

Dear friends,

There are powerful sermons and prayers shared across the Parish and beyond; we do hope that you can access some of the wonderful resources produced by the Turton Moorland Team, and for which we received an award for being 'A CHURCH FOR A DIFFERENT WORLD': for us reaching out to you in **FAITH, HOPE** and **LOVE**.

We trust that we can continue to support each other and do some things together, share what we can and come up with great ideas that will lift spirits. If we can do any more to help you feel connected in these continuing times of strangeness, please let us know.

During a 'phone chat with a lovely lady I first met at our Penny Farthing Luncheon Club, I was cheered to be told that, following the dreadful plague centuries ago, there was a remarkable era of re-awakening and renewing: the Renaissance. So let us look forward with hope...

This Sunday 1 November - there will be a 9.30am Service of Holy Communion at Christ Church Walmsley led by **Reverend Carol Hayden**, with a focus on **REMEMBERING** as it is **ALL SAINTS' / ALL SOULS' DAY**. *{Social distancing and mask wearing will be required as usual.}*

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY (8 November)

Sadly, there will be no remembrance parades this year, but wreaths will be laid individually at Dunscar War Memorial at different times over that weekend. We hope, by then, that there will also be a beautiful display of painted poppies on pebbles around the Memorial.

There will be a service of Holy Communion at Christ Church Walmsley, starting with an Act of Remembrance, at 9.30am and a service at St. Andrew's at 11am – both led by Canon David Dunn. The online Team Remembrance Service that day will feature local folk sharing their knowledge about the War Memorials across the Turton Moorland Team Ministry of churches.

Some more unusual photos taken by Nikki Barlow (Church Warden at St. Anne's, Turton), which were included in the online service last week, this time of St. Andrew's:

And a photo which was featured recently in the Bolton News of St. Andrew's Victorian Fair in 1986, held on the playing fields at Little Brow, to raise money for the church plus local and national charities. With a stall selling jam of course...





I have heard people say that they'd like to cancel 2020. Certainly, it has been a tough year for many ...and heart-breaking for some. But here are some thoughts to consider...

"Don't cancel the year that made you see how strong you are. Don't cancel the year that made you go through ups and downs and still show how incredible you are. Don't cancel the year that brought answers that you have long been looking for time. Don't cancel the year that made you see the thorns that were being watered. Don't cancel this year, because there are plenty of reasons to be thankful."

~ Felipe Pimentel ~

And consider also this:

"The trees are about to show us how lovely it is to let things go."

This 'pumpkin prayer' was shared by Katie Turner, who conducts the weekly St. Andrew's Sunday School via 'WhatsApp' ...ingenious!!

Please let us know if you have try to create a pumpkin by the method suggested (and NOT as in the image shown). If you do: please take a photo and share with us for next week's newsletter. Thank you ☺.

There has been much talk of the 'FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT' in recent prayers and sermons:

(Can you remember them all without looking?)

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

love,
joy,
peace,
patience,
kindness,
goodness,
faithfulness,
gentleness,
and self-control



Galatians 5:22-23

Pumpkin Prayer

Dear God,

As I carve my pumpkin, help me say this prayer:

Open my mind so I can learn about You;
(Cut the top of the pumpkin)

Take away all my sin and forgive me for the wrong things I do;
(Clean out the inside)

Open my eyes so Your Love I will see;
(Cut eyes shaped like hearts)

I'm sorry for turning up my nose to all You've given me;
(Cut a nose in the shape of the cross)

Open my ears so Your Word I will hear;
(Cut ears shaped like the Bible)

Open my mouth so I can tell others You're near;
(Cut mouth in the shape of a fish)

Let Your Light shine in all I say and do!
(Place a candle and light)

Amen

Our Team Rector, Canon Peter Reiss's reflections this week:

Today's Readings – Revelation 7: 9-17 and Matthew 5: 1-12

The reading from Revelation is one of those points in the story where – as it were - the camera pans up away from all that is happening on earth, and the reader sees with John this vast crowd, without number, as well as the 144,000 who are the fulfilment of the 12 tribes, the children of Israel, who he has already seen, in their ranks. This crowd is the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham of descendants like the sand of the seashore of the stars of the sky. Not sin, not human failing, not war and persecution, nothing can stop the promise of God coming true.

And in the second part of the passage we discover who is in this crowd. They are those who have believed, and in many cases have suffered for their faith. Their suffering and even death has not ended their relationship to the Good Shepherd, because the Shepherd leads us to springs of living water. In believing we too receive this gift and become part of the multitude.

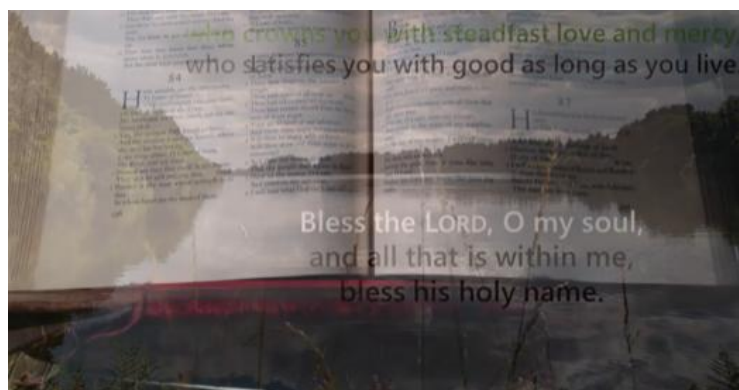
[Notice all the allusions and partial references to John's Gospel and to other parts of the Bible. Some have counted over 600 references to other parts of the Bible in Revelation.]

Our Gospel reading – the Beatitudes – is a very different piece of writing – a list of who is blessed, but couched in rather different terms, though the persecuted are common to both readings.

So if we wish to be blessed, if we are those who desire to be part of the vast multitude, we hear from Jesus how his followers should be. His gentleness, compassion, concern and love are so opposite to the ruthless powerful, power-seeking acquisitive and grasping ways of the world, and if we are honest there are acquisitive, grasping, power-seeking elements in our own hearts, when self is put first.

But what a promise from God of and from his generosity and grace.

Some images from the wonderful recorded online service led by Canon Peter Reiss on 25 Oct:



Bless the LORD, O My Soul (Psalm 103)

He who forgives all your iniquities ... and crowns you with loving devotion and compassion, who satisfies you with good things ...all that is within me bless his holy name. *The photo on the right was a screen shot just as the Bible image faded to be replaced by the reservoir scene ...effective and beautiful superimposition...*

ERRATA: When Peter Reiss was with us at Christ Church Walmsley the day of our APCM, the Gospel reading stated: ***“The Harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few;”*** and our Team Rector urged us to pray. Maybe it was my hearing loss which caused me to misinterpret the request to ‘**BESEECH**’ God with prayer as ‘**BESEIGE**’?! It has caused some slight amusement ... and I have been besieging God since then to give me greater clarity of understanding ☺.

BREAKING NEWS: Dawn Hitchen will chat with Joe Wilson on Radio Lancashire around 9:45am on Sunday 1 November about how we have kept folk connected across the Turton Moorland Team over these last eight months. [...I was ‘volunteered’ x]

Advice from Terry Waite:

Dawn McDermott (a friend for many years since I taught her sons at Walmsley CE School) worships at Blackburn Cathedral and has shared this pastoral letter from the Dean, Peter Howell-Jones, who says: "With all the challenges surrounding Covid I was greatly encouraged recently, to read some musings by Terry Waite with regard to the troubles we are currently facing." Terry W had spent 1763 days as a hostage in Beirut, socially isolated, kept in appalling conditions, tortured, chained to a wall and deprived of human niceties which you and I take for granted.

I joined Dawn & family a few years ago for an evening with Terry Waite at a church in Darwen – an amazing man!

- **Make the most of now.** "Remember that you have life now. Learn to live for the day, make that day as full as possible. Because this is your life now. Not yesterday, not tomorrow, but now."
- **Avoid the news.** "Get on with other things. There's more to life than hearing 12 times a day how terrible this is. It is terrible. We know it's terrible, we don't need to be told 12 times a day it's terrible."
- **Get perspective.** "Shift your mindset because you're not STUCK at home, you're SAFE at home."
- **Become more self-aware.** "Use the opportunity which solitude gives you to be more introspective than you'd normally be, because now you've got the time to get to know yourself better."
- **Uncover your strengths.** Says Terry, "I discovered I had gifts and abilities that I didn't know I had and they were brought out in solitude. That can be exactly the same experience for people today; you can discover you have abilities you didn't know you had."
- **Do what you've been meaning to and savour it.** "Use the time to do what you've always said you wanted to do: pick up that book you've never got round to reading, listen to music. But instead of just listening to it as background music, really listen to it."
- **Count your blessings one by one.** "I used to say to myself when I was in captivity: 'Oh, if only I was surrounded by my books, it wouldn't be so bad. Well now I consider myself today, here in self-isolation, to be extremely fortunate. I'm surrounded by my books; I can talk to people as I'm talking to you. I'm not cut off. And there are people around who will do my shopping. Being in the vulnerable category I'm not going out. So, I'm extremely fortunate."

Some of you will remember then McDermott family. Dawn's husband, Andrew, used to sing in River of Life, and their sons, Jordan and Isaac played violin (very skilfully) in our Worship group from year 5 (aged 9) all the way through their time at Canon Slade. We still miss them!

Jordan, now aged 25, is a final year ordinand (year 3 of 3), fully residential at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield, West Yorkshire which is the only theological college in the Anglican Communion that shares its life with a monastic community.

He completed his Sheffield University BA in Theological Studies at the end of his second year and was chosen to be the college's Precentor this year, in charge of music and singing, which could be something to do with the fact he has a degree in Music!

Following his ordination at the end of June 2021, he will start his curacy within the Diocese of Blackburn ...and then he's getting married in November 2021, to Becky, who he got engaged to just before Christmas last year.

How wonderful to hear such heart-warming news of a past pupil. Congratulations, Jordan. Love and blessings to you from all of us in Walmsley Parish.





REMEMBRANCE: A message from Ken Holt – artist extraordinaire:

“The thirty (painted poppy pebbles) I did over last weekend, Councillor Sam Connor has taken out and placed. Here are another 50, so we can extend from Egerton into Bromley Cross. I have now run out of pebbles so if we need to do more ***please can anyone find me some more.***” Ken x

A reminder to you: As remembrance parades are cancelled this year, we are asking you to paint a poppy on a pebble and either leave it for children to ‘find’ – or, if you have children, take your painted pebbles to leave at Dunscur War Memorial. By Remembrance Sunday (8 November), we would have a wonderful display of ‘poppies’ in memory of those who gave their lives. Names of those we remember who gave the ultimate sacrifice could be painted on the pebbles too. ***Can you be part of this?*** The councillors are supporting this!

SO: Please paint pebbles ☺



A few weeks ago, I featured a photograph of a blank canvas, sent by Ken Holt, with the intriguing message: “Watch this space!”

I invited suggestions from you and, knowing Ken’s drawing and painting prowess, I expected some answers which I may not have been able to print ...! But sadly, not a single response... When Ken sent this photo of his partially completed canvas, I received the following thoughts:

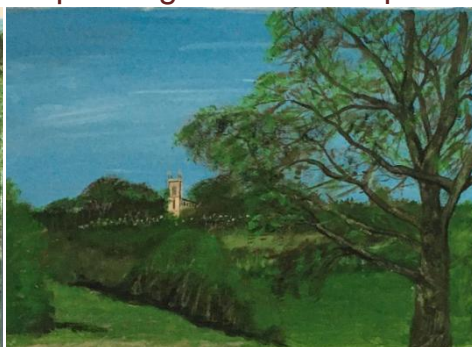


“Ken Holt’s painting is a map of our area showing a boundary which generally follows the old Turton UDC boundary, but I think it is actually the Walmsley Parish boundary. The dark blue areas are the local reservoirs. It is a splendid effort by Ken and I look forward to seeing the finished canvas. I am not surprised that nobody came up with a suggestion last week. I’d never have guessed at this.” David Spencer

“Is Ken’s painting a map of the parish/ church boundary? Just a guess!!” Jane Dent

“Might I suggest possibly of the area covered by our ‘team’ of parishes. The blue areas resemble the local reservoirs and the dark line could be the boundary of our parishes. I love looking at maps, so if I am right, I look forward to seeing the finished piece.” Jenny Murphy

Ken has now shared three of the paintings he has completed to ‘frame’ the boundary map:



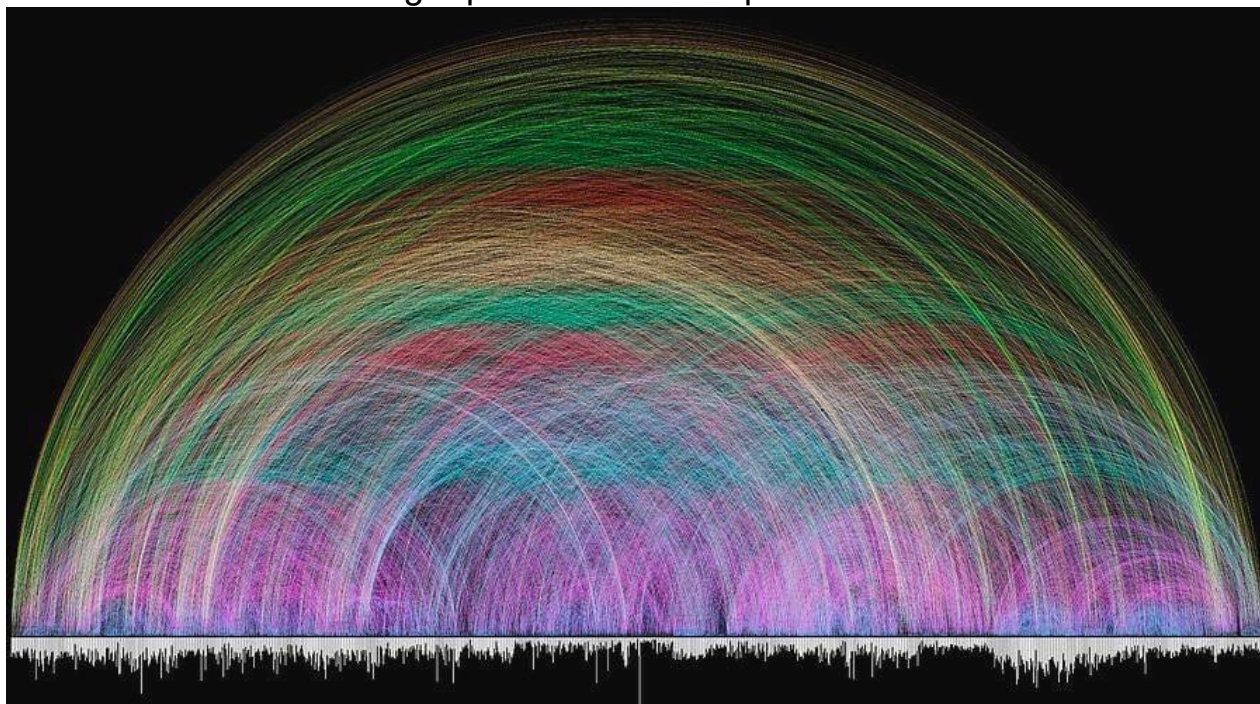
Lesley Smith sent in this cartoon saying, “I found this quite funny and it lightens a difficult time.”

Thank you x

“I can feed 5,000 so long as they’re from the same household.”

Thank you if you have written to me, sent in items, etc. If I haven’t included them this week, they will be in a future edition. I may even keep these missives up til New Year [Oh no!!! I hear some say ...] 😲

Last week was **Bible Sunday**, and this image was shared on social media. It might be the most amazing data picture you ever see! It shows the 63,779 cross-references in the Bible. The white bars along the bottom represent each Bible chapter, Gen. 1 - Rev. 22. The line's colour shows the reference's distance from the other. A cross-reference is a scripture that references another scripture. Had the Bible been written by one person or at one time this would still be amazing; however, the Bible was written by 40 authors over the span of 1500 years on 3 different continents. The Bible is complex, diverse, and intricate, and yet it has one unified message: **God lovingly is redeeming all who believe!** What an amazing representation of a phenomenal 'book' ...!!



A beautiful [#MorningPrayer](#): May God's love illuminate our world with His light. Amen.
***Eternal Word, who spoke creation into being, speak to us today your living word, that it may infuse our souls and permeate our being.
May our lives be true to your love,
and your love illuminate our world with your light,
that all may know your life, and know you.***

Chris Foster shared beautiful, prayerful words in the online service last Sunday (25 October), which feature in the prayer attachment. (Please do take a look.)

Let us remember these words with which she ended her prayers:

Loving Lord, we thank you that your word is a lamp for our feet and a light on our path. Shine, Jesus, shine so that we can live in hope. Amen!

Thank you to those who continue to connect with others who are alone or self-isolating ...everyone is very grateful for your continued help and support.


If anyone has any news, poems, prayers ...or words of wisdom to share, it would be lovely to include them here. Local news is always welcome. Thank you.



Please know that all of you, our church friends continue to be in our thoughts and prayers. Stay safe and keep well. Love and blessings,

Reverend Carol Hayden, Iain Stewart - *Church Warden* + Jane Dent ☺

Dawn Hitchen - *Church Warden* + *Authorised Lay Minister for Pastoral Care*

 Jane and Graham Dent are delighted to share the wonderful news that their daughter, Sarah and husband Adam, now have a little boy – Daniel Christopher – born on Sunday 25 October; a brother for Niamh. All are doing well.

PLEASE REMEMBER: For those who don't have internet or social media, do check out the Church of England free resource: '**DAILY HOPE**'. Friends continue to tell me that they have enjoyed this resource. Please do use it.



The Church of England *free phone*: '**DAILY HOPE**'
0800 804 8044 to listen to hymns, reflections and prayers.

Thank you to those who have now set up your offertory giving by standing order

Thank you for making a difference.

For those of you who wish to continue your offertory by cash or cheque, you might like to combine the number of weeks missed into one for when you return to church.

Thank you for your contribution to the running of our churches.

Switching to Standing Order is easy and, if you pay tax, Gift Aid adds an extra 25%; we can send you a Gift Aid form to be returned when church re-opens.

If you wish to contact your bank for a monthly standing order to be made payable to:

CHRIST CHURCH WALMSLEY:

Payable to **Walmsley Parochial Church** - Account number **10251161** –
Sort code: **16 – 00 – 06**

OR ST. ANDREW'S:

Payable to: **St. Andrew's** - Account number **91505262** -
Sort code: **40 - 12 - 41**

GRUB TUB for URBAN OUTREACH

Please do continue to remember those who rely on food donations. As a church we have supported Urban Outreach in a number of ways, including donating to the Grub Tubs in each church.

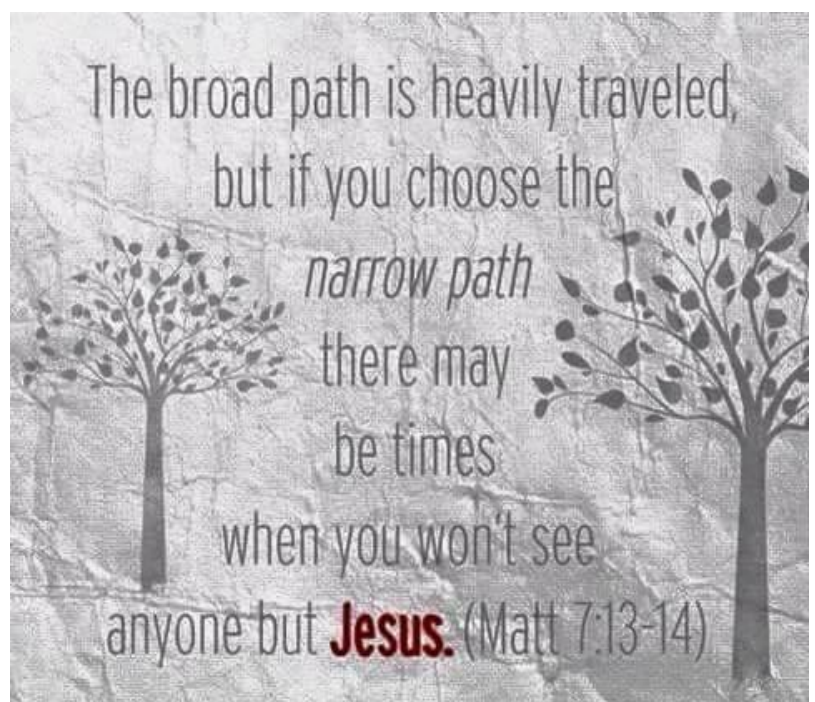
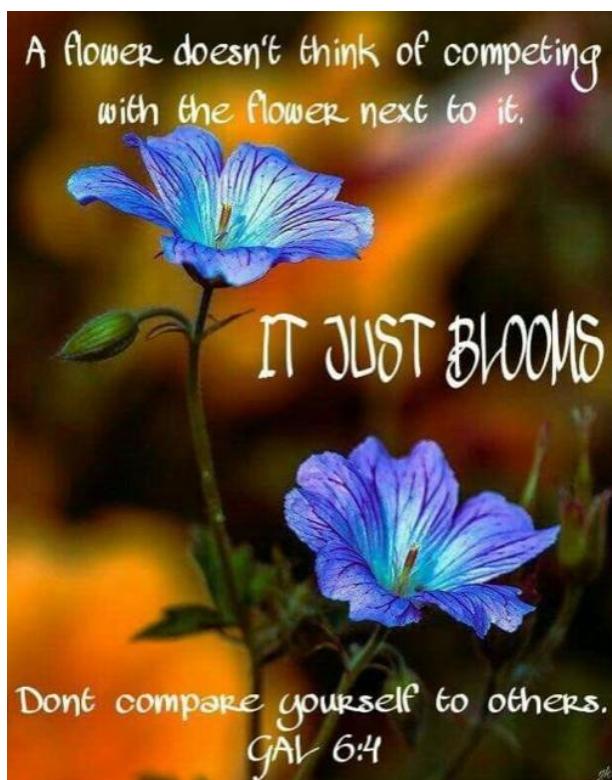
Whilst our churches are closed, you can place your food donations in the GRUB TUBs in our local supermarkets. URBAN OUTREACH rely on the generosity of food donors to provide food parcels to those in need across the borough. Thank you to those who have given recently.

**URBAN
OUTREACH** (BOLTON)

If you need to speak with a church representative, please contact:

Jane Dent jane@walmsleyparish.org or telephone 595695

Dawn Hitchen dawn@walmsleyparish.org or telephone 304142. Thank you.



Sermons given at Christ Church Walmsley this week by Reverend Carol

We have been educated and entertained in equal measure this week through the talks – and shared thoughts – given by Reverend Carol. Her new family role is ‘SOCIAL MEDIA PUG INFLUENCER’, as required by her pug-loving daughter, Laura. She shared her ‘influencer’ tee-shirt with us. And urged us to become social influencers of the Gospel!!

In the reading from Colossians (3:12-17), Paul challenges us to take a step back and think how we appear to others. Do they see Jesus in us? ...in our words and our deeds?

We are asked to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. But above all, with love.

And at the mid-week service, we were challenged by Rev Carol to show our natural beauty in the eyes of God; to develop the characteristics of the fruits of the spirit.

St. Paul says that all we have to do is to allow Christ to dwell richly within us and let the peace of God rule in our hearts.

Sermon given at St. Anne's by Peter Reiss – Oct 25th 2020 – Bible Sunday

Today is Bible Sunday, it is the last Sunday of Trinity in our church's year.

Our Gospel reading speaks of imminent happenings; it is a difficult reading in many ways as it is not clear to us quite what Jesus was talking about. However, what is clear is that there are the events of history and there is the coming of God in glory.

Not only was Jesus rejected, but there was unrest against the Roman occupation, which led to revolt and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple even more cataclysmically than when the city and temple were destroyed by the Babylonians. The world of Jesus' time was not peaceful or stable by any means.

Picking up on this connection between God's intervention and history, and it being Bible Sunday, two questions for today:

First, ***in what way have we seen God working and speaking in the last 18 months?***

And second, ***how do we find God's word for us in the Scriptures? What does it mean to read mark learn and inwardly digest them?***

For the psalmist, God's words are sweeter than honey – for Ezekiel, his scroll which he was commanded to eat was bitter to the taste. If we are honest, we don't always find the Bible "sweet".

At the beginning of the year we had begun not just to make plans but to get going on them.

We had found a 3-dimensional way to see our task as individuals and as churches.

#Looking Within, #Facing Up and #Facing Outwards

Covid and closures and then restrictions have stopped many of the things we were going to do and have damaged our income – just as for so many others. For at least the next six months we have got to learn to live within these restrictions – and find the spiritual resources to do so. The Hebrew descendants of Jacob lived in Egypt in ever-worsening conditions, the Israelites spent time in exile and under foreign rulers. The Bible is no stranger to restrictions and difficulties. BUT

I think it is important that we **don't become overly focused on Covid** – there are other huge issues in our world, the politics of Brexit, of growing Chinese power and influence; ongoing issues of **poverty and hunger** in this country as well as too many other places, and **war / violence** leading to refugees and millions living in temporary accommodation; and possibly the biggest and least easy to reverse of all, **climate change** and the greater extremes of weather in so many parts of the world.

And again, these themes, of political oppression, of division, of injustice, the call to be good stewards of the earth are all explored in our Bible, though sometimes we need to know the background.

Facing Up – looking to God in these times – learning to worship and wait on God – the Bible helps us in praise and in prayer

Looking within, as individuals and as a church – again the Bible gives us the resources if we choose to use them –

Facing outwards – realistic, but hopeful, concerned for justice and the well-being of our community and world again the example of Jesus, the words and actions of the prophets, the 'Law' with its concern for the widow and alien and orphan all remind us of our call.

One other thing that I think may help us today – the diocese has a strapline that we need to be **church for a different world** – it came up with this strap-line before the Covid different world, but how appropriate it is proving to be. I'm thrilled that the Turton Moorland Team won an award for our *team response* to Covid, but the challenge is how we will (continue to) be church in this different world.

What makes us stand out, or not, as Christians, as God's Church are the values which Paul talks about in the Colossians reading today. – **compassion, patience, kindness, humility and meekness** – humility and meekness are about putting others before ourselves. We are called to **clothe ourselves with love**, to **let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts** – a lovely phrase, for peace to rule in our hearts

And **whatever we do, to do it giving thanks**. Gratitude has the same word-stem as grace – thankfulness for the goodness and generosity of God.

I think I knew when we moved here, that **planning is always contingent**, but the **values we are called to live by are consistent**, as are the principles. Little did any of us know what this last 12 months would bring. Things we wanted to do we can't, things we planned for haven't happened, things we enjoy have been stopped. But the truths of our faith – expressed in our creeds, the principles of how we should live, looking within, facing up and facing outwards, and the values we should live by, **grace, mercy and peace**, they don't change, though living them out might get harder.

We have a Covid crisis the like of which we have never faced, and we have a diocesan crisis which has been exacerbated by the Covid issues. St Anne's may have a major building cost if our boiler needs replacing. We are not just a church in our own little area, but part of God's Church for the wider area, part of our Turton Moorland Team and part of the diocese, and other areas are struggling far more than we are; how do we support them as well?

Ron Heifetz is a Leadership guru who talks about **Adaptive Leadership**.

Adaptive leadership is what is needed when faced with complex problems rather than complicated problems.

Some key elements in Adaptive Leadership are **a clear sense of what we really want**, (not just what we think we want), that is a clear vision; the **building of trust**, which means good honest communication, and an **exploratory way of moving ahead**, testing things to see if they are what we need. As so often we find that the Bible got there first. Moses, in preparing to enter the Promised Land, a new and unknown future, went up a mountain to have a look ahead, he sent out scouts to see what was ahead, he had to wait because the unity was not there – sadly fear took over, but he worked to build back the trust and the hope and the vision of a promised land. One final element of Adaptive Leadership as seen in Moses is the **passing on of the baton**, the developing of the next generation, people like Joshua, what today they call **succession planning**.

That is what we have to do in this coming year –

- we need a clear vision – the diocesan vision a **worshipping growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of the community;**
- **to build trust with good communication and involving everyone,**
- we need **faith, wisdom and courage** so we do not lose heart,
- we will **test out ideas** and not all will work,
- we will **let go some things** that have been precious to us but are not able to be continued - sad, but we can thank God for what they were;
- we must also look to **how we equip the next generations;** passing on the faith, for the different world they will journey through.

I don't know what the church round here will look like, or how it will be organised in 20 years time, but I do know that we are called **to face up, face outwards and look within**, and I do know that the values of **grace mercy and peace** are what should shape whatever we do and however we have to respond.

And our Colossians reading ends with the call to **give thanks**, and if I may, I want to say thank you to all who have helped me / put up with me / done so much to make my job easier and to make me welcome. Together we share in the work of God and that is how it should be.

- There are people who are pastors, **ministers** who look out for others – there are people who pray – caring and praying quietly and lovingly. And there are those who minister by helping with the worship, leading services, intercessions, preparation, and now with the online resources too.
- There are people who do the paperwork, the admin, the sorting, the stuff that needs doing; the **managers**, and we need good management so we can focus on the tasks. We need to manage our buildings, our finances, our governance, in order to be active and fruitful in our mission and ministry
- And a healthy church which is facing outwards is also engaged in **mission**, sharing the good news more widely, caring for the needy, concerned for the community and the world. Without this outward concern we become a holy and even self-righteous huddle.

The engine room of a church is **prayer** – time spent with God where we will find strength to reach out, peace when things are uncertain, mercy for when we feel hurt or angry, grace against when we become self-absorbed.

Thanks be to God for all who help make our churches a place of prayer, praise and welcome; for those who have given generously of time, money and love; for all who share their faith in word and action; for all who care and look after the more lonely, isolated, and vulnerable. We are here because of the love and generosity and faith of others; may we be good stewards of what we have been given.

- **Let us clothe ourselves with compassion and kindness**
- **Let the peace of Christ rule your hearts**
- **Whatever you do, do it, giving thanks to God.**

Rev'd Peter Reiss: 25th Oct 2020