

Together as One

Newsletter of the Methodist Churches in Hungerford, Lambourn,
Newbury and Thatcham during Coronavirus Pandemic

Verses for the week

'So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.'

(1 Corinthians 15: 42-44a)

Composting

I have two compost bins in the garden, one is for grass cuttings and other compostable garden waste. The second is nearer to the kitchen door and receives all the compostable scraps from the kitchen – apple cores, potato peelings, banana skins, etc. As I was refilling the compost with the result of a recent lawn mowing I was struck by the minor miracle of the natural process of decay and recycling that goes on in that secret dark place unseen and unmarked. I am regularly surprised by how little the bin contains when I start to fill it again with the contents of the hopper of the lawn mower. Yet I know that it was full when I completed the grass cutting last time. I know too that the bin will again be full when I finish. Unseen invertebrates, fungi and bacteria get to work as soon as I replace the lid and walk away, heedless. The end result I discover in the spring is a residue of fine organic compost that I return to the soil in preparation for next season's growth. The runner beans we are starting to harvest have grown in a shallow trench filled with compost from last year. This cycle has been repeated across agricultural history, as well as across my personal history.

I can well remember as a child helping my Dad to dig such a trench and to fill it with the produce of the compost heap ready to grow the gardener's ubiquitous runner bean crop. I think of him when I do the same thing and when I construct the bamboo framework on which the beans grow, just as he showed me.

This natural composting process reminds me of the work of God in our lives. If we will allow him he will take the rotten, decaying waste of our lives and recycle and reconstitute from it a fertile productive growing medium. We need to let him have those sins, those habits, and those faults we are better off without so they can be remade and reformed for his purpose into something far greater to his glory. He wants us to be growing—growing in faith, growing in goodness and growing more like Jesus. Ultimately at a much more profound level beyond death he takes our corruptible, frail fleshly earthly bodies and creates from them an incorruptible body made to live for ever with him in timeless worship and praise.

With love and prayers, Peter.



Shopping Service

For a fee of £6 Berkshire Age UK's Easy Shop can provide a shopping service to people over 60 years old who find accessing the internet difficult. The Easy Shop can be contacted by telephone on 01635 522255 or by email at easyshop@ageukberkshire.org.uk

A blessing for those who have been shielding

For those of us who have shielded - may God remain our protection.

For those of us set free and yet still unable to walk to the end of the driveway - may God be our strength.

For those now able to catch up with family we have missed for so long, may God be our restoration and help the glue of our relationships hold together.

For those of us released but still lonely - may God be present.

For those with a letter of liberation, and yet still living with the diagnosis which inspired it - may God bring healing and wholeness and perhaps a glimmer of holiness.

Whether we are excited or terrified or somewhere in-between - be the I AM that flings stars and paints sunrises and moves mountains - with us, around us and within us we pray. Amen

Written by Joanne Cox-Darling – Methodist Minister in Wolverhampton.

Litany prayer written by Revd Michaela Youngson - co-chair London District

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be. Day followed night, every week had a Sunday and that was the day for church.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be. We made our plans, held our meetings, kept the roof on the church and the show on the road.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be. We would see colleagues, friends and loved ones again, and we would embrace, laugh, share stories as we always had.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

And now, we know something new. We know that the world is not ours to control, and that our plans are confounded by the smallest microbe.

God is teaching us a new song, for a new land.

And now, we know something new. We know that church is not committees, agendas and buildings, it is us, in homes, streets, hospitals throughout the world.

God is teaching us a new song, for a new land.

And now, we know something new. We only have today with those we love, today is the day to say "I love you", to mend an argument, to hold on tight.

God is teaching us a new song, for a new land.

And finally

I bought a litre of Tipp-Ex yesterday. Huge mistake.