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Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

I pray God's blessing for you on you and although we are unable to join together in church buildings to offer our worship, we are still able to worship our Lord from the heart, wherever we may be at this time. We can be assured that in the Holy Spirit we are joined spiritually with the Lord and with one another, therefore if we are unable to be with each other in person, we most certainly can be with each other spiritually.

This experience of not being able to come together is not new for the Church; Christians down the centuries have been forced to worship the Lord at home, in the fields or in solitary confinement in a prison cell. Even today, due to persecution, many of our brothers and sisters are unable to meet together, so it is their regular practice to worship the Lord in private, whilst recognising that they are a member of the whole Body of Christ, the Church, and they commune with others in Christ through the Holy Spirit, who joins all believers as one.

Christ will never abandon His Church, after all, it is His body on earth and all believers are a part of that body, therefore let us continue in this holy fellowship, recognising that we are spiritually united in Christ and that His Church will continue no matter what else may happen.

Of course we pray that the Lord will bring an end to this Pandemic and we pray for all who have caught it and all who fight it. We pray too that God will spare us and our loved ones from the worst effects of this virus, but as Christians we know that we are not always spared suffering, however we believe that even in the midst of suffering, God is with us, and that He is working out His greater purpose for us and for all creation.

I pray that you may know the comfort of God's peace, that peace which passes human understanding, and that whilst taking all necessary practical steps to ensure your safety, you will trust in the Lord's loving mercy and kindness.

On the next page is a reading from the Psalms, a psalm that reminds us of the Glory and Power of God, that He is greater than anything we might imagine and that His purpose for all creation is to bring it to its fulfillment and to the fullness of Joy. He is with us, He is our refuge.

Psalm 46^[a]

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to *alamoth*.^[b] A song.

¹ God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.^[c]

⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. ⁵ God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

⁷ The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

⁸ Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields^[d] with fire. ¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." ¹¹ The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Please would you join with Christians the world over, in praying for the following things:

1. The stop of the spread of the virus.
2. The recovery of those already infected.
3. Peace for the families who lost loved ones.
4. Restoration of the economies of the world.
5. Wisdom for the governments who have to manage the outbreak.
6. That many would find comfort to Christ!

Jesus commanded us to love our neighbour and so we must extend the love of Christ to all people, that means praying for them and helping them in others ways when we can.

Let us conclude by saying together the Lord's Prayer.

OUR Father which art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

For ever. Amen.

And the Blessing of God Almighty, The Father The Son and The Holy Spirit be upon you.

Yours in His service,

James.