

We are days away from the start of a new year and I don't know about you, but I am really excited about it. 2020 has been a tough year, one that I would prefer not to repeat and so on New Years Eve I am going to stay up until midnight, not just to see the new year in, but, as Brenda Reid shared with the coffee group a week ago, to make sure that 2020 leaves.

With that said I am not expecting that when 2021 begins that everything will just magically change. We will still be in a restricted lockdown and we will still need to wear our masks when we go out into public indoor spaces and most of us will not see a vaccination for quite some time. However, there is something that 2021 holds that really has not be felt in a really long time; real hope. I know we talked about hope in the advent season and it certainly has been a word that I have used a great deal over the last year, but this hope feels different to me and it is rooted in something that I myself didn't fully expect. The hope I am holding in my heart is effectively twofold. I am holding onto hope that soon we will see more and more vaccinations taking place within our communities. Again, I don't personally anticipate that soon means day or weeks from now, but rather in the foreseeable future. That is a huge and hopeful change for us all, that in the foreseeable future we can all be vaccinated against this horrible virus that has changed our lives in such profound ways.

Yet it is those profound changes, that leads to my second hope and maybe the most unexpected hope; I hope that we don't go back to how things were. Let me be clear, I hope that we can gather together again. I hope that we can have friends and family members over for coffee and dinners and parties. I want and am so looking forward to shaking hands and hugging people. I want that all to come back, but I hope that the lessons we learned in 2020 are not forgotten in 2021. I hope that we remember that simplicity can be life giving. I hope we remember that we are a family of faith beyond the walls of our church buildings. I hope we remember to take time to be present with those we have been locked down with, when we no longer are required to do so. I hope that we slow the pace of our lives and remember that getting the next dollar is not as important as spending time with those we love. I hope that we will recall the beauty of creation around us and our fragile place within it.

I hope that we make space for love and joy in our lives and build stronger relationships with our neighbours. I hope that we remember the ways we were able to put the needs of others before needs of economic progress, like using our unused infrastructure to house those without any shelter in the coldest months of the year. I hope we continue to remember that supporting local, means supporting our community. I hope and pray that we take the experience of a quiet Christmas holiday and the rest we felt from it to heart and change the way we celebrate our major holidays moving forward. I hope, that we don't get sucked back into the ways we always did things, because those ways, in my opinion, helped this small microscopic virus destroy everything we were use to, almost overnight.

I am entering into 2021 with hope that we will come out of 2020 as people who understand just how precious and fragile life really is and that we care enough to live it, rather than just watch it fly by. That is my hope for 2021.

I wonder, what is yours?

Sincerely,

Rev. Adam Hall