

## Reflection June 2021 - Great Expectations?

We are fortunate in the Millard household that none of us have had COVID, nor even had to isolate...yet. However, just before I began to right this I took a COVID test. I had been reading about the new Delta variant and how many symptoms now may be different to the key three we have had in place over the past 15mths or so. So having noticed some cold like symptoms I thought I should take a test. After all, as Charles Dickens in Great Expectations tells us... *“Take nothing on its looks; take everything on evidence. There's no better rule.”*

As I waited in anticipation, or possibly dread, I wondered what to expect - if it was positive, what would the implications be for the coming Sunday's services that I am due to play a part in? What would my family be expected to do with self-isolating? Would my family want to lock me in my study and leave food by the door so they stay safe? - hopefully not!



The government have recently announced that Freedom Day has been delayed for 4 weeks. Some of us may have expected this, others not. When it does finally happen, what will life actually look like? When do we expect businesses to get back to normal? When do we expect packed shops and pubs again?

As churches we have recently announced some changes to our services at St Paul's, and some lesser changes at St Barnabas. I wonder what your expectations of these changes are? Perhaps you have not been to church for the whole time of this pandemic

- as will be the case for many of you - what are you expecting when you return? As your new Vicar in both churches I don't quite know what to expect as to how many people will return, or when they will return! We all may ask the question, *“What will church look like after this experience?”*

Ultimately, like a COVID test, we have to wait and see. However, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, we wait in hope.

1 Peter 3.3-9 (The Message) says...

**3-5** *What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we've been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you'll have it all—life healed and whole.*

Because of this hope we have in Christ our expectations can be more sure. In Christ our future is secure and our ultimate hope secured. What a great blessing this is for us all. And this blessing and expectation of the gift of hope is what we are called to share with those around us who are yet to know Jesus.

And to end...my test was negative! Amen!