

**TFTD 20/10/20**

***Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. Heb. 13:1-3***

Last week was Prisons Week. This is a week of prayer which raises awareness of issues faced by those affected by the criminal justice system and has been running since 1975. The theme this year was 'You are not Alone.' How apt as perhaps this year more than ever we can empathise with those trapped in a prison cell. We have all had our freedom curtailed, we have been told what we can and can't do in a much starker way than that which we have experienced before. And yet, despite these restrictions, as part of the body of Christ, we are never alone.

I could have used a much shorter verse to make my thought to you today, but I think it is important we start in love. Keep on loving one another. Even when it is hard, even when we don't see people because of physical distance, a prison cell or Covid. Love is the place from where everything else can flow.

From love we can choose to remember others and pray for others. Just because we aren't seeing one another as frequently, does not mean we forget one another. You are not alone. Love has an external dimension. By showing love through prayer, an email, a letter, a phone call we demonstrate that no one is alone, love is more than a feeling, it grows into action. Despite the limitations of life with Covid, of life in a prison cell, we are never alone.

The love we receive from God and His people on earth develops into how we show care in times of distress. The writer of Hebrews mentions two crises in particular: those who are in prison and those who are suffering. In both cases, the writer underscores the depth of compassion in its sense of suffering-with-others. Our life is a life shared, our tests and vulnerabilities as well as our joys are shared with one another. In no situation should we feel alone.

However we are feeling at the moment, let's remember our brothers and sisters who are trapped in a prison cell, their families and those who work in the justice system.

Let's end by knowing that we are not alone. We are a community held together in love through Jesus. Let us pray for one another, those we see and those we don't and let us remember those in prison as if we were together with them.

Remember, you can send your prayer request to: [Prayer@baystonhillchurch.org](mailto:Prayer@baystonhillchurch.org) Or ring: (01743) 583215

***May you know that you are not alone.***

Rachael