

GLAZEBURY METHODIST CHURCH

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Bible readings for Sunday, 12 July – Genesis 25; 19-34, Psalm 119: 105-112, Romans: 8:1-11 and Matthew 13:1-0 and 18-23

REV ANDREW'S MESSAGE –

Change – The Thing We Mostly Get Wrong

“The possibility of transformation is the essence of hope.”

The words above written by John Ortberg state a deeply pragmatic and spiritual truth. The world is stacked with organisations, nations and churches that know they need to change but rarely achieve the kind of changes they envisage. Indeed, most of the changes that happen are more often the outcome of unmanageable and external factors (e.g. - a pandemic!) than the careful planning and wise delivery of change. How many churches would have resorted to digital content were it not for the current crisis? How many will keep going with digital content when it is safe to return to services-as-usual?

Of course, there is truth in the adage that insanity is... "doing the same old things and expecting different outcomes." A harsher but realistic tweak to that popular slogan would be... "retaining the same old people and expecting different outcomes." It turns out that too many in leadership positions talk a good game when it comes to change oversight, but in the end they can be the most resistant to critical change or cannot deliver such change in a way that takes their people with them.

I write this in the certain knowledge that change will come about soon enough for this Circuit and many circuits across the connexion as Presbyters move from one station to another, bringing and taking with them their own individual and personal gifts and graces. They move into circuits that usually have the same leadership, Circuit and church Stewards that served their predecessor – and that can be a good thing, it can also be disastrous! For the new presbyter comes, hopefully, with new ideas and styles, hopes and dreams. – Are the incumbent 'teams' that they inherit sufficiently nimble enough to embrace the potential change and enthusiasm that comes with the new Presbyter, or are they hoping to maintain the status quo – you're new and passing through yet we remain!

Jesus went to the shore of the Sea of Galilee, the crowds followed him, he got into a boat and pushed off from the shore, then using the 'amphitheatre effect' that it provided he addressed the crowds with the parable of the Sower.

And like other parables that Matthew groups together, they look ahead to warning of a great coming judgment, in which God will establish the kingdom once and for all by rooting out all wickedness. of course most of Jesus hearers knew that was God's plan, the judgement, didn't they long for that day – well yes they did, and they didn't need to go and stand beside a lake to hear someone saying it.

They came for a quite different reason; they came because they thought it was already about to happen and Jesus was part of it. They probably hoped that he would show them and tell them how they may be able to help in the process. No doubt they had plenty of ideas of military revolution!

Like a farmer starting a new agricultural year, God will sow his crops that would bring in the harvest, and whatever else they heard that day, they couldn't miss the underlying meaning.

Jesus is saying, something along the lines; what you have been waiting for, longing for, and praying for is really coming true. I'm here to make it happen. It may not be easy to understand, but it doesn't mean that it's not true. Stick with me, listen to me!

Presbyters come and go, appointed by Conference to serve the Circuit, to serve God and to serve Christ. To remind the people of God that we are living in the Kingdom and we have a responsibility to work with God to help build his Kingdom, and that whilst we all know the story, we have sometimes forgotten the mission.

What this period of 'pandemic' and closed churches has taught us is that the building is not essential to mission. I've been delighted to hear of good works, from so many of you, an incredible number of telephone calls, not just cursory calls but deep conversations; or the conversations that are being had when notice sheets are hand delivered. Offers of food cooking and delivery, collection of medications, production of face masks and a whole host of other meaningful activities, for which I thank you. In the wider church, volunteers with food banks have soared to meet the increased demand and need for food, work within schools that deal with 'holiday hunger' and so the list goes on. The challenge is to keep it going once we reopen our buildings.

Jesus attended the Synagogue, he was after all a Rabbi, a teacher, he certainly attended the Synagogue for prayer and worship – but it was in the streets, by the lakeside, on the mountain, in the home, inns and olive groves that he taught the Kingdom.

"Christianity isn't about cosy little lessons to make us feel better. It's about what God is doing in the world, what he's already done in Jesus and what he wants to do through us today. What sort of stories ought we be telling to get people to listen"? (Tom Wright)

What sort of action do we need to be doing to reach those on the margins of life and society? Where can we tell those stories so that people will hear, like the crowds on the lakeside – where is our lakeside because it's not inside our churches.

Bob Dylan, sung a song around the time of Kennedy's assassination and in the background of the civil rights movement -

Come senators, congressmen, please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway, don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt will be he who has stalled
The battle outside ragin'
Will soon shake your windows and rattle your walls
For the times, they are a-changin'

The times are a changing, the question is as ever, are you am I, are we, going to be players in God's plan for the Kingdom, or are we standing in the door and blocking up the hall, while the battle outside is raging?

Garden Communions

I have taken delivery of some individual communion wine and wafer sets. Delia has arranged for us to attend household gardens, if you've not been contacted and would like to receive communion before I move, then please contact Delia, who will confirm your time and place. *Rev Andrew*



EMAIL NEWS SHEET

We have set up a 'Google Groups' for the circulation of the weekly news sheet. We will have sent it to you via Google and would ask you to check your spam and junk email and find it there.

From thereon it will only come via Google so keep an eye on your junk mail just in case.

If you have received this in the post, and would like to receive it via email then please let me know. Thanks *Christine*.

SHARING SUNDAY WORSHIP

We are sharing our Sunday Service over the telephone. Most weeks we have over 180 callers from across the Leigh & Hindley and Liverpool North Circuits.

If you would like to listen in, at 10.30am on Sunday:

Dial **020 3478 5289** on your telephone,

When it asks for the access code, enter **145 404 825#**.

(this number will be the same each week)

When it asks for your ID, press #

FOR THOSE THAT LISTEN TO THE SUNDAY SERVICE AND EVEN TO THE PODCASTS. IF YOU HAVE NOT GOT A SINGING THE FAITH HYMN BOOK AT HOME - SO THAT YOU CAN SING ALONG - PLEASE LET ME KNOW AND I WILL ARRANGE FOR YOU TO RECEIVE ONE

Christine Taylor Mobile: 07801 252625 or email - christine.arran4872@aol.com

PODCASTS

Regular podcasts from Rev Viv can be found on: <https://soundcloud.com/user-476066366> . I send these out daily to those who receive notice sheets by email each week. If you know of anyone who would like to receive them, please let me have their email address and I will include them in the distribution. *Christine Taylor*

FEELING THE EFFECTS OF 'LOCKDOWN'? If you are on your own, or not, and are feeling the effects of the 'lockdown' then phone your Pastoral Visitor for a chat.

IF YOU ARE not a member of church and need to talk please ring Rev Andrew Bradley or Delia Caswell on the phone numbers at the top of the first page of this news sheet.

Prayer by Rob Russell before he went into hospital - Prayers for Daily Living 2 Can I get through each day without you Lord?

Can I get through each day without you Lord?

I don't think I can.

In fact, I know I can't. I need your presence every day.

Well really, I need you every minute of every hour.

These last few months have been so strange and challenging.
I have experienced so many different emotions.
At times I have felt frustrated; fed-up; annoyed; scared and a sense of deep, deep sadness.
But at other times I have felt uplifted; inspired and challenged.
I have listened to music. I have been reminded of scripture. I have heard prayers, testimonies and reflections. I have shared in the news of family; friend and stranger.
I have been connected with hundreds of people on a daily basis.
And I have done all this without ever leaving my home.
Lord, these experiences have given me time that I don't always take in my normal day to day routine.
It has allowed me time to think about what is important in my life.
It has allowed me time to find new pastimes and reacquaint myself with favourite hobbies.
I have had time to reflect and think about myself and about the people around me.
I have learnt so much about my relationships with the people in my life.
Most of all I have learnt a lot about my relationship with you.
As I reflect on the past few weeks, the word love comes to mind and it binds all of my experiences together.
Your love for me is the source of energy that has kept me going.
Love links together the network of friends that you have helped me to create and that provides the tangible support I need.
Love is woven into every conversation I have; every gift I receive; every telephone call I make and receive; every email I send and read.
In fact everything Lord that I do and say is surrounded with your love.
I am not sure what the future is Lord.
I am not sure what you have planned for me.
But I can see a sunrise.
I can see the bright light of your hope shining.
Sometimes it feels a bit distant and maybe a little blurry.
But I can see the hope of being able to reconnect with people in the old familiar ways.
I just have to be patient and wait until it is safe for me and for all my friends and family.
In the meantime, Lord, stay with me. Keep me safe. Keep speaking to me. Wrap your arms around me and never let me go. Because I need you Lord and I need your love and the love of my friends and family this day and always.
Amen.

Our allotment needs attention! - If anyone, who is able to go out, is feeling a bit at a loss of what to do!!! Why don't you think of giving the church allotment (opposite Bents) a little attention? All help would be appreciated. Thank you to Aaron and Alan for their on-going caring of the allotment. If you are interested please contact Alan Crozier on his email address – alancpds@hotmail.com. Or ring me (Christine Taylor) on my mobile below.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING TO THE NEWS SHEET PLEASE CONTACT ME ON EMAIL BY WEDNESDAY OF EACH WEEK: christine.arran4872@aol.com or phone me on Mobile: 07801252625.