



## ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'CATCH UP CHURCH' NEWSLETTER

Sunday 9th May 2021

### NEWS UPDATE



#### Bee Hive at St Christopher's



Volunteers made a great start weekend tidying up the rear outside space and getting it ready for the new bee hive.



We are under a bit of pressure to get the work finished so that the hive can be established this season. There is a bit more clearing to be done at the rear of the church, the grass needs cutting, and it would be nice to paint the fencing. If you have any time available to help with these things please let Debra, Hilary, or Peter know.

[d.foste2880@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:d.foste2880@hotmail.co.uk)

[admin@stchristopherslea.org](mailto:admin@stchristopherslea.org)

[revpete@stchristopherslea.org](mailto:revpete@stchristopherslea.org)

It has been suggested that going forwards we might have a church gardening group that meets once a month on a

Saturday morning. Is that something *you* could be a part of?

#### Refreshments after Church

Based on government guidance these are allowed to recommence from Monday 17th May. We can have a maximum of six people around a table, with drinks/biscuits being served to the tables by designated individuals. The PCC will discuss how and when to proceed with this at our next meeting on 27th May.



## BIBLE READING – John 15: 9-17

*As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.*

*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.*

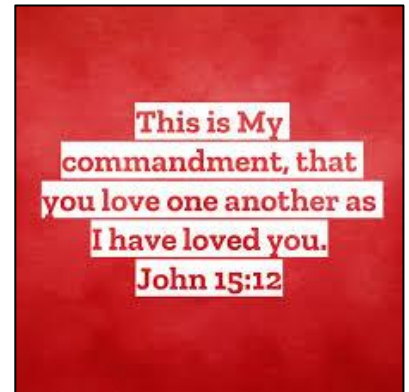
### THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE – written by Peter

#### Two sides of the same coin



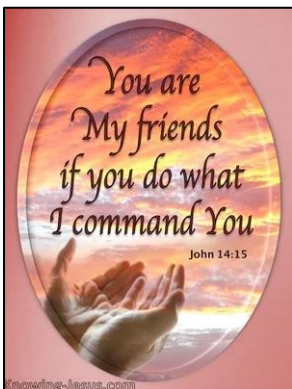
We find our meaning in life through our relationships. Humans are relational creatures. Christians think about this in terms of our relationship with God, and our relationship with other people. This is at the heart of Jesus' two great commandments – *'love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength'* and *'love your neighbour as yourself.'*

As Jesus continues with his image of the vine and the branches, we see that loving God and loving other people are closely intertwined. We might say that they are 'two sides of the same coin.' If we obey Jesus' commandments we will abide in his love, and his command is simply this – that we *'love one another as he has loved us.'* We therefore dwell in Jesus' love as we love other people, and vice versa.



#### Loving others brings us closer to Jesus

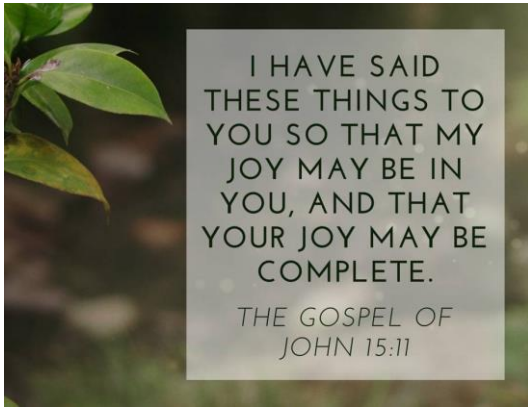
I know from my own experience that when I have practised love and kindness towards family, friends, neighbours, and strangers, I can come to Jesus in prayer with greater confidence. It feels good to do good, and we feel closer to God when we have loved our neighbours as ourselves.



We can of course still come before Jesus when we have fallen short of this, in which case we may have a few things to discuss with him! But fundamentally, if we want to stay connected to the vine and bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit, then we need to love others. When we live a life of love towards other people, Jesus tells us that we can relate to him as a friend. Those who show love towards others are friends of God. What more could we wish for?



## The Source of true Joy



The first disciples must have looked at Jesus and wondered whether they could ever know the kind of relationship with God that he had. Jesus tells them that they can! If they keep his commandments, and abide in his love, then they will experience the same kind of intimate friendship that Jesus' had with His heavenly Father. Jesus wants his followers to discover this, to experience it for ourselves, so that we too may feel the same joy that was in Christ Jesus. *'I have said these things to you so that*

*my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.'*

What a wonderful metaphor Jesus gives us. I don't know about you but I want to remain in the vine, enjoy Jesus' love, bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit, love other people, and experience all the joy that follows.



## Prayers – Written by Jim Cam

We lift up our hearts and thoughts in prayer.

In the faith of God the Father, who loves us and knows our every need;

In the name of God the Son, our loving Saviour, whoever lives to intercede for us;

In the power of God the Holy Spirit, who comes to our aid.

Lord in your mercy and love;

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Church with all the challenges it faces in today's world

in showing and making known the good news of God's love, as revealed through His Son Jesus.

As the church seeks to do so we are reminded that each of us, by God's grace, are called as his friends to bear the lasting fruit of God's love in the Spirit.

Lord in your mercy and love;

**Hear our prayer.**

O God, whose love is ever new and ever active,

Pour out your all-sufficient Spirit upon us and all your Church;

That with renewed faith, love, and obedience, we and all your people may joyfully show the life we share in Christ, and more selflessly serve your will to your praise and glory.

Lord in your mercy and love;

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world, for its nations and leaders. We are especially mindful at this time that whilst we are fortunate in having a sense of coming out of the worst of the pandemic, others parts of the world are suffering greatly from high infection and death rates.

We pray for all those in authority, particularly those who serve in government, that they may be given wisdom and a true spirit of service as they seek to serve not only our nation but also play a positive role in the wider world.

We pray that from the G7 summit real help and support will be delivered to those nations needing help and support at this time.

Lord in your mercy and love;

**Hear our prayer.**

Remember in your mercy Lord all those who are passing through illness at this time....

Help each one to look to you in the midst of their time of trouble, that they may receive the strength and peace that you alone can give.

Lord in your mercy and love;

**Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, whose we are and whom we serve,  
help us to glorify you  
in all the thoughts of our hearts,  
in all the words we speak,  
and in all that we do in our lives,  
as becomes those who know and love and serve you  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour and friend.

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

