

Minister: Rev Derek McLean

25th January 2021

Dear Friends

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Matthew 5:4 (NRSVA)

Good grief.

No, that is not simply an expression of surprise, but an invitation to reflect on how we draw good out of our grief. We need to transform the sadness of loss into the joy of thanksgiving – or at the very least find comfort.

As most of you will have heard by now, my mum died last week. In one sense it was unexpected: when she went to sleep, nobody had any expectation that she would die that night; she simply didn't wake up in the morning. Nevertheless, it was not altogether a surprise. Mum was weak and frail, she had been in hospital for several weeks, and the fact that she couldn't have visitors added to the confusion caused by her affliction with dementia.

The pain of loss is offset a little from knowing that 2021 was going to be a tough year for mum. As her dementia progressed she would inevitably have to move from the only house my parents ever owned: the one which they bought in 1961 and in which I had grown up. She might well have faced that move whilst we were still suffering Covid restrictions on visiting. During 2020, two of her grandchildren had married and she had seen her two great grandchildren. (All those on my brother's side of the family!)

I'm grateful that she and I had taken the advice which I often give to families: we had talked about her funeral and we will get as close to her wishes as Covid restrictions permit.

Not for the first time, I will be taking a funeral where the words that I say will be inspired by things written in the Bible which was by the bedside. In her final months she was upset that she struggled as she said her prayers each day.

I know that there will be days when my emotions are more troubling than they are as I write this. I know only too well that grief and loss can be much worse than this.

Yet, I hold fast to my faith, and give thanks for hers, and I acknowledge the way my Christian journey began in the Methodist Chapel where she first took me all those years ago, and where we will say our goodbyes.

God bless you all.

Rev Derek

Morning Worship continues online every week at **10:30am**.

Our preacher this week is Roger Whittaker who is a Local Preacher in the Leicester West circuit. He was originally due to preach this Sunday at Great Glen, as part of the cover for my Sabbatical. He was still going to preach at Glen this week as one of the Sundays we opened the building for in-person worship but sadly that was cancelled due to tighter Covid restrictions. Fortunately that means he can preach for all four of our fellowships as we gather online.

Sunday Evening Circuit Services every week **6pm**

Revd Daniel Yovan will lead the service on the 31st.

Don't forget that it is possible to phone in, even if you haven't got a computer. Please let me know if you would like to join either service online, and I can send you a link, and also talk you through setting this up. Email for information: derek.mclean@methodist.org.uk

Churches Together

The Welcome and Induction service for John Tearne and Sami Lindsay took place at St Peter's on Sunday 24th. This was a service of welcome to the Benefice which includes St Cuthbert's, Great Glen so it was good to see Kim involved as well as Steve and Bishop Martyn. It can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6WgXx_FnBc (It starts 11 minutes in)

The Week of Prayer resources (18-25 January) can still be accessed here:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQ7vzm2_mxusMM0XVhV_3wUGPk8VdR7Z

and here: www.oadbybaptist.church/week-of-prayer

Holocaust Memorial Day I plan to lead a short online reflection at 2:30pm on Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January).

Deaths

We hold in prayer the families and friends of Margaret, Peggy and Mary who died on 13th, 19th and 19th January, respectively.

Church Membership

Are you interested in Church Membership / confirmation / adult baptism? An introductory session will take place on zoom on Tuesday 26th Jan, 7 – 8.45pm.

Saturday Prayer continues online each week at 10:15, please contact Barry or Derek for joining instructions.

Tablets for Schools Thank you for your generosity. We have now donated £1450 meaning 29 tablets will be supplied to help school-children with online learning.