



20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings to you in the name of our risen and ascended Lord, Jesus Christ.

Well, I have recently seen, among others, Captain America, Wally (of 'Where's Wally' fame), Spiderman (on a bike!), Buzz Lightyear, Batman, Robin, Wonderwoman and a Tyrannosaurus Rex go past our house. The neighbourhood has certainly changed! It brings a smile to see folk having fun like this and cheers us all up during this strange time – a time when we are living with the certainty of uncertainty.

Tim Cook, the CEO of Apple, in a recent address to university students said: *'It can be difficult to see the whole picture when you are still inside the frame.'*

So, when we think about our life together as the church, what picture comes to mind? It is probably that which we have been used to and are familiar with - worship on Sunday mornings, prayer meetings, Bible studies, Church councils, fellowship times, coffee mornings and the like. We know this frame – we know its colours and design. Now, our circumstances are calling us to look and imagine differently to what we are familiar with inside the frame – to look further; to look outside the picture frame and discover that God is actually there too.

We are now in that period of the Christian Year called 'Ascension-tide' – the last ten days of the Easter season that take us to Pentecost. When the disciples were with Jesus for that period prior to his ascension, they felt comfortable because he was there – inside the frame with all that they were familiar with. When Jesus ascended, they had to step out of the familiar picture frame, to learn that God is still present even if God is not as startlingly visible as before. The motif for this period of Ascension-tide is that we are called to wait, and in that waiting to pray.

When Pentecost comes, as we will celebrate next week, the disciples discover new power and energy, that creativity and light that will resource them to be witnesses to God's kingdom, both inside and outside the frame. In one sense is not this time of being restricted, a time of prayer and reflection, and wondering what God might be calling us to do next. I believe it will involve us becoming more aware and more trusting of what God is calling us to do and be, both inside and outside the picture frame.

Let us wait, prayerfully, as we discover the possibilities of God revealing more about God and ourselves. We might be in for some wonderful surprises.

Continue to remember and encourage each other in prayer and with your calls.

May you know the blessings of God.

Grace and peace,

*Eddie*

