

Christ Church News (28)
by and for the Christ Church Family
13th September 2020



Musings from the Manse

Dear Friends,

Just when you thought things were going swimmingly, something comes along to scupper your plans!!

I'm referring to two things in this – firstly, plans to gather for worship at Christ Church, (and Pagham), are sorted - or are they? The 'Induction in the Park' is set, (tick), fine weather ordered and should be delivered, (tick), everyone looking forward to getting together for a socially distanced chin wag, (tick)! Ah, but hang on; we then get the news that social gatherings over 6 people are going to be banned!! Fortunately, the new guidance doesn't come into force until Monday - (pewh!)

However, from what I gather on the grapevine, this will not apply to worship in church – though the 'official' denominational guidance is still yet to confirm this. So how does this make you feel?

Personally, there is a greater sense of frustration at not being able to gather as we would like to – but then there is the overpowering need to consider the risk to everyone - (including myself) - of coming back too soon. I long to get to know everyone, but appreciate that this might have to be on a much smaller scale and over a much longer period of time. I hope that, whatever guidance does come out in the next few days, it will be something we can accept - no matter how we feel.

Secondly, in the ongoing saga of 'Helen's new knee', there has been a further twist to the tale!! A small amount of infection set in at the end of last week, due to part of my scar refusing to close up and heal. Antibiotics prescribed and being taken, I visited the Nurse yesterday, who looked at my knee and did that sharp intake of breath that people do in some situations, and said, "*You might need this re-stitching*"! Oh, joy and rapture!! I go to see the Orthopaedic knee team tomorrow morning to see what they have to say – but I feel my journey to recovery has just become a whole lot longer!!

Yours in Christ,
Helen
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Word for Today Matthew 18: 21-35

Reflection – Meditation of Simon Peter

Do you find forgiving easy?

I don't.

Oh, it's simple enough to say the words – 'apologies accepted' and all that – but to **mean**, them,
to pardon from the heart,
that's a different matter.

We can try, of course,
genuinely strive to let sleeping dogs lie,
but when you've been hurt, wronged, misjudged, mistreated,
it's hard to put that behind you,
as though it had never been.

Once, perhaps,
twice, maybe,
even a third time for some,
but as many as **seven** times?
I don't think so.

For most of us then, trust is broken,
fractured beyond repair.

So when Jesus answered that question of mine,
suggesting not seven but **seventy-seven**,
you could have knocked me over,
such patience surely too much to ask of anyone!

Only it wasn't,
for he showed just that to **me**,
as he shows it **you**,
as he shows it to **all**,
daily forgiving and forgetting,
the ledger cleared,
the slate wiped clean.

There's no ceiling to his love,
no limit to his grace,
so next time you struggle to forgive,
just ask yourself this:
can't you pardon a little
for him who pardons so much?

Let's Pray ...

Merciful God,
we **intend** to forgive others,
we **try** to forgive others,
and we truly believe we **have** forgiven them,
but we find it so hard to let go of hurts,
grievances,
anger,
resentment.

Though we accept people's apologies
and try to put the past behind us
we find it almost impossible to let bygones be bygones,
the memory of wrongs done to us,
real or imagined,
festering within,
welling up to the surface at a moment's notice.

Help us to be more like you, able to forgive and forget.

Work within us,
and nurture a genuinely generous and merciful spirit.

Amen.

Quoted in Methodist Recorder: *submitted by Terry Timblich*

*"We must constantly hold on to the notion of Kairos time -
the right time, the proper time, the time of opportunity and decision."*