

Dear Friends

As I sit down to write this letter the sun is glorious, the garden is blooming and my tomatoes are ripening, all things to be thankful for. I do think it is important to take time each day to praise God for all the good things. I have frequently been labelled a 'glass half full' type of person, which is true, but even I can be dragged down by continuous negative news, so I make a point of focusing on the positive. I recommend it, it works, most of the time!

Covid, well yes, it feels as if everyone is getting it, but wasn't that going to happen eventually? Herd immunity they call it. I guess we need to learn to live with it like we do the flu and the common cold, whilst also being sensible about staying at home if we feel unwell and doing our best to care for each other. If you find yourself unwell and stuck at home and need help, please do not hesitate to contact your pastoral visitor, Rev Julia, or me, we will do our very best to ensure you are supported.

The good news is that Rev Julia is now ordained, and we wish her well as she begins her third year in full-time Ministry with us.

'Trusting a known God with an unknown future'. What will the future of our Methodist Circuit look like? Well, that is certainly the pressing question, so let's begin with prayer when we take time out to listen to what God might be saying to us. We will be holding a Circuit Prayer Day on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. All churches across the Circuit will be taking part by opening their doors for some part of the day providing a space to pray and listen, keep a look out for times and venues. However, if you are not able to get to any of these churches on this day, please take a moment, wherever you are, to pray for our Circuit and listen for God's voice.

Worried about the planet but not sure where to start? Let's take some small steps toward reducing our carbon footprint. Turning the heating down by 1 or 2 degrees will make a huge difference to our environment and probably go unnoticed by us. Let's commit to doing this both in our church buildings and in our homes. LED lightbulbs use a fraction of the energy of other lightbulbs. Replacing as many lightbulbs as possible with LED ones in church and at home will have a positive impact. Yes, LED lightbulbs are more expensive to buy but they will last for around 10 years or 50,000 hours so in the long run are much cheaper and kinder to the environment. Recycling our plastic. You will know there is loads of soft plastic packaging that cannot be placed in our regular recycling bins however, the COOP is collecting all soft plastic and pledging to recycle it. Why not save up all that plastic and when you are next able pop it into the collection box in your nearest COOP store? It's small actions like these that will make a difference.

This preaching plan takes us into a new Connexional year, and our thoughts will turn to Harvest celebrations and Remembrance. In many ways time marches on, but in other ways there is a comfort in the rhythm of the year, a reminder that God walks beside us. My God be your constant companion on the road that lies before you, regardless of the terrain.

God Bless.

*Rev Melanie Reed* (Superintendent).