**Reflection for 10 May 2020**

“In my Father’s house are many rooms….” Familiar words that we often hear at funerals.

But unless you are royalty or celebrity, how many of us can say that about our own houses? We are fortunate in our Manse that we do have several rooms but this is not the case for everyone.

In which case, where can we find space? Where can we go to find peace; solitude; space to just “be”? Before lockdown, that may well have been out in the countryside, or on the beach, or in a coffee shop. Now we are having to find new places to “go” to have time with God without interruption.

My “haven” should be my study, but as anyone who has been to my house will know, it is as cluttered as my head is at the moment! So I’ve taken some time out this week to clear some space, not only physically by catching up on filing, but also with a view to mentally by trying to clear my head. So much has happened so quickly, it has taken all of us by surprise and we are finding different ways to deal with the changes.

Our default position is often to keep busy, to find lots to do to keep us going, but the danger of doing that is that we burn out. Or we do nothing, and hibernate, and pretend that the world only exists in our front room and ignore anything outside of that. Then we find it difficult to get going again.

How can we reach those who are finding these times impossible to bear? Initially everyone was “ok” as it was a novelty, it was different, it was a challenge to be faced. Now 6 weeks or so in, it is more difficult, with a strain on family relations, family finances, and a sense of “when will this end?”

Communication is key.

Whether that is by telephone to share a friendly voice, or by email, or interactive conversation – Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp – (other brands / companies are available!!) or by a “hello” over the garden fence at a safe distance, we need to keep in touch. So speak to your neighbours, friends, family, by whatever means will keep you and them safe. Send virtual hugs where you can and love heart emojis and wave as you pass, and… and… and….

Keep safe. Keep well. Keep connected. We will get through this – Together

Rev Ruth