**Call to Worship** *Put your hope in God,
     for I will yet praise him,
      my Saviour and my God. (Psalm 42)*

**Read Psalm 42 Verses 1-11 (NIV Version)**

**1**As the deer pants for streams of water,
    so my soul pants for you, my God.
**2**My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
    When can I go and meet with God?
**3**My tears have been my food
    day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
    ‘Where is your God?’
**4**These things I remember
    as I pour out my soul:
how I used to go to the house of God
    under the protection of the Mighty One
with shouts of joy and praise
    among the festive throng. **5**Why, my soul, are you downcast?
    Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
    for I will yet praise him,
    my Saviour and my God. **6**My soul is downcast within me;
    therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan,
    the heights of Hermon – from Mount Mizar.
**7**Deep calls to deep
    in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
    have swept over me. **8**By day the Lord directs his love,
    at night his song is with me –
    a prayer to the God of my life. **9**I say to God my Rock,
    ‘Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning,
    oppressed by the enemy?’
**10**My bones suffer mortal agony
    as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
    ‘Where is your God?’

**11**Why, my soul, are you downcast?
    Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
    for I will yet praise him,
    my Saviour and my God.

As we endure this time of social isolation, what does your soul long for? To get back to normal, what is normal? We are all missing worshipping together meeting together and certainly in Jenny’s and my case, going into Central most days. We can resonate with that deer panting for water in a dry place. At the end of the psalm it says put your hope in God. I listened on the radio the other morning to an interview with Terry Waite, if you remember he was the archbishop of Canterbury’s special envoy to the Middle East who was held in captivity by Hezbollah terrorists for 5 years, 4 of those years in solitary confinement. With no one to talk to most of that time with nothing to read, I can’t imagine how he survived! But he said even though he wouldn’t want to go through it again, he learnt a lot from it. He learned to keep hope alive. And the secret of that is to live for today. Not to think too far ahead, not to dwell too much on the difficulties of the past but to live for now. Good advice for us and also reminiscent of the end of the psalm. In Jesus we have a saviour who accepts us just as we are, one who doesn’t dwell on how we have messed things up in the past and who will never leave us or forsake us no matter what, and that is something to praise him for!!

**Let us pray:**

Risen Lord. Our Saviour and our rock. We pray today for those for whom today is another day of being isolated from family, from friends, from church life and daily routine. We stop to remember the empty cross, to ponder Christ’s love. The tomb stands empty to reflect on the hope that his rising brings. For God gave his one and only son to show his love for us and bring new life. Father we pray for all those who are sick, and those who have died through covid-19. For families grieving the loss of loved ones. May they know and feel the resurrection power of your love, filling them, comforting them, for you Lord are our strength and salvation. We pray for all those on the front line in the NHS, care homes and all who are risking their lives for us. May each and every one of us know and feel the truth that fills us each day with new hope and confidence, so whatever obstacles we may face and whatever may fight against us, there is nothing that will finally be able to thwart your purpose or deny your saving power. So we put our trust in you always, for you alone are able to do more than anyone could ever imagine. May each one of us have a deeper insight into all you have done for us in Christ, and a greater sense of all you have yet to do. To you be praise and glory now and forever more. Amen. **We say the Lord’s Prayer.**

*Please click on link:* [**https://youtu.be/FBppKZ0eJlQ**](https://youtu.be/FBppKZ0eJlQ)*God Bless & stay safe, Don & Jenny Spooner*