



Bognor Regis Methodist Church

Journeying with God

Forming
Community

Celebrating
Faith

Deepening
Discipleship

Gazette

April / May 2021

EDITORS NOTE: Digital Version does not follow the same formatting as the printed version.

Faithful in the wilderness...

Over the last 12 months, God has given me much strength and comfort through reading scripture. The stories scripture retells often explore human experience of God in light of crisis or uncertainty. From the panic of the Israelites as Goliath stood before them, to the crisis Ruth and Naomi faced through grief and famine – scripture’s story proclaims the truth of a faithful God in all seasons of life.

One of the stories I’ve read and found most fruitful spiritually is the story of the Israelites after escaping Egypt, passing through the red sea, and then spending 40 years in the desert (read all of Exodus!). Every aspect of the communal life together was changed as a result of their Exodus and passing through the waters.

Despite the struggle this community that God calls ‘mine’ faced, despite their sometimes complaining, despite their taking matters into their own hands and making a golden calf, God was faithful and continued to be faithful to them:

“I am the LORD, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment.” Exodus 6:7, NRSV

-3-

PTO

2021 began with as much uncertainty as 2020 ended with. As I write (on 16th Feb) we know little of what the next few weeks, let alone months, will look like. By the time you read this, perhaps next week’s long awaited ‘road map’ will begin to give us some idea, at least, of the sort of terrain we will be travelling on.

But no matter what comes, there is one truth we can depend upon – that our changeless God is as faithful to us now as He has always been – and despite our uncertainty and worries about the future, God will continue to be faithful to us.

As always, while restrictions distance us, you are regularly in my thoughts and prayers. If you find yourself in need of a conversation about life, faith, uncertainties we face, or would like me to pray for you, or even with you over the phone, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

In Peace and Hope for the weeks ahead, Dan

Faith doesn’t always take you out of the problem,
Faith takes you through the problem.

Faith doesn’t always take away the pain,
Faith gives you the ability to handle the pain.

Faith doesn’t always take you out of the storm,
Faith calms you in the midst of the storm.

3am thoughts

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BODY?

Norman Warren in his book 'What's the point' asks "*What happened to the body of Jesus?*"

- Did the Jewish or Roman authorities take the body?
- Did the friends of Jesus take the body?

If the body of Jesus was not taken by his enemies or his friends, there can only be one possible answer to the question.

God raised Jesus from the dead.

Nothing else explains the many appearances of Jesus. Sometimes it was to a single person, sometimes to twos and threes, sometimes to the eleven disciples, sometimes to crowds, even to 500 all at once. These appearances cannot simply be explained as hallucinations.

He met them, talked with them, even ate with them. They could see him and touch him. He was the same Jesus they had seen dying on the cross. The marks of that terrible death were still there.

He was the same, yet different.

He now had a resurrection body, not subject to time and space.

CJW

Easter greetings to you all. The Easter stories of Jesus all point to or remind us of God. I pray for you all, good health and hope. Peace, **Tony B**

With so many difficulties surrounding us all at the moment, it is good that certain things are surviving. One example is our Church Gazette. Those producing it, together with contributors, earnestly hope it is a hopeful sign. Please excuse the repeat of the word **hope**, but surely we must all cling to that. Hope that we will again be able to live and enjoy our wonderful world, bequeathed to us by God.

My main thoughts this time could be construed as cheating somewhat, but I want to share an item from The Upper Room, a daily bible reading booklet. I hope (again!) you agree it is very apt and uplifting.

First the suggested reading, headed in my Good News Bible “The goodness of God” Psalm 36:5-9. Then the following article, submitted by Adam Weber from South Dakota U.S.

“When the future seems uncertain, I find it helpful to remind myself of three of God’s promises from scripture.

- **First, God’s love is constant.** Work situations, relationships, etc., can change in a moment, but God offers limitless, unending love.
- **Second, His protection is certain.** He is our shelter and protection. We will have tests and troubles, but we can be sure He remains by our side throughout whatever befalls us.
- **Third, we can count on God’s provision.** Our Heavenly Father knows our needs and will provide.”

It is in our hearts to do whatever we can to promote and ensure those provisions are shared equally and fairly. Supporting **Methodist World Mission** is a sure way of helping those people suffering drought and famine abroad. If you would like any information about how we support the important work of **MWM**, please contact Anita Hayward 01243 826425. As a Church we also support **Mission in Britain** and Janet Tapping 01243 824414 would be pleased to talk to you about their work and how you can support them.

Back to Upper Room.....amid changing circumstances, we can hold on to God’s unchanging promises.

Thought for the day

“Even in my uncertainty, God is faithful.”

It has helped me, and I pray it helps you also. God be with us all especially the many now in mourning, worldwide.

JANET TAPPING

COG's

Just over 10 years ago when the Church was in a dire state financially, some of us decided to attempt some fundraising, with the emphasis being on fun.

The Whist Club had already started, and we realised that we were welcoming people from a much wider area than expected. So the Community Outreach Group was formed. The regular events were:

- The Whist club
- Monthly lunches preceded by a coffee morning, with a cake stall and sales table
- Quiz nights
- Musical afternoons with Michael Wooldridge.
- Annual flower festivals.

Because we were able to have a new kitchen built which was registered, we were given a five star food distribution certificate, which enabled us to attract many more hirers than we had had in the past.

I think the team will agree with me that the biggest success of COG's is that we made many new good friends (some from as far away as Portchester).

At the moment COG's obviously is no more, and we agreed to close our bank account and donate all the remaining money to the Church.

Apart from the lovely new friends we have made we must thank all our supporters for 10 years of fun and the satisfaction that we were helping the Church at the same time.

Now I must mention some of our friends that we have lost during the lock down:-

Irene who supported all events with her quiet enthusiasm and her lovely smile;

Doreen who was always ready to do anything she could to help in anyway;

Ron who always enjoyed the events and who appeared to be quite a serious 'thinker' until you got to know him and see his wicked sense of humour;

Janet a close friend of Margaret who was just getting to know us all when she was taken ill;

George who used to come in his wheelchair. Although he was really disabled by Parkinson's disease, his smile could light up the hall.

Iris who was married to Ron, died suddenly after being in hospital for only a day (not from Covid). Ron, her husband who suffers from Parkinson's, is coping with the help of his daughter.

God bless them all.

Thank you all for many happy memories. We don't know what the future holds, but hopefully *"we'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when"*. Val

To all parents, grandparents, aunts & uncles.....

Don't feel sorry for, or fear for, your children because the world they are going to grow up in is not what it used to be. God created them and called them for the exact moment in time that they're in.

Their life wasn't a coincidence or an accident.

Raise them up to know the power they walk in as children of God. Train them up in the authority of His Word. Teach them to walk in faith knowing that God is in control. Empower them to know they can change the world. Don't teach them to be fearful and disheartened by the state of the world but hopeful that they can do something about it. Every person in all of history has been placed in the time that they were in because of God's sovereign plan.

He knew Daniel could handle the lions' den.

He knew David could handle Goliath.

He knew Esther could handle Haman.

He knew Peter could handle persecution.

He knows that your child can handle whatever challenge they face in their life. He created them specifically for it!

Don't be scared for your children, but be *honoured* that God chose YOU to parent them! Teach them God's love and to share it with everyone!

Rise up to the challenge.

Raise Daniels, Davids, Esthers and Peters!

God isn't scratching His head wondering what He's going to do with this mess of a world. He's raising up an army to drive back the darkness and make Him known all over the earth!!!

Don't let your fear steal the greatness God placed in them. Of course it's hard to imagine them as anything besides our sweet little babies, and we just want to protect them from anything that could ever be hard on them, but they were born for such a time as this!

God doesn't make mistakes. We are raising little warriors!

AMEN

If everyone on the planet stayed away from each other for a couple of weeks, wouldn't the common cold be wiped out?

This question was raised in a book 'What If' by Randall Munroe, kindly given to me as a present at Christmas, perhaps to prevent me from keep asking "how long would it take a number 700 bus with 20 BRMC Whist Club members aboard to travel to the moon from Earth and how much would it cost each passenger?" The last question is easy to reply. The answer is nothing as they would have their bus passes!

So, by transposing the question in the book to our current pandemic to read "..... wouldn't the covid virus be wiped out...", a few hints emerge as it relates to the Covid-19 virus. The author advised that "the common cold is caused by a variety of viruses but rhinoviruses are the most common culprit. These viruses take over the cells in your nose and throat and use them to produce more viruses". "If Sarah (who asked the question) put us all in quarantine, the cold viruses (*and the covid virus*) we carry would have no fresh hosts to run to." So would a worldwide quarantine be effective?

The book's author suggests that if we divided up the world's land area evenly, there's enough room for each of us to have a little over 2 hectares -or 4.942 acres - with the nearest person some 77 metres away [a distance from BRMC to the old post office in the High Street]. A more practical solution the author recommends would be to give everyone biological suits. "That way, we could walk around and interact, even allowing some normal economic activity to continue"

CJW

From the Organ Bench

The Masked Organist of BRMC writes:

The hymn tune St Denio, originally a Welsh secular ballad "Can mlynedd i nawr" ("A Hundred Years from Now"), was first used for religious purposes in a Welsh hymnal of around 1840 and has become firmly associated with Walter Chambers Smith's verses 'Immortal, Invisible, God only Wise.' We have been challenged to find new ways to worship together this last year, so here is my 2021 update version, offered for all those grappling with the complexities of computer communications!

Church portal's invisible! I'm not tech-wise.
Website's inaccessible, hid from my eyes.
Most stressing, laborious, and in all my days
Whoever would think that we'd download e-Praise?

Undoing, unmuting, still silent as night,
Nor cutting, nor pasting, I can't get this right.
It's like climbing mountains! High soaring above
The Cloud's storing fountains of hymns that we love.

On smart phones and PCs, device great or small,
Our livestreaming Rev Dan - can't hear him at all.
I've 'logged off' then 'logged on' – ah, now I can see!
(You don't get this hassle on the BBC).

Great change to our worship, we're seen in new light,
(Just look at Maud's curtains, well aren't they a fright!)
We're passing the peace online from room to room,
With décors displayed to the world, thanks to Zoom.

This new byte-size worship, it's hard to adjust
When you're techno-phobic, but try it I must.
My internet's gone down, Lord help us to see,
Our broadband may perish, but **NAUGHT CHANGETH THEE.**

WORDS THAT MAY COMFORT....

THE MUSIC YOU MAY KNOW!

Days of darkness still come o'er me, Sorrow's paths I often tread;
But the Saviour still is with me, By His hand I'm safely led

[All together, now]

**Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me-
sing it with the saints in glory, gathered by the crystal sea.**

When peace like a river, attended my way, when sorrows like sea billows roar.
Whatever my lot, thou has taught me to say,

[All together, now]

it is well, it is well with my soul

I need Thee every hour, Most gracious Lord,
No tender voice like Thine, can peace afford

[All together now]

**I need Thee, O I need Thee, Every hour I need Thee,
O bless me now, my Saviour, I come to Thee**

God be with you till we meet again, By his counsels guide,
uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you, God be with you till we
meet again

[All together, now]

till we meet again, till we meet again, God be with you till we meet again

who was off key?

CJW

Taken from Day by Day with Billy Graham

WE ARE NOT ALONE

After the crucifixion, the beleaguered disciples despaired. There was anguish, despair and tragedy in their midst. Life had lost its meaning and purpose. But when the resurrection became apparent, life took on a new meaning.

The explorer, David Livingstone, once addressed a group of students at Glasgow University (*obviously before the current trend of excluding speakers*). When he rose to speak, he bore on his body the marks of his African struggles. Several illnesses on nearly thirty occasions had left him gaunt and haggard. His left arm, crushed by a lion hung limp by his side.

He told the students that what supported him through years of exile and uncertainty and among people, whose attitude was often hostile, towards him was:

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world

Sorry, refunds no longer valid

It is regretted that refunds can no longer be given for any who had booked tickets to hear the talk ***The Case of the Missing Speaker at the Friendship Club in April 2020.***

However, in lieu, entry for the talk will be granted for £1 per person when the current pandemic has been halted, the Friendship Club resumes, the Church hall becomes free once more, and the guest speaker is available.