

Together as One

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

Verses for the week

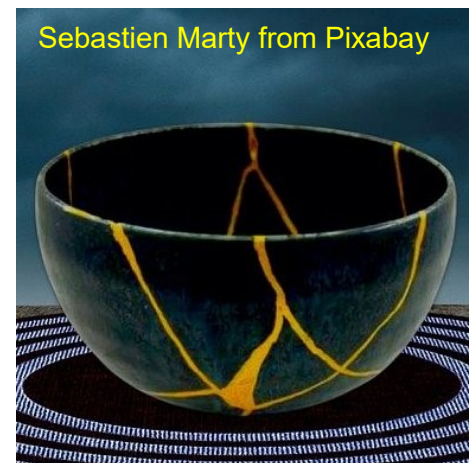
But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 2 Corinthians 4: 7-10

Broken plate

This week, because of my careless inattention while washing up, I broke a plate. It fractured into about five pieces. The plate was one of our every day dinner plates, of little value, and we have a reserve supply of the same design acquired from a charity shop. The broken pieces were quickly wrapped and consigned to the dustbin. The breaks were few and clean and the plate could have been repaired but I never considered that option, the plate was not valuable enough. This broken plate came to mind when I was listening to a Christian song written recently about these difficult corona days. It begins:

'When the year has been unkind, and the hearts of the people are broken.
When the winter is long and wild and life like the earth becomes frozen.
If you're plagued by anxiety, if your fear for the future's unspoken.
If you've nurtured your dreams from seed, but the harvest has failed or been stolen.
*In the darkest night, He's the light that shines,
He's the hope that's burning in the shadows.
Like a seam of gold in a shattered world,
He's the One who holds it all together.'*

I don't know but I suspect that the writer was inspired by the Japanese art of Kintsugi. If you are not familiar with that it is the art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with lacquer dusted or mixed with gold. You can see an example in the photograph. It is far from an invisible repair and that is the point. The repair becomes part of the object, part of its story like a scar from an old wound obtained in the battles of life. We are all being broken, wounded and scarred to a greater or lesser extent in this Covid season. We will bear its scars for the rest of our lives. Much will never be the same again, some things subtly, others very painfully obviously. The question is will the way we heal and mend become something positive and beautiful individually and societally? What will be the story we move forward with as a result? As the Bible verse above reminds us, we are jars of clay, easily chipped and broken, but there is 'One who holds it all together', who will remake, renew and repair you and your broken or weary self and make that repair a beautiful part of you to draw others to the healer of souls, the One whose wounds, still present in His resurrection body, bring forgiveness and wholeness.



Sebastien Marty from Pixabay

With love and prayers, Peter.

Living Lightly 24:1

As followers of Jesus, through whom all things were made, let's be at the forefront of protecting and restoring his creation. The climate crisis is a huge and urgent challenge that requires all of us to play our part.

Proverbs 31:9 reads: 'Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.' In the words of Dr Ruth Valerio, Tearfund 'We are called as Christians to stand up for justice, calling on those in positions of power to make decisions that protect the most vulnerable people and the Earth we all rely on. Let's keep standing together in prayer and action to see a breakthrough in the climate crisis.' Now is the time, especially during these months leading up to COP26 in November, in Glasgow, to speak up: please consider adding your name to the Time is Now petition and join the thousands of other voices. [Click Here](#)



Wes Talks

New Room Bristol online talk: How did John Wesley speak out against the slave trade? Monday 15th February 7.30pm on Zoom. Tickets £5 can be booked here [Click Here](#)

Methodist Church Podcast

You might like to subscribe to The Methodist Church's regular podcast. Episode 49 is about mental health and well-being for Christians and may well be of interest to you or someone you know. If you don't have a podcast app on your phone or tablet, you can listen to it online. [Click Here](#)

The Real Easter Egg

For the past ten years Tesco, Waitrose, ASDA and Morrisons have made room on their shelves for The Real Easter Egg which as well as providing a fairtrade chocolate Easter egg also includes the real Easter story. However, the pandemic led to the supermarkets having very low sales at Easter 2020 as people stayed away from high streets. This year, supermarket buyers were told to cut brands, reduce the volumes and in some cases ask for stock to be supplied at a loss or cost price. It means there will be fewer brands, including the Real Easter Egg, on their shelves this Easter. So, if you are one of the 80,000 people who usually buy a Real Easter Egg from a supermarket or have friends who do then you will be pleased to know they are available to purchase online, where you will also be able to donate one or more real Easter eggs to a foodbank. [Click Here](#)



Together at Home Activity Bags

The Together at Home activity bags are proving to be a great success and are very popular with those who receive them each month. The fundraising application on The Good Exchange will be closing at the end of February and if you haven't supported this pastoral outreach and would like to do so [Click Here](#) or via a cheque payable to Thatcham Methodist Church (which acts as Treasurer for the project) given to Karen Frost (Tel 07444 851606).

And finally

I've learned to slow down when saying the Lord's Prayer...as our Saviour tortoise, so we pray.
