



Mary Tavy Methodist Church at Home - Newsletter for Advent Sunday 29th November 2020

O Come, O Come Immanuel and ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

The pictures at the head of this newsletter remind us of where we were last Advent - part of the world church , part of the British Church, meeting week by week usually in the chapel, but sometimes as Cafe Church and others as Messy Church.....today is so different

This Sunday we begin our preparation which takes us to Christmas. This year has been unique and challenging for all of us and continues to be so. We are a very small part of the world wide community which faces two of the same questions. How and when will we be released from the Pandemic and shall we survive Climate Change ? As Christians we believe that this is God's World and we are part of His creation charged with looking after it. This year the relentless presence of the Covid-19 virus has acted like a magnifying glass revealing our strengths and weaknesses and we do not know whether it will remain with us indefinitely. We have witnessed many acts of heroism and sacrifice - particularly from those who care in care homes and in hospital environments. We have witnessed the dedication and generosity of those who have sought and developed safe treatments and vaccines. At the same time we know that there have been some situations where those in positions of power and leadership have sought to focus on their own self interest and are eager to use the protection of the virus to increase that interest.

I don't think any of us are 'world leaders' but each of us has a role in responding to the opportunity of Advent to offer ourselves to God in preparation for His coming. Over the last nine months, Sunday by Sunday we have not met together for worship but we have had opportunity to meet using a service in written form. Some of us have shared in singing in broadcast services - others have focused on listening and looking for God's presence in a quiet place in our own home.

Today's reflection has been prepared by Janet Clare who shares her own experience of what that has been like.

Contribution from Janet - How we Spend Sunday (?)

God rested from his work on the seventh day.

Do we?

Is Sunday special when we can no longer meet at church?

Some people, not church goers but elderly, still have a feeling that it's all right for someone to wash a car on a Sunday, or to slave over a roast meal, but not to hang out the washing, even if the sun is shining.

However,

Sunday afternoons in Mary Tavy you will see more walkers out and about than on any other day, and although the shop is open in the morning, Martin and Tracey have a welcome rest from us jolly customers after 12 o'clock.

I find BBC a help in keeping Sunday different. I begin with Bells on Sunday, on radio4, then, if I haven't dropped off to sleep again, Something Understood gives me something to ponder. By 8-10am I am ready for Sunday Worship, which comes from a different church and denomination each week and to which I can listen again on BBC Sounds.

Then there is a vacuum. I should be getting ready for church. I fill the time as best I can. I read the Mary Tavy at home service, if I haven't already done so and the bits of the Saturday news paper that I haven't already read. I get an early lunch and then settle down to Songs of Praise. I may attempt to sing some of the hymns, if I know them.

The afternoon is for letters, phone calls, emails, birthday cards and a walk. I used to visit Phyllis 101 tomorrow, and listen as she reminisced about her childhood, but in lockdown I've just tried telephoning. This is not successful as she is profoundly deaf.

Facetime with daughter Anna in Canada finishes the day for me as she begins hers.

Yes, for me Sunday is different from the other days of the week, but not as satisfying as when I've been to a service with music and actual people!

Thankyou Janet. It would be good to hear from others - not necessarily about Sunday but about positive and negative experience of the period we are passing through and also contributions for the Christmas Card - greetings, drawings, practical ideas, new hobbies books you have read, anything that has been memorable

Peter Fox

