

Facebook Thoughts for the Day – July 2020

1st July – Rev Cliff Shanganya

Because God will examine the kind of workers we have been for him, we should build our lives on his Word and build his Word into our lives.

The Bible alone tells us how to live for him and serve him. Consistently and diligently study God's Word so that we will not be lulled into neglecting God and our true purpose for living.

A blessed Wednesday to you all

Love thoughts and prayers from
Rev Cliff Shanganya



2 Timothy 2:15 NLT

Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.

2nd July – Elsie Warby



We may not be able to attend live musical events at present but I enjoyed a marvellous open-air performance in our back garden on a warm afternoon in May. It was a glorious concert of song with two main soloists: the robin in the treetop, and the blackbird on the chimney pot. They sang as loud as they could; the sweet fluting song of the blackbird, followed by the exuberant notes of the robin. The blackbird responded, then the robin again, repeating the sequence over and over again. It seemed as if they were trying to out-sing each other.

They went on for hours, with only a pause now and then, as the blackbird moved from chimney to rooftop, and the robin to a different branch of the tree. They were accompanied by the two-tone rhythm of the chiff-chaff song, and the less tuneful wood pigeons.

The grand finale was a glorious solo from the blackbird!

Enjoying this joyful, natural singing, reminded me of words from the Psalms: 'LET EVERYTHING THAT HAS BREATH PRAISE THE LORD'. (Ps. 150:6)

Perhaps we can learn from the birds, and sing in joyful praise wherever we are, 'Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord' (Eph. 4:19).

3rd July – Rev Betty Trinder

My husband Mark and I always try to be the first to say, "pinch punch, first of the month". Remember doing that when you were at school, sometimes it would get out of hand, "punch and a kick for being so quick" and "punch in the belly for being so smelly". You would think we would have grown out of all that childish ways but a wise person once said, "Growing older is compulsory, growing up is optional." Looking back over my working life as I near retirement has been something I have had plenty of time to do since Lockdown. It is always easy to talk about the "good old days" and that it was much better when we were growing up in the 50's and 60's, but there is much of that time I am happy to leave in the past. Putting racist notices in windows of rooms for rent, inequality for women, sexism in the workplace, shame heaped on people who weren't married, children born out of wedlock. What will this generation say in future years? Is this their "Golden Age?" 2020 was the year we had a Pandemic, we all stood up and said, "Black lives Matter", neighbours looked after each other and we didn't have to go to school! This year is half over, we have six months left; are you a half empty glass person, or a half full person? Let's be positive, this is OUR time, whatever age we are.

4th July – Deacon Jen Woodfin

At the beginning of the lockdown I made a commitment to take a photo each day as a basis for spiritual thought. As I did in my Sabbatical, some years ago, I wanted to journal a short reflection and relate it to a relevant Bible verse. As I got going with this, it became easier and, surprisingly, more fulfilling. I had assumed that, if I was very busy, I would find these reflections a burden. But no! I have relished the chance to reflect on a single moment captured by my camera and found that God has led me to the appropriate Bible verse and been very much in the process.

As lockdown began to ease, I thought that I would stop when my reflections reached 100. This milestone was this last Thursday and, for many reasons, this seemed a good time. And, it would be a relief not having to find this time each day. But, I was completely taken by surprise when I had completed the last one. Instead of relief, I felt a real sense of loss. So much so, that I have decided to carry on! This exercise has become an important part of my daily spirituality.

I have re-learned that, by giving time to God, we receive blessings in return. Those blessings may not be dramatic, and they may not be obvious to those around us, but they will always be enriching, life-enhancing and a true gift.

6th July – Rev Barbara Winner

I am a person of contradictions! I do not hoard 'stuff'. Yet there are things I am reluctant to throw out or change. One is our computer. I say 'our' because John and I chose it together and the screen saver says 'Barbara and John.' It is now old and I know that really it needs updating but I am reluctant to give it up!

The other day it packed up and however much I tried I couldn't breathe life back into it. I was upset. Then I remembered that I hadn't tried the 'switch it off, switch back on' routine and so I tried it – and it worked! This made me think that at the moment we are in a 'switch off switch back on' place with our church buildings.

How will we view them when we are back in them? Will we want them to be the same – that might be comforting – or will we want to refresh them? If we take all the pews out will we be able to seat more people if we need to socially distance? Are there outdoor areas we could use differently? Do we even need a building at all?

7th July – Rev Elizabeth Jolly



I am reading a book called *How to be a bad Christian* (by Dave Tomlinson) which is about experiencing God in everything.

A few days ago, an orchid appeared in an area of the garden I was encouraging to go wild. I was thrilled by this little plant, only half the size of the surrounding grasses. I was so excited about this orchid, that I was telling anyone I happened to have contact with, including the local wildlife photographer.

The next morning as I emerged to walk the dog, there was Sarah, the photographer, lying fully stretched on her front with her long lens trained on the orchid, and her greeting was "There's even a ladybird on it!".

Is God in the Orchid, the ladybird or the enthusiastic photographer up at a very early hour with her camera?

Maybe all three.

8th July – Rev Cliff Shanganya

This psalm is almost a duplicate of 2 Samuel 22. It may have been written toward the end of David's life when there was peace among the people of Israel. In it God is praised for his glorious works and blessings through the years.

God's protection of his people is limitless and can take many forms. David characterised God's care with five military symbols. God is like (1) a *rock*, an immovable foundation that can't be shaken; (2) a *fortress* or place of safety where the enemy can't follow; (3) a *shield* that comes between us and harm; (4) a *power that saves because* God has the strength and power to save; and (5) a *place of safety* high above our enemies. If you need protection, look to God.

A blessed and peaceful day to you all.



Psalm 18:3 NLT

I called on the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and he saved me from my enemies.

9th July – Judith Semmons

We're all very familiar with the story of Noah and the ark: Once the floods had ended, God said the following: *'I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind.* (NIV bible - Genesis 9 v 13 –15).



I find it amazing how rainbows are formed: the sun shines through falling rain with the light showing the separate colours in a droplet of water, creating the wonderful arc of the rainbow: Two things coming together to form something beautiful, just as people have come together in so many different ways during the Corona pandemic. Rainbows are often linked with a sign of hope, just as God offered new hope to his people, after He sent the floods in the story of Noah, because He despaired of their wickedness.

So rainbows have been drawn and frequently displayed in people's homes during this pandemic; offering a sign of hope. Even last night when I watched the news, they interviewed a family who had lost a loved one to the pandemic and the family said something to the effect that they had to move on and have hope.

I am reminded of the words from the hymn 'Colours of day' – an Advent hymn, when we are filled with the hope of Jesus' coming. *'So light up the fire and let the flame burn. Open the door let Jesus return. Take seeds of his Spirit, let the fruit grow. Tell the people of Jesus, let his love show.* (Singing the Faith 167)

10th July – Rev Betty Trinder

When I first felt God calling me to preaching and ordained ministry I was given a mentor called Beryl Lucas. I would go to her whenever I felt doubt in that calling or lack of confidence in my ability and she would say, "Tell me, dear, have you prayed about this?" I first replied to that, "God hasn't got time to be interested in my little problems, there are much bigger problems for Him in the World" and she would reply, "God is ESPECIALLY interested in the little things in your life before they become the big things." I have never forgotten that and when I take time out to talk to God in prayer or write down my thoughts I have never ceased to be amazed at how, sometimes..not always, I have received peace in my heart and got through whatever was worrying me feeling not alone but guided and comforted by that unseen, but heart felt presence of God. I hope and pray that those of you who have joined in with these prayers, ESPECIALLY those who feel you are too small for God to notice or hear your prayers, now have a growing understanding and confidence that God hears ALL our prayers, " Heavenly Father, we thank you for prayer, a chance to tell you everything that is on our hearts, thank you that we can praise you when things are going well, and praise you until things begin to go well again, bless all who are now praying to you more with greater confidence and assurance that you love us all and hear all our prayers....Amen"

11th July – **Dee Moden**

STRANGER or SAVIOUR: Matthew 25 v 31 – 46

When we look at a stranger what do we see?
Someone who is just like you and like me
Outer appearance smart and neat
A pleasure to meet in anyone's street
someone to chat to and pass time of day or
maybe to walk with along the way.

But what if the stranger is bedraggled and smelly?
Maybe there are rumblings from their empty belly!
What do we do now, they are not our 'type',
do we turn away so they are no longer in sight?
This could be Jesus says a voice in my head
Thinking of words my Saviour had said.

Those on the right had shown great compassion
those on the left had failed in God's mission.
Jesus my Saviour has died for me
He didn't turn away when nailed to the tree.
He asks us to care for those in need
Share our resources banish our greed.

Our reward is great if we only care
Looking around there is plenty to spare
'God's love is for all' are the words Jesus said
these are the truths – and by him we are led.
To help those in need is our mission today
so turn around swiftly and don't look away.

13th July – **Rev Jacqui Horton**



The Circuit's virtual 'Open Gardens' event has been very successful. See the photo album at <http://centralnorfolkmethodistcircuit.org.uk>. Our weekly Worship @ Home sheet yesterday celebrated gardens as well as including a reflection from Judith Semmons on the parable of the sower. Hear Judith and experience words and music at <http://www.wattonmethodist.btck.co.uk/This%20Week>. In addition, the circuit telephone service, led this week by myself and Deacon Jen, focussed on the spirituality of gardens and can be heard, and seen, here https://youtu.be/RJMhs32_FUw. Jen plays 'An English Country Garden' 6 minutes into the recording. In this latter service, we read short verses that talk of the 4 important gardens that provide a framework to the biblical story. But, there is one more garden that I didn't mention yesterday. It comes from Isaiah 58 and says, "The Lord will guide you continually...and you shall be like a watered garden". We can be like a garden! And a watered one at that... if we let God be our continual guide and companion...

14th July – **Rev Barbara Winner**

I spent a pleasant lunch time in a Summer House which belongs to my friend Liz. This Summer House was originally one of the huts which housed TB patients at Kelling Hospital. My mother was one of those patients. She was there in the cold months which she hated. Part of the treatment was to be isolated and outside. I always imagined these huts were larger and more enclosed – but they are not! Lovely on a summer's day but in the cold, wind, rain and snow very unpleasant – especially for someone who thrived in the sun and the heat. She often talked about this time – the isolation and how people treated her.

Mum supported many charities and one close to her heart was the Leprosy Mission. She felt she could identify with the way those suffering from leprosy were often shunned by others. Another of her charitable works was to prisoners – supporting them financially, prayerfully and by writing Christmas letter – by hand. Piles of them! I often think of this when I see Wayland Prison on my walks to Griston.

The effects of Covid 19 with the isolation, fear and limitations it has brought has helped me to reflect on both of these things and how I could respond.



15th July – Rev Cliff Shanganya



1 Timothy 4:4-5 NLT

Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it but receive it with thanks. [5] For we know it is made acceptable by the word of God and prayer.

'Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it but receive it with thanks. For we know it is made acceptable with the word of God and prayer.' 1 Timothy 4 v 4 - 5

In opposition to the false teachers, Paul affirms that everything God created is good (see Genesis 1). We should ask for God's blessing on his created gifts that give us pleasure and thank him for them. This doesn't mean that we should abuse what God has made (for example, gluttony abuses God's gift of good food; lust abuses God's gift of love; and murder abuses God's gift of life). Instead of abusing these gifts from God, which is sinful, we should enjoy them by using them to serve others and honour him. Let us take time to thank God for the good gifts he has given. Are we putting them to the best use? Food for thought!

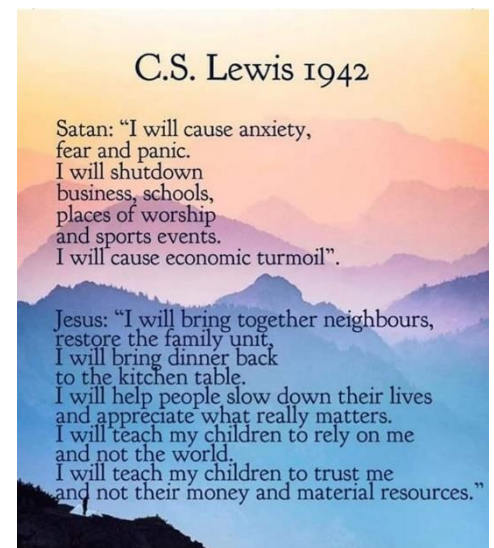
Have a peaceful, safe and wonderful day.

16th July – Judith Semmons

July 16th 2016 is a date that will stay with me. I am aware that I have shared aspects of this story before during church services but thought it might be helpful to share it with others.

My husband and I were on holiday in Somerset and having already spent a week there, our son, Thomas, was due to join us the next day. However, in the early hours of that morning - 1.20 am, to be precise, we had a phone call from a friend advising us that in our absence they had been contacted, as Thomas had been involved in a car accident and was going to A&E. They were planning to join him there. Little did we know the extent of his injuries. Thomas was in hospital for 10 days and was back at work on light duties three weeks' later. Although his injuries weren't life changing, he was lucky to survive: Driving off the road, spinning 6 foot high, (so we were told) into a mass of trees with one tree landing on top of the car, could have been fatal.

What did he 'gain' from his accident? (If it can be phrased that way). At that time the Police Commissioner was starting a campaign to reduce accidents and fatalities in young drivers so Thomas went on to speak at 6th Form Colleges about his experience and how all three emergency services were involved, as well as the impact on families. He was also introduced to Jenny Pathmarajah: When he was struggling in hospital and visiting times were limited, I knew the one person who could visit at any time was a minister so Jenny went along and they have remained friends. Thomas is not 'religious' but I believe Jenny and her husband have had a positive impact on him. That contact has also been strengthened by his new(ish) girlfriend originating from Jersey and her parents attend one of the churches which Jenny is responsible for. And he also says that someone was definitely watching over him on the evening of his accident. Finally, he has had a career change and recently completed his 2 year probationary training with the Police Force....influenced by his contact with them when he shared his story. Covid 19 has had a devastating impact on the world: some people have been more greatly affected than others and the future for us all is uncertain. We can have that question, as we no doubt had after Thomas' accident....'Why?' Perhaps in the case of Covid 19, CS Lewis offers some thoughts in a reflection written in 1942, during the 2nd World War.



17th July – Rev Betty Trinder

My husband's full name is Mark Thomas Trinder, so of course some called him Tommy after the comedian Tommy Trinder. My "Tommy" or "Doubting Thomas" is an engineer and likes to know how everything works, he needed to see before he could believe in God. He did not come to faith until he had his own encounter with the Holy Spirit and whilst he could not see, or touch, he certainly felt the power of the Spirit in a real way. He had been reading the Bible whilst we were at Spring Harvest (he was open to faith which I think is the first step) when he read the verses of Jesus's transfiguration and the voice from heaven saying, "This is my dear Son, with whom I am well pleased, listen to him". (Mathew 17: 5) I was out at the time and when I came in he was shaking, literally, from the experience. I said to him, "What are you going to do about it?" He didn't know what to do, it took a whole year before we came back to Spring Harvest for him to make his decision. When the preacher in the Big Top worship at Butlins in Skegness, where 5,000 people were worshipping, asked if anyone wanted to come forward to be prayed for and offer their lives to Jesus he knew what he needed to do. Jesus said to the disciple Thomas, "Do you believe because you see me? How blessed are those who believe without seeing me" (John 20: 29) Do you need proof that God exists, do you believe but are yet to have an extraordinary encounter with the Holy Spirit. "You are blessed" said Jesus but don't expect the encounter to always be a big dramatic experience, you can talk to Jesus and feel the peace that comes from that simple conversation we call prayer. In times like these it is that peace that means more than anything else in our lives.

18th July – Rev Liz Jolly

There's nothing nice in the Bible about frogs. The plague in Egypt to help Pharaoh change his mind about letting the Hebrews go, gets referred back to even in the Psalms.

Yet some people think they are really cute – but that may be the influence of Kermit!

In the world of nature there are some creatures that make amazing changes during their life; the nymph into a dragonfly or the tadpole into a frog.

This little creature (in the photo) was a tadpole a few weeks ago and now it is having to explore a new world, and hop instead of swim. It is leaving the safety of the pond for the grasses and the hedgerows. We have got to make changes, from staying in to going out. From not singing when we have a hymn that would be just right in a service, to having shorter services (no one will mind!); but not socialising after the service – that will be hard. We have got to learn to hop.

These changes are not as difficult as for the tadpole becoming a frog; but the 'Rock of Ages' will also be the one who 'goes before you.' (Matthew 29 7).



20th July – Rev Anne Richardson



On one of my walks recently I spotted these mirrors. Even on quiet roads, cars can whizz by, making it very hard to pull out safely. It reminds me a little of the Roman god Janus, from which the first month of the year is named of course, who looked both to the past and the future. Many of us have 20/20 hindsight, even if our foresight needs correcting with glasses! Yet one of humanity's failings seems to be the inability to learn from the mistakes of the past.

Today may we each spend a moment looking to yesterday to learn how we may better live today in anticipation of tomorrow. In so doing may we put our hand into the hand of God, our one true guide.

Psalm 25:4-5 - "Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long." Lord our God, in Your strong hands, I place my life today. Forgive the mistakes of yesterday, and help me to follow Your guidance for today. I pray in the powerful name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour, in whom I trust my future. Amen.

21st July – Malcolm Hunt “Beegone”

On a warm bright June day, the library was a cool place to enjoy an after lunch snooze. There was buzzing from a bumblebee wanting to escape outside to the colourful bloom abundant gardens. Persistently it bumped against the 10 foot high window pane. It was too high for me to make a jar and cardboard capture. A broom could not encourage it to come lower. I tried drawing the curtain but it stayed at the pane. If only I had a long butterfly net like the Victorians used. It must have been battling away long before I saw it for suddenly it fell to the sill, moved its legs slowly then was still. Is there a heaven garden for bumblebees ? I carried the body to lay it under a foxglove that it would have loved. There came the realisation that we are all trapped in this world and will sometime be released. Apparently, where we go depends on our choices now.

22nd July – Rev Cliff Shanganya

Verse of the day: Psalm 19:1-2

[1] ... The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. [2] Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. ...

We are surrounded by fantastic displays of God’s craftsmanship—the heavens give dramatic evidence of his existence, his power, his love, and his care. To say that the universe came into being by chance is beyond reason. To argue that mind-boggling beauty and complexity can come out of nothing and was created by no one seems absurd. The design, intricacy, orderliness, and life-giving environment of our world clearly point to a personally involved Creator. As you look at God’s handiwork around you in nature and in the heavens, thank him for such magnificent beauty and the truth it reveals about the Creator. Have a blessed day!



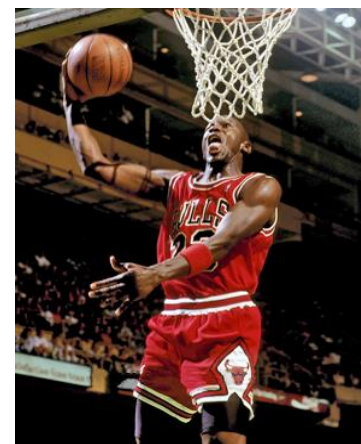
Psalm 19:1-2 NLT

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. [2] Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.

23rd July – Judith Semmons ‘Perseverance’

Whilst compiling another thought for the day, I stumbled across a service I’d prepared for Hingham Methodist Church, during Lent 2019, entitled ‘perseverance’. When I came across it, I was sitting in our office admiring the sunshine and longing, like many other people to get back to normality and go off in our motorhome. So I thought, ‘Well how ironic is that? I wonder what I said?’ So I had a look.

I had shared the fact that I’d decided to hunt out a simple story about perseveranceas follows: *“I could have told you about Michael Jordan, the highly successful American basketball player who struggled at first to be selected for his high school team as he was too short. The story goes that he was told that putting salt in his shoes would help him grow and be successful. Then he realised the true answer was through persevering at his game and by practising hard, he could succeed. Or I could have told you about the successful artist, Henri Matisse who became interested in art but his parents didn't think he was gifted enough. So he persevered and developed an unusual artistic style.”*



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I shared with the congregation that it had then occurred to me that the examples of perseverance existed in Hingham church and other congregations; people who have persevered when faced with challenging situations. My service continued with the theme of perseverance and how Jesus demonstrated that characteristic in so many ways, especially during Lent. We are currently having to persevere and stay strong. Is Jesus walking with us today?

24th July – **Rev Betty Trinder**

Matthew 8: 26 states, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?”

One of the hindrances to a faithful response to Jesus in the storms of our lives is our acute awareness that He let us get into the storm to begin with. We would rather have a Saviour who didn't sleep in the back of the boat. We would prefer that He would navigate us around the storms rather than deliver us from the middle of them. What we need to remember is that our God has never guarded His people from storms, he even lets us suffer in them sometimes. Why?



Jesus could have navigated His disciples around the storm. It blew up without warning (can you see the likeness of Covid 19 to this story) but the Lord of creation isn't surprised by anything, He's seen it all before. He knew about the Cross ahead of time, and He knew about this storm. However, if He had let the disciples avoid it, they would never have known Him as the Master of the winds and the waves, they would never have asked the question, “What kind of man is this” v. 27. They would not have known Jesus as their Deliverer that day . Sometimes Jesus lets us get into the middle of storms so that we will know Him better. When we avoid dangerous waters, we avoid the Deliverer. When all is well, our faith only needs a Jesus who is asleep in the boat. Whether we like it or not, some of His characteristics can only be discovered in the deep, treacherous waters. Is all we really want, comfort and ease? No, deep down we want real faith, we want to know the One who accompanies us – even in the storms.

25th July – **Dee Moden 'Time'**

In the last 3 months time is what most of us have had in abundance and we read in Ecclesiastes chapter 3 that there is a time for everything. This has been, and still is in many ways, a strange time. For some it has been a time of bonding with immediate family - lessons to be learned from this experience. It has been a time for getting all the jobs done around the home and garden that have been waiting for a rainy day! A time for learning new technology enabling us to connect with family and friends, a time for getting to know our neighbours better at a distance, the list goes on.

What will we learn from all this time? Appreciation of the things around we normally take for granted – appreciation of the smaller things – sharing – caring - meeting up with friends for a coffee and chat, sharing a meal, having a hair cut!!

This time has brought to the forefront what is important, assessing the things we once thought as important, but have somehow paled into insignificance. God moves in mysterious ways! How wonderful it will be when we can all meet to celebrate the wonders of His love.

27th July – **Rev Barbara Winner**



I seem to be going through a phase of things breaking or failing to work as I expect them too! The result is to try my hand at ‘fixing things!’ (not too successfully I have to say!) One of these things is the garden hose which suddenly stopped obliging me. It is old but it does have various parts which can be replaced so I thought it was worth a go! This resulted in me getting soaked – not once but three times. (I am a slow learner!) Of course the problem is putting new parts on an old hose but I am persisting in hope! Haven't I heard something like this before? ‘No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wine skins.’ (Mark 2:22 RSVP)

Looks like it might be a new garden hose then?

28th July – Rev Liz Jolly - Wildlife in my garden

A lot of wildlife passes through, or possibly lives, in my garden. Some are welcome, but not all.

The badgers pass though at night and dig holes in the lawn.

The pheasants peck at the growing vegetables when I am not looking; and as for the wood pigeon that has built a nest in the garage, that is no good for the paintwork of the car!

But the bees are kind enough to pollinate my runner beans.

The blue tits do acrobatics to eat the aphids on various flowers; and now I think a mouse has made an entrance into the chicken run to scavenge the corn they have left.

As far as my garden is concerned, it is a case of living with diversity, I think I have heard that phrase before, to do with living with humans. God made us and those creatures for a purpose, we have just got to get used to that diversity, because God said 'it was good'. (Genesis 1)



29th July – Rev Cliff Shanganya

A fluffy orange and white kitten sitting on a light blue background, looking up and to the right. The kitten's right paw is raised towards its face.

**1 John
4:16**

"We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them"

Reflection

God's presence in our lives is proof that we really belong to him (also see Romans 8:16). He also pours out his love in us and gives us the power to love (Romans 5:5; 8:9; 2 Corinthians 1:22). Rely on that power as you reach out to others. As you do so, you will gain confidence

Love, thoughts and prayers from Rev Cliff Shanganya

30th July – Judith Semmons



My husband and I enjoy going to a coffee shop for a cappuccino (and cake...sometimes!) Some considerable time ago..long before the corona virus, we decided to buy a cappuccino maker - perfect! It wasn't one where you put pods in but almost a mini version of a cafe style where you make the coffee then froth the milk. The only problem was that we failed on the milk frothing..on more than one occasion so we gave up. However, when our son started working at Waitrose and mastered his barista skills, home cappuccinos were back on the menu...Hoorah! Until he bought his own property and then it only happened when he visited. Still it was better than nothing and we could continue to enjoy cappuccinos when we went out. But not any more. Our son happened to ring us the other week just as I was

attempting...and failing.... to make a cappuccino. **"If only you'd taken the opportunity to learn from me whilst I was there."** He said.

What opportunities are we creating during the restrictions in place due to the Corona virus? Are we giving things priority that previously we would put to one side, just like I discarded any thoughts of cappuccino making.

In Ecclesiastes 3 v 1 - 8 we can read that there is 'A time for everything;' thinking especially of verses 6 and 7. **'A time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak.'**

What are we giving our time to at the moment and what are we making a priority?

31st July – Rev Betty Trinder

I have received my first State Pension! I can't be that old surely? Where have the years gone? Shall I go and get a bus pass? Actually, I have been receiving my Education Welfare pension and other pensioner's benefits for over 5 years. When you turn 60 you get free prescriptions, half price pensioner meals and just a few years ago women of 60 received their State Pension whilst men had to wait until they were 65. I am happy with that as it makes it fairer for men.

I remember my then 3 ½ year old granddaughter Eleanor saying to me as I took her to the park, "Don't worry Nanny, I'll look after you as you are VERY old!" I replied, "Really? How old do you think I am?" She took a long look before answering, "36". I thought, "I'll settle for that, thank you" as I was 59 at the time. It made me wonder, how old is old? At 62 she dared me to do a forward roll and I really struggled and then I thought I was old...until I tried, tried and tried again and did the forward roll in front of a group of ladies aged 80 – 90. Age is just a number, we are as old as we chose to be....I love the saying, "Growing older is compulsory, Growing up is optional" We are all God's children and when he say's to the disciples who tried to stop the children coming to Jesus, " Let the children come to me, for to such as these belongs the Kingdom of Heaven", there is a difference between being childish and being child-like. May we always have the child like innocence that trusts in God to be the grown up as we grow in faith..Amen