



**Histon
Methodist
Church**

Rev. Alison Walker,

28th July 2020

Dear Friends,

It's a well-worn joke when it rains on an open-air service or church BBQ "Don't you have a hotline? Didn't you book the weather?" Of course, I don't have the red telephone line to God, and nor do you. Instead, we search for God's direction for our present and our future by prayer, meditation, reading the Scriptures, seeking the wise counsel of friends. Sometimes we do all of that and life-events (like the rain) still disrupt our plans – not our fault nor God's, but just the way that life works out.

Right now, I'd really love to have that magic hotline. I'd pick up the phone and immediately ask "Hello God, could you just tell me when we will have a second wave so I can plan to open the church and shut it again? When can we meet together again and sing and drink coffee and not just sit quietly? Will it be ok to celebrate Harvest together? and what about Christmas?" Alas, no red telephone, no easy answers. We must work it out together, using the best knowledge available at the time.

The future seems even more unknown than normal. I know that's a silly statement, but usually I know when we will celebrate Harvest, who will go where on Christmas Day, what concerts are in the diary – even if any of those things could be disrupted by a myriad reasons, it feels reassuring to open my diary and see some things marked in. This year, everything is tentative, everything has an implied (?) in case the pandemic changes our plans. With this uncertainty goes anxiety. The usual plans quell this anxiety, the insecurity of any plans allows anxiety to come bubbling forth. There is a kind of tension, a background hum, that stops us from being gung-ho and asks us to consider what is the right and wise thing to do. When that hum forces our attention, the anxiety can overwhelm rational thoughts about 'there's always flu' or 'most people don't get sick with it', and leads to that ache in your heart, wobbly in your tummy, catch of breath and sting of tear, as anxiety manifests itself in physical form. Grief rising up at the loss of summer plans, friends, maybe employment or future plans.

Different things can help manage this rising hum of anxiety for different people. I recognise that some of this fear is rational, and part of the unpredictability of the world. I step away from the computer screen, put the

kettle on and just for a moment, breathe. A verse of scripture often comes to mind "Perfect love casts our fear" and I try to tune in again to God's limitless love that crosses past, present and future. Or I remember a phrase from a song "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future" and I imagine myself and my future held securely by God. Jesus never said he would protect me from the unknowable but promised to be with me through everything.

Awareness of God's eternal love increases in me again, the wash of anxiety diminishes. I still don't know if Christmas will mean we can sing again, nor who has to order the turkey, but I know that none of it really matters, compared to the gift of divine love. God's love holds me, you, the world. God's love starts each day. God's love has the strength to change everything and create peace with justice. Don't ask me if it will rain a week on Saturday, ask me about God's love.

Wishing you God's deep peace,
Alison

Histon Methodist Church Notices

Sunday 2nd August 2020

Services that we can all take part in:-

8.00 am Sunday service on Radio Cambridgeshire.

8.10am Sunday worship on Radio 4

BBC 1 Songs of Praise. (check TV guide for times)

This week we pray for Joy and Roberta and all in their pastoral groups.

A message from Janet Houghton:-

Christine Pooley sent me a book "Waiting on the Word" by Malcolm Guite but I think it was sent to me in error as I feel that I am not the correct recipient. If it was intended for you please contact me so that it can be passed onto the correct person. Thank you.

New Church Recipe Book for 2020.

A church recipe book was created in the year 2000 and has been used often by many people in the church. Given it is now 20 years since

publication it is time for a new one! We have all been in lockdown over the past few months so will have lots of recipes we have revisited. Sue Watson has agreed to pull together and publish the next version called 'Lockdown Treats'. Please can you send your recipes that you would like included in the book directly to Sue Watson (or to Rosemary). Recipes can be for anything at all, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, cakes and biscuits - the more the merrier so don't be shy if you want to include more than one.

Our Church Building is currently CLOSED but it is being used to help the village with the food bank.

"For all the saints....."

When I became involved in taking services in the Cottenham care homes I often consulted Church diaries to see if they were being held on any special days and after my time in Italy I found that there was at least one Saint's Day for Catholics practically every day. Italian children often have an extra "birthday" to celebrate the Saint on whose day they were born.

I began to wonder why so many Anglican churches were named after saints and although my research didn't come to any real conclusion it did throw up some interesting tales, which are "legends" rather than factual "biographies." Why was St Andrew so popular that all three churches are named after him in Histon, Impington and Oakington? He is apparently the Patron Saint of Scotland, Romania, Greece and Russia with no mention of E.Anglia! Catholics believe that these holy people will intercede with God on their behalf and apparently sufferers of gout, sore throats and stiff necks, singers and all sorts of people involved in the fishing trade, amongst others, invoke his aid. He was St Peter's brother and was also crucified but on a diagonally transverse cross, as seen on the Union Jack.

One of my favourites is the story of St Edmund, King of E.Anglia from the age of 14. He was killed by the heathen Danes because he would not recant his faith and he was shot with arrows and decapitated. His head was thrown into a wood and his followers went looking for it, calling out "where are you friend?" to which it replied "here, here"! Eventually it was found, held in the paws of a wolf. A church was built in his honour many years later and they exhumed him to find that his head was once more attached to his body and his skin was as soft as the day he died!

This miracle of the skin was also seen in St Eheldreda in Ely whose body was moved several times but sceptics believe that this was less to do with sanctity than with the preservative properties of the Fen peat bogs! When she died her place as Abbess at the convent she founded was taken by one of her three sisters with the unlikely name of Sexburga!

St George was apparently a Roman soldier from Syrian Palestine and the story about him and the "dragon" probably involved a very large crocodile but it was brave of him to rescue the King's daughter after she drew the short straw in the martyrdom lottery. His daring deeds became popular amongst the military and England put his red cross on a white background as their official flag on their ships and "For St George!" became their battle cry for many years.

In Cambridge there is a church called St Giles after a Greek Christian hermit living in a forest whose only companion was a deer. When hunters came to shoot it he got in front and was wounded instead. The king was so impressed that he built him a monastery and filled it with Benedictine monks - not much of a reward for a man who really only liked his own company and that of wild animals to have to share his home with a lot of men in frocks! Most Saints did not die peacefully in their beds but Giles was one of the rare number not to be martyred.

G.B. Caird wrote in his hymn at the beginning of this century: "Rooted and grounded in thy love, with saints on earth and saints above we join in full accord". Amen to that.

Liz Davis

Tropic Tea at 3pm. August 18th.

My daughter Rachel Darby works for Tropic they make Organic hair and skin products from natural ingredients. A Green company who also raise money for good causes. Rachel would like to invite you to a Zoom 'Teatime' where she informs, includes a few games and shows us some of the products.

Come along there is no pressure to buy but any who do the Commission will be donated to Church funds. It's always a good event. One or two of you have been to a previous face to face evening before.

Details of Zoom Id.etc from Julia Daft nearer the date. Tropic Tea at 3pm. Aug 18th Get the teapots ready.

This week's saying:

Nothing is impossible, the word itself says "I'm possible".

Thank you to all our contributors. If anyone would like to write an article for a future issue please let me know.

John (on behalf of the stewards).