

## OUR JOURNEY OUT OF LOCKDOWN

As we enter a lifting of restrictions and an easing out of lockdown and (hopefully) some warmer weather, it seems good to reflect a little bit on the journey we have been on to get this far.

It does feel as though we have been on a journey over the last year– not of choice perhaps, but of necessity, and it's been a journey of many highs and lows, indeed some have likened it to being on a roller coaster while others have compared it to being in a storm, where we are all facing the same storm, but in different boats. Still others have equated the journey to passing through a long, dark tunnel and that is the picture I'm reflecting on here.

As we entered that tunnel we left behind a familiar landscape of relative freedoms, which we probably took very much for granted, and embarked into a period of time which seemed quite dark and dismal, and sometimes it wasn't clear when or where the tunnel would end. During those days it was often remarked that there was light at the end of the tunnel, and with the introduction of the Covid vaccination programme the light got brighter and the end of the tunnel nearer.

It seems now, as we navigate the 'road-map' out of lockdown restrictions, we are at last stepping out of the tunnel and as we emerge from the darkness we see that the landscape before us is very different from that which we left behind when the journey started. Here, there are many obstacles of unknown factors which hinder a clear view of the way ahead, and forever hovering on the periphery of our vision is the spectre of another impending disaster that might overwhelm once again. On this side of the tunnel life is indeed very different. There are some familiar landmarks but the landscape seems to be constantly shifting and we cannot always rely on the truth of what we can see.

However, in all of this life is good, being alive is good, and we have much to celebrate and to be thankful for. We may not see clearly the way ahead. It may seem that we are just feeling our way along very slowly, and we may wonder in what or in whom we can put our trust and faith.

I read today that we should *"Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly and love extravagantly."* (1 Corinthians 13:13 -The Message Version) which seems a good adage to adhere to as we enter this 'brave new world.' Personally, I am forever grateful that because of the trust and hope I have in God, I can live and love extravagantly. My hope is that you will also feel able to place your hope and trust in God's extravagant love for you, because *"even though on the outside it looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace."* (2 Corinthians 4:17 – the Message Version)

At Great Shelford Free Church our prayer for you is that whatever is revealed in the landscape you face on this side of the tunnel, you too will experience God's unfolding grace in your life.

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