

Dear Friends,

This week we will be thinking about Jesus's teaching on the Vine and the branches. He pictures the Father as the gardener who prunes away the branches that bear fruit in order that they bear even more fruit. I sense, during this past year during Covid, the Father has been pruning away at the vine. This has been a time of cutting back, of loss, of trouble and anxiety. Jesus' picture of pruning reveals the secret to deeper, richer growth and fruitfulness. Often for Christians this means facing trouble, pain and opposition. We are waiting for Pentecost, for the Spirit to be poured out as the wine of the New kingdom Jesus ushers in. Meanwhile, He calls his followers to pray and this continues to apply to us today.

We totally depend upon staying connected to the vine in order to be fruitful as the Church. A really good initiative that calls us to pray over the coming weeks in a focused way is Thy Kingdom come. Please consider taking up this challenge which Michelene will be telling us more about.

Pray that we will experience, as a Cluster of Churches, a deeper connection to Christ, the true vine. On Sunday there will be a short Covid friendly 8am communion service at St Mary's and a communion at St Sampson's (11.15am) Stoke Climsland (10am) are also back in their Church building this Sunday. St Mary's are hosting the Cluster family service at 10am and this will be live-streamed to Facebook. There will also be a link on the Cluster website to this service on Youtube but please be patient as it may take a few hours after it appears on Facebook. Don't forget there is also a Zoom service option at 10am hosted by Linkinhorne.

Pray for the new changeover on 4th May to the new online Marriage registration system. Our churches will be closing the existing registers and, across the country there will be prayers said for all those who were married in the respective buildings. We then move onto a new system (though we continue to use Banns and will have a new register of marriage services). Please pray for all those preparing to get married this year.

Please can you also remember to pray for Angus who is recovering from an eye operation.

Meanwhile my prayer is that we remain in Him.

Blessings,
Joe