

## An Easter message from the Chaplain

Warm greetings from Selwyn. It's hard not to use words like 'strange' and 'unprecedented' to describe the situation we all find ourselves in. So much has happened over the past few weeks, and we are all adjusting to new ways of working, and being.

Our hearts go out to those around the world who are suffering with the coronavirus - those in intensive care, and those who have lost loved ones and been deprived of the opportunity of a proper funeral to say goodbye. We know that doctors and nurses are working around the clock caring for patients in desperate need. Their dedication is mirrored by others working in our communities to ensure that daily life carries on as normally as possible.

Yet at the same time as all this activity, many of us are finding ourselves locked in the relative peace and quiet of our homes. Some of us are self-isolating and seeing even less of others. There does seem to be a stark contrast between the activity in the hospitals and the unusual stillness and change of pace we may be experiencing. Selwyn itself is very quiet. Even the chapel is locked.

Hopefully though, this new-found space may offer us an opportunity to make discoveries about the world and ourselves. Some of us are getting to grips with new technologies, opening up new possibilities for communication. Others of us are enjoying occasional walks and time to reflect. Some couples and families are finding they are together much more than they have ever been used to, but are coping nonetheless! And many who live alone are finding joy in renewed friendships and neighbourliness.

As I often say, Selwyn is a community of all faiths and none. At this time of year, the Jewish community is celebrating Passover, remembering the journey from slavery to freedom. Later this month, Muslims will begin the holy month of Ramadan, an important time for spiritual reflection. And for Christians, Lent is a time for self-examination, and Easter celebrates the hope that love is stronger than death and fear, and opens up new possibilities of embracing life in all its fullness.

In the biblical account of the events of Easter, there is an important story about the appearance of Jesus to his disciples when they are locked away in a room on their own. Sometimes, our most important encounters happen when we least expect them, and out of sight. I'm looking forward to a time when all of us are back enjoying each other's company at Selwyn, as students, staff and fellows, or as alumni and friends. But in the meantime, despite being locked away, I hope we may be discovering some good things about how strong communities transcend physical boundaries; and that we may be experiencing afresh what it is to be loved and cared for, even when we feel cut off, or on our own, or far away.

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