



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.

Philippians 2: 1-4 'Imitating Christ's Humility'

¹ Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not look only to your own interests but also to the interests of the others. ⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...

Paul is writing to the Christians at Philippi to encourage them to stay united as a fellowship and to reflect Jesus' love and humility in all their dealings, or as he says in verse five: "Your attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus." He then quotes from what is thought to be an early hymn praising Jesus. Do find some time to read Philippians 2 verses 6 to 11, or look in *Singing the Faith* at 797 which is a responsive reading called "A Song of Christ's Glory". When the media is full of worrying news and ever changing advice, it is good to look to Jesus whose love and compassion is unchanging.

Paul's message set out in verse four above, is also unchanging. It is as true today as when he wrote it over 2000 years ago. It tells us how to behave as Christians: to seek the wellbeing of our family, friends and neighbours. And hasn't that sense of concern for others been one of the positive outcomes of the pandemic? The phone calls, emails and letters to check people are alright and to let them know that others care; the increased giving to Foodbanks, not only through the churches but also in the baskets at supermarkets.

Paul really is bang up to date in his message that "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others," because it exactly matches the Government slogan: 'HANDS FACE SPACE':



We wash and sanitize our hands to protect ourselves – "YOUR OWN INTERESTS"

We wear masks to protect others from our germs and viruses – "THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS"

And the space between us is to protect ourselves and others – "NOT ONLY...BUT ALSO"

Who says the Bible is not relevant today!

Prayer:

Father God we thank you for your Word, Jesus, your Son, our Saviour
who set us a wonderful example of how to live
and for your indwelling Spirit who helps us in our day-to-day living
prompting us into what we should do and say and think.

We thank you for your Word, the Scriptures, our Bible
where we can learn of your power and glory and your love and concern –
again showing us how our lives can reflect your love and care for all people,
for all are our neighbours. Amen.