West Sussex Area Ministry, United Reformed Church (Billingshurst, Petworth and Pulborough)

Bulletin for Sunday **26th April 2020**

Dear Friends

Greetings to you all, and I hope that you are all well. This Sunday we look at the meeting of two disciples with Jesus on the Emmaus Road. Just a prior notice that **if** you find that doing something with your hands (rather than just thinking about things in your head) helps you worship, then you might want some string or thread, or even some beads, for the prayer / activity after the first hymn. But it's optional, obviously!

"he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread."

Hymn: The King of love my shepherd is (Rejoice & Sing 552)

Prayer / Activity: Think about your life, and particularly your faith life, as a journey. Take time to remember some of the people, places and events that have been important on that journey. If you want, you can use your string or thread to represent those important steps on your journey by creating a bracelet or bookmark, with a bead or a knot for each step. Then think through it in the order in which each step occurred, thanking God for each person and event, and for being with you as you travelled, and as you continue to travel through life.

Reading: Luke 24: 13-35

Reflection: It was very early days - they had been through a shocking experience and were still stunned - traumatised. They hadn't had time to get their heads around it at all. So they walked… and talked… trying to get things to make sense… and as they did so Jesus came alongside them.
To their bereavement and confusion he brought gentleness and a framework into which their experience could fit, reminding them of things they knew, rebuilding their world. Yet even as they started to understand intellectually, they still didn't recognise him.
Only when they got home; when they stopped thinking and sat down to eat; when Jesus stopped explaining ideas and instead broke real bread and gave it to them; only then did they recognise who he was.
Faith is a journey with Christ always beside us. Sometimes it is difficult to get our heads around things, or to put them into words. Perhaps our best chance of finding Christ is not in ideas at all, but in experience of real events and people - times when we have felt his presence walking alongside us.

Fortunately we as disciples can - and do - support each other on the journey of faith, even if it is sometimes with the help of computers or televisions.

Hymn: Now the green blade rises (R&S 243)

Prayer: Living God
We bring before you the needs of the world…
We cannot welcome strangers into our homes,
but we pray for those who are lonely and have to eat alone.
We are unable to travel beyond our own communities,
but we pray for places where food is short and people hungry.
We may not chat and learn face to face,
but we pray for those who have yet to recognise you.
We have so many thoughts and concerns weighing us down…
We pray for our families, friends and neighbours -
and for ourselves, as we travel an unfamiliar road.
Be with us to teach and to bless, today and always.
Amen

Hymn: All my hope on God is founded (R&S 586)

Go in peace, knowing that Christ walks beside you;
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you and with all those you love
now and always. Amen

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News of our church family and wider communities

I have heard from many of you again this week, and mostly people seem to be bearing up. Seeds are being sown, gardens planted and daily walks enjoyed! My thanks to those who have helped with hymn book distribution - a few more of you should hopefully be able to follow the words this week. Let me know if you still need one.
I hope you are managing to find programmes of worship on television or radio or online to supplement these short notes. The fellowship may sadly be less warm and real, but looking on the bright side there are advantages to worshipping at home - the chairs are more comfortable and worshipping with a mug of coffee in your hand is fine! I suggested some online worship resources (for adults and children) a few weeks ago. If you missed that, or would like more ideas, just say so.

Have a blessed week, Anne Lewitt