

Christ Church News (20)

by and for the Christ Church Family

19th July 2020

Dear Friends,

Normally, at this time of the year, children and young people would be breaking up from school; families perhaps preparing for holidays, at home or abroad; churches welcoming holiday visitors and tourists – but not so much this year. As I mentioned last week, 2020 has been the year when everything changed.

We continue to wrestle with our 'new normal' and look to being able to gather together once more in the places where we feel God's presence and to worship Him.

But we must be patient ... as they say, *'Rome wasn't built in a day'*!! We need to ensure that it is safe and legal to be able to worship together again – and to encourage and comfort those who are nowhere near ready to leave the safety of their homes.

For myself, not being in a vulnerable group and being classed as a 'key worker', I was happily beginning to get to grips with ministry in Chichester and looking forward to getting out and about. That was until I had a phone call from a lovely lady at The Spire Hospital in Havant, asking me if I could get myself ready for my dual knee replacement operation on the 3rd August!! (Whether both knees are done together or separately, I do not know as yet.)

All this came about when, in early November last year, I saw an Orthopaedic Consultant who told me that I would need both my knees replaced. As the waiting list was about 6 months, he said it would be after Easter this year before I would hear anything. Then, of course, Covid-19 happened; hospitals concentrated on those affected by this awful pandemic – and rightly so; all electives were cancelled, and I prepared myself for a long wait.

So it was not without a little shock that I was told I would have to isolate myself - (and Colin being the lovely man he is, is isolating too!) - from the 20th July until I go into hospital – and then for a further two weeks after I am home. I will know more details when I visit the QA Hospital for my pre-op assessment on the 15th July – but, for now, I ask that you bear with me until I am fighting fit and raring to go once more.

I will continue to meet over Zoom and be available on the phone – but for a few weeks post-op, I'm not sure what I'll be able to do. Any handy hints and tips from those who have prior experience of knee replacements will be gratefully received – otherwise I am in God's hands and the hands of the NHS!!

Yours in Christ,

Rev'd Helen <><

Word for Today Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

In the parable of the weeds and the wheat we learn of God's infinite patience with humanity, allowing good and bad to live side by side. As we consider his goodness and mercy we ask, 'Are we willing to live with others we do not easily relate to?'

Meditation of one of the 12

Wheat and weeds, good and evil – it all sounds so simple, doesn't it – so straightforward; the distinction between them as clear as it's possible to be. And we'd like to think it is, wouldn't we: ethical issues, moral decisions, black and white, right and wrong, true and false?

It's so much easier that way, for we know precisely where we stand: no need to argue or debate things, no need even to think – the correct course is prescribed for us and woe betide anyone who dares suggest otherwise.

But is that what Jesus was saying?

I'm not so sure, for, look more carefully, and you'll see that you can't always separate the one from the other - not in this life, anyway.

There is good and evil, of course, sometimes starkly apparent, but the reality is that there's a bit of each in all of us; everyone capable of rising so high or falling so low. It's not for us to point the accusing finger, to sort out the wheat from the weeds, much though we'd occasionally like to.

Judge not, lest you be judged – isn't that what Jesus told us?

And we ignore that message at our peril; for we may well find ourselves in the dock should we pursue our case too far.

No, the advice is simple enough: look not to others but yourself, your own words, your own deeds, and ensure that the seed which was sown is the one that is growing - that the final crop lives up to expectations. Judgement will come in God's good time, our lives weighed in the balance and the harvest assessed – will your life prove to have been fruitful?

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, we forget sometimes that it was not the outwardly pious who responded to you, but those condemned as sinners – the outcasts, the rejects, the socially unacceptable.

They recognised their faults and acknowledged their need, while the so-called '*religious*' felt sure of their own righteousness.

We try not to make the same mistake, but we can fall into the trap so easily.

We turn faith into rules and regulations, taking refuge in outward observance, creed and dogma, forgetting that it's the heart which counts -

the person within - rather than the image we project to the world.

Teach us to recognise our weakness and to acknowledge our dependence on your grace, so that, when the day of reckoning comes,

we may be happy for you to deal with us as we have dealt with others.

In your name we ask it.

Amen.

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

from Daniel Dei

I have been singing this chorus for many years but only found the story behind it this week. It is such a powerful story that I have decided to share it with family and friends.

Nokseng, a Garo tribesman in North East India who accepted Christ, was asked by the village chief to '*Reject the faith in this foreign God*'.

He replied: '*I have decided to follow Jesus. There is no turning back!*'

His two sons and his wife were killed in front of him, but he refused to recant and was killed.

His martyrdom led the Garos to become Christians. His statement has become a popular chorus.

Will you stand for Christ whatever persecution you face?"

by Ctrl + Clicking on the links below you can see more of the story and listen to the chorus.

[I Have Decided To Follow Jesus 🎵 The Story & The Song](#)

[True story of 'I have Decided to Follow Jesus'](#)

Christ Church will be open for Private Prayer from the 22nd July

Welcomers will be there to guide people

Days and times are:

Wednesdays, 10 – 11:30 am and Sundays, 4 – 5:30 pm

Much work has been done to make this happen,

so, let's pray that folks will feel comfortable enough to support this

Please see the other attachment – '*Leaflet - open for prayer*' – for more information

Congratulations to Zizzi Temple on the award of a
BA(Hons)2:1 in English and Creative Writing
from the University of Chichester