

Vol: 43 - No 31

Sunday 2nd May 2021

5th Sunday of Easter

Dear Friends at TaB

It was a real joy to share in worship with you last Sunday. Of course, we weren't able to socialise very much, but I came away with the certainty that as a Church you were in good heart and looking forward to being able to worship more fully over the coming months.

These past months have been exceedingly difficult for us all, but we thank God that our prayers have been answered and vaccines have been developed to provide a real opportunity for us to overcome this pandemic. Our thoughts and prayers are very much centred upon India. As we see the suffering and heartache in that huge nation it re-emphasises that we are one race, one people, all children of God. We must continue to urge our leaders to share more fully with those parts of the world that do not have access to the medical care and vaccines that we have here in Britain.

This past year has also helped us come to a deeper understanding of our inter-connectedness as churches in the New River circuit. The weekly online worship each Sunday has been really appreciated by hundreds of people across the circuit and around the world, as have the daily prayers and Thought for the Day videos. We have met as the circuit for an Advent course and more recently a Lenten Sunday evening series which has helped those who have joined on zoom to get to know others from the different churches. It is our prayer that this newfound sense of circuit will continue in the years ahead. This is the vision that was shared recently at our Circuit Meeting in a paper "One church, one circuit" _that you will hopefully discuss at TaB looking at how we can pool our resources and work more easily as one unit across our nine church sites.

I do wonder what the future will be like in a year's time. Will all our members and friends have returned to worship with us, or will we find some prefer now to stay at home and worship online? Some people may have found other churches in which to worship or have really struggled with faith and the virus and no longer believe. We will need to work together to encourage 'our people' to not only return but to do so with a new commitment to serve God. These past thirteen months have provided us with so many new opportunities and we must grasp them. This is why we are running the Sunday evening course "Everyone an Evangelist" so as to equip us....and it is not too late to join, please talk to the Rev Sam.

As we enter this new month of May it is full of opportunities to celebrate, especially the gift of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost Sunday is the 23rd May, the birthday of the Church. In the evening, our own Rev Matt will be sharing in the London District Testimony Service (on zoom) where he and others will share their faith story before their ordination the following month. Then the next day, the 24th May, is Wesley's Day when it is an opportunity to remind ourselves why we are Methodists and to listen again to the way God can use us in the years ahead.

So let us rejoice that God has watched over us, held us and kept us for this moment when together, in the power of the Spirit, we can share the love and grace of Jesus Christ with one another and all those we encounter day by day.

Every blessing
Stephen Poxton
Circuit Superintendent

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LECTIONARY REFLECTION

By Suzy Godfrey

Acts 8 26-40, Psalm 22, 25-32 , 1 John 4, 7-21, John 15 1-8

Writing the lectionary notes is a joy and a privilege. It has taken me on a journey of exploration through the bible that has led to some very interesting discoveries. Today, using the modern research tool of the internet, I stumbled across John Wesley's notes. I was surprised to find these freely available online, not just in a dusty book in a university library or for sale in a specialist book shop. What a great resource our founder has left us! And I was even more surprised to read how relevant John Wesley's words are to our current situation.

TaB has embarked on a journey, of preparing each of us, working together and as individuals, to become evangelists, to spread the Good News of God's love revealed through Christ. Let me quote just some of the comments on today's familiar story of evangelism: Phillip and the Ethiopian, Acts ch 8, v 26-40.

Note 28. Sitting in his chariot, he read the Prophet Isaiah - God meeteth those that remember him in his ways. It is good to read, hear, seek information even in a journey. Why should we not redeem all our time?

Note 30. And Philip running to him, said, Understandest thou what thou readest? - He did not begin about the weather, news, or the like. In speaking for God, we may frequently come to the point at once, without circumlocution.

Note 32. The portion of Scripture - By reading that very chapter, the fifty-third of Isaiah, many Jews, yea, and atheists, have been converted. Some of them history records. God knoweth them all.

Note 33.b. And who shall declare, or count his generation - That is, who can number his seed, (Isaiah 53, 10) which he hath purchased by laying down his life? (Suzy: Who can number His followers, brought into a relationship with God through Christ).

Note 36. And as they went on the way they came to a certain water - Thus, even the circumstances of the journey were under the direction of God. The kingdom of God suits itself to external circumstances, without any violence, as air yields to all bodies, and yet pervades all.

The story continues with Philip baptising the Ethiopian. No need for a 6-week study course or a traditional ceremony in front of specially invited guests. Just the recognition of God sending Christ and a belief in His saving grace, reinforced by a physical demonstration of being washed clean, ready to start a new life.

I am particularly struck by the idea that we should use our time on journeys to read, hear and seek information. On our long drive to Cornwall this weekend, I will definitely do that! But more importantly, perhaps we should all note what is said about coming to the point. There are times to be alongside someone, to quietly, gradually, build a relationship before speaking about our faith but there may be times to cut through the small talk and challenge.

Let us pray for the insight and judgement to know which is the best approach in our situations.

The three other bible passages chosen for today link to the story from Acts: Psalm 22, 25-32

"future generations will be told about the Lord, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it"

John's first letter, Chapter 4, 7-21 *"We have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world..."* God abides in those who do confess that Jesus is the Son of God and they abide in Him.

And these words of Jesus from John's Gospel Chapter 15, 1-8: *"Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."*

So, in recognition that we can do nothing unless we abide in Christ, let us give thanks for His loving strength and pray for His guidance, that we, like Philip, may bring others to a relationship with God.

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PASTORAL



If you would like news items, prayer requests and or celebrations to be included in the Newsnotes
Please send an email to revsam@mail.com before 6.00pm every Wednesday.
Pastoral Sec. Tony Addo – Anthony.addo54@gmail.com

Father God we thank and praise you for the assurance that we can take all our care worry and anxiety to you in prayer.

Dear Lord we pray for the people of India who are suffering from lack of oxygen due to the rapid increase in 'covid-19 cases. May the Lord enable the health workers to do their work. We also pray for the people in Israel after the news of the stampede that took place during a time of festivities. May the Lord comfort the dying and suffering of the families.

God, this week we lift up the people of TaB, the families, friends and those who have asked us to pray for them. Help them to find ways to know that you love us all and consider each one of us important and a part of your creation. Pour into our lives your Holy Spirit to take away our worries, sickness and fear.

Compassionate God we ask for your comfort and healing touch for all those who are in need of your Grace, Mercy and Healing. For those undergoing tests or waiting for test results, including those waiting hospital appointments. We bring before you Yvonne Obeng who is hospitalised at present.

Father God we especially bring before you: **Elizabeth Arnold, Barbara Briggs, Iris Branch, Joyce Beaumont, Christina Cabrera, Dorothy Campbell, Yvonne Jardine, Rhona Knight, Charles and Elizabeth Dadey, Hope Siwela, Victoria Sibanda, Elizabeth Takaedza, Catherine Smith, Nick** (friend of Frances Thomas) **Christine** (Linda Dawson's sister)

Loving Father we pray that they will feel your loving arms enfolding them with the reassurances that your grace is sufficient to see them through all their difficulties.

Father we Stand in the gap for families who are bereaved remembering, Steve & Frances for their loss of an Aunt, the families of Bob Barker; Barbara McNally; Suzy and Peter Godfrey for the loss of Diane Howard (Peter's sister)

We pray for Franklyn and the rest of Cathy Riley's family that the Lord strengthen and comfort them as they prepare for her funeral on Wednesday 5th May.



Birthdays & Anniversaries



Happy Birthday to our friends who may be celebrating a birthday this week

Carlette Griffiths 2nd May
Beverley Watkins 4th May
Francis Branch-Thomas 6th May

May God grant you overflowing joy, abundant opportunities, and a shower of blessings. Happy Birthday!

To all who have Anniversaries this week.

Steve and Frances Thomas
On 28th April – 21 years!
Congratulations!!!

May your marriage continue to be blessed with love, joy and companionship all the days of your life

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Church News and Centre Plus

During this Lockdown period, Trinity at Bowes is open for worship in person, at 10:30 am every Sunday; however, Circuit worship will still be taking place through the New River Methodist Circuit - Online Church.

Available on Facebook OR search You Tube for New River Methodist Circuit. Alternatively, you can use the link on our website's Home page of <http://trinityatbowes.co.uk>

Streaming Schedule for New River Methodist Circuit Online Church

Day/(s)	Time	Online Event
Monday - Saturday	8.00 am	Thought for the Day <i>Pre-recorded</i>
Monday - Saturday	9.00 am	Morning Prayers <i>Live</i>
Saturday	10.30 am	Virtual Coffee Morning <i>Live</i>
Sunday	10.30 am	Sunday Circuit Service <i>Pre-recorded</i>

TaB church: Worship on Sundays 10:30 am

Wednesdays at 5 pm-

Join via Zoom

Meeting ID: 992 829 7354 - Passcode: 518822

TaB Church Face Book: "Like" our Facebook Page and receive regular inspirational updates

TaB Sunday School Resources: Updated every Saturday and ready for use from the following Sunday

TaB Bank Account Details: Should you wish to make an offertory or a donation: our details are:

Account Name: Trinity at Bowes Methodist Church:

Account no: 92883701 **Sort Code:** 09-01-55

Please ensure you use your name as the payment reference

Support Captain Tom 100
captaintom100.com



Remembering our friends and loved ones



Donations which would have gone to the flower fund, as we are not in the Church building will be used instead for the church garden project. Please send payment to the Tab bank account detailed above. With a reference "Garden".

We remember:

Cathey Riley & Barbara McNally (previously Lewent)

Please let Peter Godfrey know if there are dearly departed loved ones that you would want remembered.

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