



## ***JANUARY 2021 Newsletter***

### Looking back...

There were a lot of comments and jokes at the start of last year that referred to the number of the year and what our 'vision' might be. This is because in common use, we use the phrase '2020 vision' to mean perfect eyesight. At the start of 2020, despite the odd news story from China, very few of us had any idea or vision of what might happen in the UK and around the world in 2020.

For many, 2020 has been an awful year and the sooner it is gone, the better. It has been a year of isolation, lockdowns, losses and grief. Yet, perhaps precisely because of those darker, bleaker things, 2020 was also a year when neighbours came together to support each other; when communities came together to support and serve the most vulnerable; when families and organisations found alternative ways to do things so that no one needed to feel cut off, even when shielding and staying physically isolated from others.

What then, from 2020 vision, should we hold onto and take with us into 2021?

### Looking forward...

1. People have frequently shown that they care and are what the Bible calls 'people of peace'. They want their community or street to be a place of kindness, acceptance and goodwill. We should hold onto that willingness to help out – both in looking for partners with whom to serve and in being open to receive help when we need it. If we are vulnerable, most people will not misuse that as a weakness to take advantage of.

### Looking forward...

2. Using technology has the potential to draw in and include those who previously were excluded. Residents of care homes and those unable to leave home are able to access church services via the internet, or by use of CDs or DVDs. The vaccine rollout has now begun and it seems likely that within a few months, it will be safer for us to meet again in person. We should hold on to the use of technology to include those who will still be unable to attend.

3. Being unable to sing communally in worship has been a real loss. However, we have all, I hope, been able to explore different aspects of worship in new ways – perhaps developing our prayer lives, learning forms of Christian meditation, practical service or use of our creativity. We should hold onto these new spiritual practices in 2021, rather than shrinking our spirituality once we can sing together again.

2020 Vision may no longer mean 'perfect vision' for we who have lived through 2020, yet we can still hold on to positive things with thankful hearts into 2021. Sarah



May the LORD bless  
you and take care of  
you; May the LORD be  
kind and gracious to  
you; May the LORD  
look on you with  
favour and give you  
peace.  
Numbers 6:24-26