



UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

Brethren,

It is just over four months since I took the regrettable but inevitable step of suspending Freemasonry in response to the Coronavirus. Since then I have been enormously impressed by, and immensely proud of, the way in which our members, both at home and throughout our Districts, have manifested and even amplified the spirit and values of our ancient institution. In particular, you have demonstrated that our charitable instincts and actions are indeed the defining characteristic of a Freemason's heart. The ways that you have kept in touch with each other, caring especially for Brethren who were alone and vulnerable and, more widely, the ways in which you have selflessly helped and served your local communities, have greatly impressed many beyond the Craft itself.

I am sure that we all regret that we are not yet back to where we were before this virus struck. Not least, we so miss the camaraderie of dining together. It is a sad reality, however, that things will probably need to remain different to what we have been used to for some considerable time yet. You will know that UGLE has recently promulgated guidance for Lodges that wish to meet again and even to conduct ceremonies. I fully understand that some members will feel that the time is not yet right for them to return to Masonic labour, or that the necessary restrictions in ceremonial would detract too much from their impact. I am equally sure though, that they will join me in wishing all Brethren well as we chart our different journeys through this period, keeping the light of Freemasonry alive until we are all able to meet again.

We must have faith that this period will pass, as most surely it will. Freemasonry has weathered many storms and has evolved and adapted over the centuries. We will be the stronger for coming through this time of trial and it is that hope and confidence that now sustains us. The principles which have guided the many generations of Masons that have gone before us are just as true, just as relevant, and just as needed in today's world as ever they have been.

Brethren, I wish you a happy, healthy and enjoyable summer, and look forward to seeing you as soon as circumstances permit in the new season.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, K.G.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, K.G.,

Grand Master