

Bulletin for Sunday 4th July 2021

Good Morning, Friends. I hope you've had a good week. Next week, from Friday 9th to Monday 12th July, the URCs General Assembly, of which I'm a member, will be meeting, taking decisions about the life and work of the church. Topics being looked at include racism, conflict and the URC's 50th anniversary. More details are on the website, and Assembly can be followed live on the URC's website, Facebook page and YouTube channel, including the worship on Sunday 11th at 11am (order of service on website).

Let's pause as we prepare to worship..... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn: Let all the world in every corner sing (R&S 114)

Prayer: Our loving God and King,
we praise you, and we come now to worship you.
We know that you are here, beside us, always:
forgive us when we act as though you weren't...
We know that you are all we really need:
forgive us when we try to be self-sufficient...
Help us to trust you, and to be open to each other.
We ask your blessing on everything we do,
and everything we give in your service,
now and always.
We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Reading: Mark chapter 6 verses 1-13

Reflection: When I was in the Brownies, I remember that our motto was 'Be Prepared', and we were expected always to have in our pockets a clean handkerchief, a pencil, a piece of string and a coin for public phone boxes. Similarly, living in this country we all know that going out without a jacket or an umbrella is unwise. Yet Jesus deliberately sent out his disciples unequipped!

If you go on a self-catering holiday, you have a choice - you can take with you bags and bags of everything you could possibly need or want... or you can travel light and shop at the local shop when you get there. The first way, you can be sure of being able to eat exactly what you want, and have your usual, favourite, brands of everything. The second way, you may well have to make do, or at least to eat different things; but you will have a point of contact with the local community - a chance to chat, perhaps, and get to know what is going on - as well as putting a little bit into the local economy.

Jesus knew that only when we are vulnerable - not self-sufficient and not protected by comfortable possessions - do we learn to trust God, to listen to God, to depend on God. And only

when we meet people as equals, equally vulnerable, needing as well as being needed, sharing and talking together, do we build relationships of trust and openness with each other, within which the gospel can grow.

Hymn: God's spirit is in my heart (R&S 576)

Prayer: God, whose kingdom has truly come:
Jesus sent his disciples out to bring health to the sick,
so we pray for all those in need of healing:
those suffering in mind, body or spirit,
and also those who grieve....
We pray for those in the news
whose stories have touched us;
we pray for our local communities,
for those we love, and for ourselves.....
Compassionate God, hear all our prayers,
spoken and unspoken,
in Jesus' name Amen

Hymn: Go forth and tell! (R&S 574)

Blessing: May we go out as the twelve did, trusting God
and vulnerable enough to truly meet others;
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love
now and always. Amen

In all our churches morning worship is at 10.30am. Please remember masks and social distancing; congregational singing isn't allowed, and services are short and well ventilated! The evening 'Sunday at Six' service, with hymns, is on Zoom at 6pm. All welcome. And the best chances to chat are at the 11.30am 'After Church Coffee' Zooms!

Anne Lewitt