



ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'SUSPENDED CHURCH' NEWSLETTER

Sunday 7th February 2021

NEWS UPDATE



Ash Wednesday on Zoom



Jim Cam has agreed to prepare the pots of ash for our Ash Wednesday Zoom service on Wednesday 17th February, 8pm. He is busy researching how to create the perfect mix, which involves burning palm crosses, sieving the ash to create a fine powder, and mixing it with a little water or oil. Jim is hoping to become a master of pyrotechnics.

So far fourteen people have indicated that they would like to join in. If you would like join us, and you haven't already mentioned it, please send a message to myself, Jim, or Hilary, so we can arrange for your pot of expertly made ash to be delivered.

Larches and Savick Community Association food hub



In the midst of lockdown there is not always a lot of news to share. However, some things are still happening, including the local food hub which uses St Christopher's community hall once a week. I asked Christine Clitheroe, who organises the hub, to write us a little article for our newsletter:

"The group decided to start up the food hub in April 2020 when we realised how many families with children were struggling in the initial lockdown. People lost jobs, people were furloughed and lots of other issues added to the problem. After having discussions with head teachers from local primary schools we started the hub at Ashton Primary school. This was run with minimal volunteers due to social distancing guidelines. When schools reopened we

had to find a new base and we did this with the help of the head teacher from the school who had the contact details of one of the church members. With the help of Debra we very quickly set up the hub and were up and running in no time.

Each week we email the head teachers and they let us know how many families are struggling and would benefit from a bag of food. Food is then ordered from Fareshare and is collected each week for us by 'Lets Grow Preston' and their marvellous team of volunteers. Every Thursday we use the church hall to bag up the food which is then collected and distributed by the schools. Each family get a bag of food, a bag of fresh fruit and a bag of fresh vegetables to help see them through the week. We provide





between 60 and 70 bags of food each week. We are currently working with Ashton Primary school, Roebuck school, St. Andrews school, St. Bernard's, Lea Primary school and Golden Hill short stay school.

We are able to provide these food bags free of charge as we have managed to obtain funding from Preston City Council and Community Gateway Association. We have also

had food donations from Let's Grow Preston, The Purple Pantry, Costain and Preston North End Community Foundation Trust."



BIBLE READING – Philippians 2: 1-11

Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!

Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE – by Mike Clayton



I must admit to being a bit relieved when I saw what the reading was that Peter had given me – *"Imitating Christ's Humility," Philippians 2*. Well this is fairly well-trodden, safe ground for any preacher I thought... But is it really?

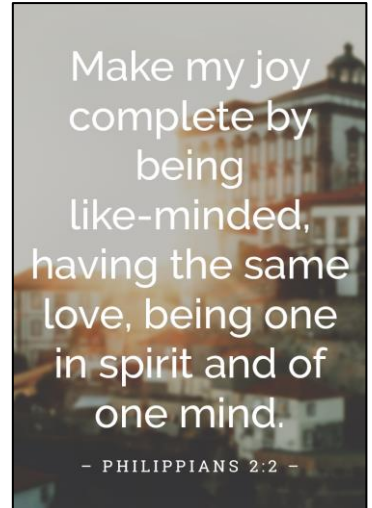
It is an unavoidable fact of life that from time to time people can and do fall out with each other – sometimes over tiny things, sometimes over big things. Whether that's with

other motorists on the roads, colleagues at work, with friends, with family and neighbours, or even at church.

And when I reflect on such difficult times that I have known, I wonder if there had been maybe just a bit more humility sprinkled around - like pixie's magic fairy dust in Peter Pan – would the outcome have been so much better for everyone involved?

That's not to say we will always totally agree about everything, but the manner in which we disagree can and does make such a difference. This is one reason why unity is so often a key theme for Paul in his writings, such as it is here, “...*make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being in one in spirit and of one mind.*” (v.2). Paul loved this church, he wanted it to thrive and grow, he knew how vital this all was.

Maybe humility is the most unsung virtue there is? And yet humility is such a vital ingredient, not least in our life together, and when it is scarce and in short supply - then we all suffer.

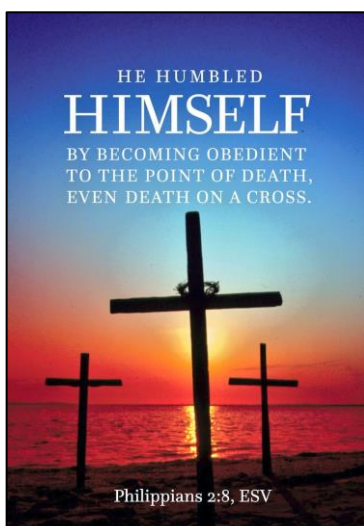


Our Lord Jesus could have had it all and yet He chose to make himself nothing and became a servant (v.7). Only by choosing such lowliness was he then qualified for greatness to come (v.10,11).

“And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

2 Corinthians 5:15

This is really simple and yet we all find it hard to do, and it's even harder the dimmer our view of Christ becomes. Once we see Jesus, perhaps for the very first time, perhaps for the first time in a long time, then it's much easier to humble ourselves before God; to be honest, open and transparent about our own failings. To know and experience his love shown supremely for each of us on the cross – and his risen power at work in our lives today.



All this because our Lord Jesus was prepared to humble himself.

And humility does not mean that we just roll over and let everyone walk all over us – Jesus was humble, and did he always let everyone walk over him? Humility is not about waving the white flag at the first sign of danger.

So let us cherish today humility and give it the honour it deserves – humility in our hearts towards others, and also our own humility before the Lord. To know His love, to enjoy His peace, that peace that only Jesus can bring as we imitate Christ's humility and surrender our lives, open up our lives, and follow Him. AMEN.

Prayers – Written by Hilary Holderness



Heavenly Father, in these strange times we see many disagreements by those who are trying to steer us back to normality through the pandemic. Give them the opportunity to stand back, respect another point of view, and come together for the good of all.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, in our church life, let us remember why we are here. We profess to follow Christ and as such we should try to follow Paul's teachings to the best of our ability, and think of others in our church family and not just ourselves. We can then all work together to spread the gospel.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father help us all to try to follow your teachings and example in all aspects of our lives. Help us to consider how we respond when disagreements happen. Let us always try to resolve that we will show humility in our dealings with others.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father let us pray today for one person we know who may be ill physically, or be struggling mentally with this current lockdown.....

Let us pray for those who have suffered a bereavement in their family or within their friendship group. We pray that your love may surround them in the rawness of their grief.

Lord in your mercy:

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father let us aim to follow the example of Jesus in the way we live our lives, in our dealings with others. Give us the grace to always do this.

Merciful Father; **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**