



TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH WOKING
Weekly Newsletter
Sunday 12th July 2020

Message from Rev Jackie Case

Dear Friends,

Since I moved back into my own home in Reading, I seem to have spent a lot of time looking out of a large window onto the back garden. Even after the time I've spent on it in lockdown it is still very much a work in progress. At the moment I probably have the biggest bird feeder in the area – about 12 ft high and 6 ft wide – since I had the huge and invasive single leylandii topped off and all the side branches cut away, leaving a rather sculptural network of bare trunks. I am training climbers up it but for now the bottom half provides very good hanging space for a wide variety of feeders. I have learnt a lot from watching the birds attracted into the garden.

During a zoom meeting this morning I confess to being a bit distracted by a sparrow, hovering, hummingbird-like, inches from the window, picking off insects caught in a spider's web. It must have been quite difficult, but it kept coming back. Now I have just watched a magpie, after four attempts, manage to perch near enough to a dangling fat ball to have a quick peck of nourishment before falling away. What does this teach me about living the life of faith: to make the most of God-given opportunities wherever they appear; not to be put off by apparent difficulties if the fruits seem worthwhile; perseverance is a very important spiritual gift to cultivate. These lessons were never more relevant than as the church emerges from the severest restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Every Blessing
Jackie

Acts of Kindness

This week my boss reminded us that we should all act with kindness. My boss is aware of the difficulties that we have all been working under during lockdown. It is easy to have misunderstandings when communicating via email rather than face to face. One of our organisation's values is 'a spirit of generosity'. To support our staff and because we have been working hard and under pressure our

boss has given us a compulsory afternoon off at the end of July – which is most welcome and shows her spirit of generosity!

One of the aims of The Foundry and the work we are now doing supported by ROC (Redeeming Our Communities) is to bring the Woking community together and discover where the needs are. Coming out of the ROC conversation in March, which took place just before lockdown, were three main areas of need :- support for young people, support for people with mental health problems, and loneliness and social isolation. Three action groups have each taken on one of these areas of need.

At the moment, the three action groups are very much at the exploration/fact finding phase. This involves meeting key people in the council, finding out where support may come from and what work is already taking place. So, for instance, in the Youth group, which I co-chair, we are developing a survey of young people to find out where their major needs are as we come out of lockdown. Once we have a clearer idea of the most urgent needs we will be looking for where acts of kindness can support these needs. Please do continue to pray for the work of the action groups as we bring people together.

Ruth Taylor

A Word in Season 16 - Ordinary Time in an Extra-Ordinary Time

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8 NRSVA)

"We praise you, the God of our yesterdays. We praise you, the God who is here today. We praise you, our God, as tomorrow comes". (Matt Redman StF 241)

When I first started preaching, the Lectionary recorded the Sundays after Trinity Sunday as Trinity 1 to 23, then the Sunday before Advent. Today they are recorded as from the Sunday after Epiphany 1st– 6th in Ordinary Time, then Lent, Palm Sunday, Easter, Pentecost up to Trinity, then from the Sunday after Trinity as 11th in Ordinary Time to 33rd in Ordinary Time, up to the Sunday before Advent – The Feast of Christ the King. (I don't know what happened to the 7th, 8th and 9th in Ordinary Time!) It occurred to me as I started to plan my next preaching appointment via Zoom at Trinity on 26th July (17th in Ordinary Time) that recently we have been living through a significantly 'Extra-Ordinary' Time. Things have been way beyond the ordinary over many weeks now.

At last we are beginning to see some real light at the end of the tunnel but at what cost – thousands of

lives lost, hundreds of thousands locked into self-isolation, shielding, and many thousands of 'key workers' going beyond the expected to ensure that care and support, of all kinds, is provided for those who needed it. Quite rightly we have expressed our grateful thanks in many rounds of applause and reflective silences.

There have been times when we have all felt oppressed, depressed, restricted, limited, and lonely to various degrees. It is at these times we have been able to turn to the promises of the Gospel and those words in Hebrews. Although we may not have felt it, or perhaps doubted it, yet we have been able to recognise that Jesus has been with us throughout this time. God, the Holy Spirit, has always been with us as the Comforter. Our Lord of Yesterday, is with us today, and will be with us tomorrow, as we tread the difficult path out of the pandemic. The going will not be easy, as we have seen there have already been spikes of increased infection. We will need to heed the advice and tread very carefully so as not to jeopardise the slow, but steady progress, toward the 'new' normality. To progress with hope towards an 'ordinary time'.

As God's church here at Trinity we have been called to use different forms of worship, to hold the sick and grieving in our prayers, to undertake small, but significant steps, to support and care for our neighbours. As we now begin to think and talk about the future for our congregation and buildings, and how God wants us to use the experiences we have lived through to ensure the Gospel of love, salvation, and redemption is proclaimed to the world, we have the promise of Hebrews that Jesus will go with us into the future. However, the question I find myself asking is, will I have the faith to go with Jesus?

Things will be different, even vastly different. Our 'comfortable' past has gone, we have moved on. Jesus is calling us to look forward, taking our love and service where our Lord calls. Like Moses, Elijah, David, Ruth, Nehemiah, Mary, Joseph, Peter, John, Philip, Stephen, Paul, Ananias, Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Lydia, Aquila and Priscilla; will we take our faith and love for Jesus and step out to respond? To respond in faith, as these, 'ordinary' people did, and follow our Lord into the relative unknown and accept the challenges of the future? Reflecting on Jackie's words in a recent Newsletter, "Jesus has no body, hands, feet or voice but ours – yours and mine".

As Jesus said to his disciples,
"Go to the lost, confused people right here in the neighbourhood. Tell them that God's kingdom is here. Don't think you have to put on a fund-raising

campaign before you start. You don't need a lot of equipment; you are the equipment. Don't worry about what you will say or how you will say it. The right words will be there; the Holy Spirit will be there and supply the words". (Matthew 10:7-20 *The Message*, abridged)

Are we prepared to respond to that call? And say in the words of Charles Wesley (*StF 546, H&P 788*) ...

"Behold your servant, Lord! I wait your guiding eye to feel, to hear and keep your every word, to prove and do your perfect will. Joyful from my own works to cease, glad to fulfil all righteousness.

Me if your grace vouchsafe to use, meanest of all your creatures, me, the deed, the time, the manner choose. Let all my fruit be found of you, let all my works in you be wrought, by you to full perfection brought.

My every weak though good design overrule or change, as seems meet. Jesus, let all my works be yours! Your work, O Lord, is all complete, and pleasing in the Father's sight; you only have done all things right.

Here then to you your own I leave, mould as you will your passive clay; but let me all your stamp receive, let me all your words obey, serve with a single heart and eye and to you glory live and die".

Remembering the second part of Matt Redman's refrain (*StF 241*) ...

"We thank you God, for grace in our yesterdays, for peace in our hearts today, for our joy as tomorrow comes. We will trust you God.

You're always closer than we know, always more involved and in control.

We will trust our lives to you – the One who was and is and is to come".

God bless us all this week.

Graham Warr

Excerpt from Rev Dave Faulkner's pastoral message to the Circuit this week. By way of explanation, Dave is acting Superintendent Minister whilst Keith is on holiday.

Dear Friends,

The lockdown has affected people in different ways. Introverted people, who are energised in solitude and who find socialising tiring, have perhaps been the folk who have most easily adapted. Some have thrived and found this was a crisis where their personality traits could be deployed for the common good. Perhaps in future we will value these people more, rather than labelling them 'aloof'. Extraverts, on the other hand, who are energised by meeting people

and who find solitude draining, have had a hard time. Some have reported symptoms of depression. In them and others there may be long-term ongoing pastoral needs a result.

Likewise, we are only beginning to glimpse signs of the future effects on our wider society. Home working will doubtless play a bigger part in the world of work, even if it is more easily utilised for white collar and middle-class jobs. Already I hear stories of employers reconfiguring offices with workstations spaced further apart, and likely rotas of who will be in the office when, rather than everybody being there together Monday to Friday.

Other industries may be less fortunate. I write on the day Pret A Manger has announced job cuts (where will I get my Chicken Caesar baguette and Cinnamon Danish in future?) and the arts and entertainments industries are being offered financial assistance but with no clear sign when they can offer live shows again.

The Church will not remain untouched, either. The Gospel may not change because God's character is unchanging, but if the message is unaltered, our methods may not be.

While we wait for some of our cherished practices to return once the virus has been sufficiently suppressed in our society, it would be good to concentrate on valuing the things we do have rather than bemoaning what we don't have. After all, what we do have is all given to us by God. These things we do have are his gifts to us and therefore should be treasured.

Allow me an illustration from my hobby of photography. People ask, 'What is the best camera to buy?' and that's a bad question, because some are better for sports action and journalism, some are better for landscapes, some for portraits, and so on. But even without that, it's a common response among photographers to say that 'The best camera is the one you have with you.' Use whatever is to hand and use it well! There is a time to be content and to use what you have skilfully. Only as your skill develops, may it be worth buying a better camera. And something like that is important for us as Christians.

Paul told Timothy that 'godliness with contentment is great gain' (1 Timothy 6:6) and while we don't have all the resources we would love to have; this may be an important Christian principle for us to remember and to live out. Wouldn't it also make a good witness in a society that never seems to think it has enough? And if the coronavirus and possibly a

no-deal Brexit lead our nation into a severe recession, it may be even more important than we think now.

Every blessing in Christ,
Dave Faulkner

'Lockdown in the Lane'

We live in a small enclave of seven houses in Carters Lane. Some years ago, we formed a Neighbourhood Watch including the three properties at the start of the Lane and the two at the far end near the old palace. Apart from its obvious purpose this has been a vehicle to share occasional events like street parties but nothing more.

Opposite us live Simon and Chevaun who both have a background in show business - Simon is a trained singer and now runs a hospitality company and Chevaun has sung and danced in West End shows. They have three young children, the oldest of whom (at 13) has already landed roles as a child actor. On the first Saturday of lockdown Chevaun sent a message round to say that at 7pm the children would like to give a little concert for the residents. It was a fine evening and when we got out to our gate, we could see they had set up a microphone, speaker and iPad on a music stand. At least four other sets of neighbours came and stood at their gates and we were entertained to half an hour's entertainment. The songs were contemporary pop or show songs, all performed to a high standard and to great acclaim. The children are talented and look capable of following in Mum and Dad's footsteps.

The following Saturday the event was repeated and has been every week until the end of June when they decided that, with lockdown easing, it was time to finish. Only one week was the concert abandoned because of rain. Each time there has been an audience made up of the residents of at least five of the houses, and sometimes boosted by passers-by (Carters Lane being a public footpath). On VE Day we held a street party but still the concert took place the following evening.

All of this, together with Thursday night clapping, has meant that lockdown has enabled us to come much closer together as a community. We established a WhatsApp group and there is regular messaging, ranging from offers of garden veg to concerns about a rave on the golf course. By being in closer contact we can offer support where it is needed. All of this from the simple enthusiasm of three children to sing to others!

This story is not unique - many people will have similar experiences, but for Daphne and me it has been a

powerful illustration of the good that can emerge from difficult and apparently unpromising circumstances.

David Lander

Did you get the answers right to Valerie's Quiz last week?

- Who was prime minister of Britain from 1834- 35 and 1841 – 46? *Sir Robert Peel*
- Where is the Gluteus Maximus in our body? *In your bottom*
- Word that begins with HE and ends with HE? *Heartache and headache*
- Which is the largest of the Windward Islands? *Dominica*
- What kind of bird is a Kite? *Bird of prey*
- Where does The Sargasso Sea get its name from? *From the seaweed that floats on its surface*
- Another name for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints? *Mormon*
- Which is Canada's second largest city and chief port? *Montreal*
- A Swiss painter and graphic artist 1879- 1940 *Paul Klee*
- When was the Falkland's War? *April – June 1982*
- Who wrote the novel Les Misérables? *Victor Hugo*
- From what flower does saffron come from? *Perennial crocus*
- What is a palindrome? *A word spelt the same forwards and backwards e.g. civic*
- Who commissioned the Doomsday Book? *William the Conqueror*
- What instrument was played by the late Jacqueline du Pre? *Cello*

Good luck with this week's questions 😊

1. Who wrote the book *The Phantom of the Opera*?
2. Where are the Phi Phi Islands?
3. What is the protein found in bones and tendons that can be turned into gelatin?
4. Which is the second largest of the Great Lakes in North America?
5. What is the scale measuring the force of a hurricane?
6. Where in the body is the Renal Artery?
7. What is special about a marsupial?
8. What is an Arroyo?
9. Where was the first wheel reported to have been created?
10. What is a bloater?
11. What noble gas was discovered in 1861 and has the chemical symbol He?

12. Where was the birthplace of Rembrandt?
13. What is the capitol of Myanmar?
14. Who was Mr Teasy Weasy?
15. What is a stroboscope?

Sculpture depicting Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* painting



Photo taken by Graham Warr