



Dear Friends at Christ Church,

A year on from the start of the first lockdown in the UK, I have been reflecting on a challenging quote from Miriam Adeney: "Global fellowship is glorious, but it rests on local fellowships... While the global dimension is vital, so is the local. On one hand, we must network as broadly as we can. On the other hand, we must love the local as deeply as we can. The worldwide church is built from a thousand, thousand communities of grace, one story at a time."

Certainly this strange year has been immensely enriching at both a local and global level. Having overcome some of my technophobic apprehensions, it has been a real joy to experience global fellowship on various digital platforms. Amongst many virtual gatherings, I have been able to link up with friends from student days in Southampton and with some of those with whom I served on the OMF team in Indonesia, as well as sharing in meetings of the Langham team in Indonesia. A special joy has been seeing one of the Indonesian Langham team, Dr Dwi Maria, taking on the role of Director of Langham Preaching (LP) for Asia and the South Pacific. Dwi is doing an amazing job as she 'meets' regularly with LP leaders throughout this vast area. She looks forward to visiting many of these leaders when international travel becomes possible once again.

At a local level, the 11 members of our home group have been meeting on Zoom each Wednesday evening. Restricting ourselves to 40 minutes has meant that everyone studies the Bible passage in advance, so we are being both encouraged and challenged by our sharing. Carole - the sub-warden of the small branch congregation for which I have pastoral responsibility - and I have been in regular touch with all our members over the past year. We plan to re-start our services in the Community Hall on 28<sup>th</sup> March. Relationships have deepened during the year and we have been privileged to be able to serve our community through FareShare, a project where we distribute food provided by the supermarkets to those in need. Now we are inviting our friends to join us on Zoom for an evangelistic outreach led by Roger Carswell over the Easter weekend. The hardest thing for me this year has been taking the funerals of several friends under covid-safe conditions.

Apart from a 2-day round trip last August to see my 3 siblings, I haven't been away from home all year. Several sets of plans for celebrating my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with my family last October all had to be cancelled. However, thanks to a kind



friend - Liz Capper - we were able to have a staggered party in her garden for local friends! Even several heavy showers didn't dampen the joy of celebrating and rejoicing in the Lord's goodness. I have been in regular contact with my scattered family, although my brother, John, who has vascular dementia, finds zoom meetings difficult to follow. We would appreciate prayer for John and his wife, Corinne, who is his full-time carer. Old age doesn't come without some problems but, I am thankful that, apart from minor issues - including limited mobility - I am in good health. I still enjoy several hobbies, although singing to a laptop when I can only see and not hear the rest of the choral society is not

really my idea of fun! How good it will be when we are able to meet physically once again.

Easter blessings,

With my love and prayer,

*Rosemary*