



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.

Matthew 11:28-30 'Resting in Jesus'

²⁸ 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

In this time of uncertainty we must trust that the Lord will never give us a heavier load than we are able to bear, and as we tread life's path we have His promise that He will be walking along side us helping and guiding us through both the easy and difficult times. When this pandemic is fading and we can resume a more reasonable life style I wonder what we will remember most about our time of isolation?



Many things spring to mind but surely one of the hardest things to bear must have been the restrictions on visiting family and friends in hospital, nursing homes or in their own homes. Looking through a window at someone you love is a poor substitute for a warm embrace. But what can bring us some comfort is knowing that God was on the other side of that window with our loved one – looking back at us.

So many people have had to endure the pain of not being able to visit and care for members of their family or in the worst cases not being able to attend their funeral to say a final goodbye. I realise this is a very sobering thought but then this is a very serious crisis when people are having to live through deep hurt and hardship.

Because of the love that unites us as a Christian family I'm sure that when we meet once again for worship, with God's grace we will be able to help each other to heal and to get over the trauma of the past few months. To be there for each other helping one another recover from the loneliness, fear and sadness that so many have had to endure. For some, life will have changed forever. And I pray that we will have been strengthened by the knowledge that we can call upon the Lord to help us, knowing that whatever load we must bear He is there, easing our burden and carrying us through.

Prayer

Loving Lord,
thank you that no matter what is happening around us
we can feel secure in your unchanging love.

May we find comfort in the knowledge that your love is for all and encompasses those whom we love and hold dear.

We thank you that when the weight of this pandemic is lifted and we are able to meet as Emmanuel once more it will be with glad hearts and deep gratitude knowing that no matter what the world has in store nothing can separate us from your love. **Amen.**