decisions made to stop its progress. Let us see the best, and be the best, and pray for opportunities to love one another.

It is time to reflect deeply on what is important, and on what we really need rather than want, and to “dig for victory”. How we react can be an investment in our community in ways that we haven’t had to think about before. I believe it is a time to listen to each other, and if we are in a position to help in any way, to consider it, and be generous with what we have.

You will be hearing about initiatives, and I am considering creating a common pot, which can help those in genuine need. It may be that you know someone who could do with a financial hand. I’m sure you have already thought to invest some time phoning friends and neighbours to listen and to help if you can.

When it comes to overwhelming situations like this, it is good to stop, be still, pray, and to reflect. Ask the Lord of Wisdom for wisdom. Psalm 23, “the Lord is my shepherd” is the psalm that speaks of the Lord watching over us, even through the valley of the shadow of death, where we need fear no evil, for he is with us. Please watch out for whether services are happening or not, and look out for local news about developments.

With our love,
Jeremy and Claire

Rev. Jeremy Haswell
Vicar of St Luke’s, Grayshott