

Weekly Newsletter (66)

by and for the Christ Church and Paghams URC families

6th June 2021

Musings from the Manse

Every so often a little something will come into your day which gladdens the heart and stirs the soul. In my case this happened a few weeks ago when I was given a book called *'The Swallow, The Owl & The Sandpiper'* by a lovely lady - (you know who you are!) - in the congregation at Christ Church. It sits on my desk in the study at home and, every so often, I dip into it and read a few of the verses, poems and prayers – and today I came across one which I thought I would share with you. It reminded me of another verse which a friend had sent to me during Mental Health Week – but more of that one later.



This first one is called *'The Interview with God'*.....

I dreamed I had an interview with God.

'So, you would like to interview me?' God asked.

'If you have the time' I said.

God smiles. 'My time is eternity. What questions do you have in mind for me?'

'What surprises you most about human kind?'

God answered...

'That they get bored with childhood, they rush to grow up, and then long to be children again.'

'That they lose their health to make money...and then lose their money to restore their health.'

'That, by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live in neither the present nor the future.'

'That they live as if they will never die and die as though they had never lived.'

God's hand took mine and we were silent for a while. And then I asked...

'As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?'

'To learn they cannot make anyone love them. All they can do is let themselves be loved.'

'To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others.'

'To learn to forgive by practising forgiveness.'

'To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those they love and it can take many years to heal them.'

'To learn that a rich person is not one, who has the most, but is one who needs the least.'

'To learn that there are people who love them dearly, but simply have not yet learned how to express or show their feelings.'

'To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently.'

'To learn that it is not enough that they forgive one another, but they must also forgive themselves.'

'Thank you for your time,' I said humbly. 'Is there anything else you would like your children to know?'

God smiled and said, 'Just know that I am here...always.'

anon

The second one is more of a conversation with God...

Me: Hello God.

God: Hello...

Me: I'm falling apart. Can you put me back together?

God: I'd rather not.

Me: Why?

God: Because you're not a puzzle.

Me: What about all the pieces of my life that fall to the ground?

God: Leave them there for a while. They fell for a reason. Let them be there for a while and then decide if you need to take any of those pieces back.

Me: You don't understand! I'm breaking!

God: No, you don't understand. You're transcending, evolving. What you feel are growing pains. You're getting rid of the things and people in your life that are holding you back. The pieces are not falling down. The pieces are being put in place. Relax. Take a deep breath and let those things you no longer need fall down. Stop clinging to pieces that are no longer for you. Let them fall. Let them go.

Me: Once I start doing that, what will I have left?

God: Only the best pieces of yourself.

Me: I'm afraid to change.

God: I keep telling you: You're not changing! You're becoming!

Me: Becoming. Who?

God: Becoming who I created you to be! A person of light, love, charity, hope, courage, joy, mercy, grace and compassion. I made you for so much more than those shallow pieces you decided to adorn yourself with and that you cling to with so much greed and fear. Let those things fall off you. I love you! Don't change! Become! Become who I want you to be, who I created. I'm gonna keep telling you this until you remember.

Me: There goes another piece.

God: Yes. Let it be like this.

Me: So...I'm not broken?

God: No, but you're breaking the darkness, like dawn. It's a new day. Become!! Become who you really are!!

Sometimes we just need to be reminded that God is always here and that, when we feel like we are breaking apart, we are not broken, but becoming!

Yours in Christ, Helen <><

Word for today Mark 3: 20-35

Then he went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, '*He has gone out of his mind.*' Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, '*Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.*' And he replied, '*Who are my mother and my brothers?*' And looking at those who sat around him, he said, '*Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.*'

Mark 3 19b, 20, 31-35)

Meditation of Mary, the mother of Jesus

Were we upset by his response, by his ignoring us in favour of the crowd? Not a bit of it. We were ashamed more like; for we should have known better than to pressure him as we did. We tried to restrain him, you know – told him to make haste slowly, avoid causing offence – and all because some people were saying, '*He has gone out of his mind.*'

They were shocked, I suppose, by his challenging the authority of the Pharisees, interpreting the Law, and setting himself up as a teacher, with disciples in tow. But, of course, they shouldn't have been; for that's what God had called him to do, why he'd come into the world, as they'd surely have understood if they'd only listened.

How could we care more about what **they** thought than about him? But foolishly, we did. The crowd didn't though – those gathered around him when we arrived. They were drinking in his every word, listening with wrapt attention, wonder in their eyes. Never mind what others said – to them he was special, making God known in a way no one had done before.

Alright, so blood may be thicker than water; but at that moment **they** were being his family, not **us**, for they were honouring the Father, doing his will.

That's what he wants from us – from you, from me, from everyone. That's what it means to be his people: to love and serve God. I forgot that, for a moment, and was rightly reproached. May he save me from making the same mistake again.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

thank you for staying true to us despite the cost,
for walking the way of love even though it was also the way of the cross.

Help us to stay true in turn, not being swayed by what others say of you, by the response of this world,
but proving our commitment through honouring the Father, seeking to do his will.

Teach us that if we would truly do so we must be one with you,
equipped and enabled by your grace to follow in your footsteps as best we can.

Amen

Word for today, Meditation and Prayer from 'A most amazing Man' by Nick Fawcett

Gathered for Prayer....

Meets on Zoom at **9am and 7pm** on Wednesday. **All are welcome!**

Here's the link....

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5742722693?pwd=R3BEQ3pPV0ZJNndRWVVKwWVdvd6QT09>

Meeting ID: 574 272 2693 Passcode: xsX5UM

Refugee Sunday



Being part of the Welcome Churches network means that not only is it Father's Day on Sunday, 20th June, but also Refugee Sunday – something that I will be focusing on in the morning worship at Christ Church. Hope to see you there!!



But during the week before, as part of Refugee Week (14th-20th), you can tune in to this event, 'Refugees, Jesus and Justice', booked through the link in the picture.

Helen <><

In absentia....

Rev. Helen will be on holiday from the **11th June to 18th June** –

and this time she and Colin are actually going somewhere!! To lovely Devon – please pray for good weather!!!

If you have a pastoral issue,

please contact Debbie Mabbitt or your Pastoral Visitor –

if you have an item for the prayer chain,

please contact Elizabeth Manson by email (25ehsm@gmail.com) or on her mobile (07779 668882).

Thank you.

Booking for Church Services

We have **more capacity for people on a Sunday morning** so please feel free to book a place.

Remember - before 6 pm the previous Sunday - to email chichristchurch@gmail.com or phone 01243 531594

and leave a message on the answerphone stating:

the date(s) of the service(s) you wish to book,

the names of the people you are booking for and whether or not you are all in a 'bubble'

if there are any seating requirements.

You will receive an email confirmation of your place(s) by the end of the Wednesday evening before each service.