

Dear Friends

Tomorrow is the first day of spring – as I look through my window I can see daffodils in full bloom and trees in bud. Yet we know this is no normal spring: life has changed for all of us over the past weeks and that change seems to be constantly accelerating. None of us knows how things will develop and what may happen over the coming weeks and months.

It's understandable that this uncertainty will cause anxiety, not only for those who are self-isolating due to age or underlying health conditions, but for all of us as we seek to come to terms with the 'new normal'.

It's important that as we move into the coming days and weeks we offer support to each other in whatever ways we can. Not being able to meet on a Sunday or at our usual weekly activities can lead to us feeling isolated, so we need to look to other ways to support each other – through a phone call or for those who use social media through that means, for example. For those who wish to worship at home on a Sunday there are some suggestions on the Methodist Church website:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus-guidance/#d1>

The website also offers suggestions on how to offer support to the most vulnerable in our society through contributing to local food banks and how to offer pastoral care to one another.

Words of comfort which sustain me at this time can be found in Matthew's Gospel: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest'. Many of us will feel burdened at this time – by worry for family, friends or our own health or financial security. May you find rest and peace in your hearts at this difficult time.

With my best wishes

Sue

Rev. Sue Burton, Methodist Minister Linthwaite, Holmfirth, Slaithwaite, Gatehead.