



Borders Mission Circuit

Part of the Methodist Church of Great Britain



The **Methodist** Church

Dear Friends in the Borders Mission Circuit

Ministers Weekly message

22nd March 2020 Mothering Sunday, 3rd Sunday in Lent 'Worship through a new lens & light'

It is the intention of the Circuit Ministers to write a short reflection based on the weekly lectionary, so that in these different times, we can continue with a rhythm of worship and devotion, wherever we are.

The set Gospel reading this week is John 9:1-41, 'A blind man healed.' When we read this passage we might think of that well known hymn by John Newton, 'Amazing Grace'. If you have a hymn book or internet, why not read those words or other songs that connect here.

The Pharisees (v13-16) come to do their own investigation and say "this man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." Crumbs, you and I are not in public Worship this Sunday! But in spite of these surreal, isolating and worrying times, this does not prevent us from seeking God and Praising God in our lounge or kitchen. God is still God and we are his people made to worship him. Worship is currently through a new lens & light.

The Pharisees were certain this blind man was a sinner, even Jesus' disciples ask 'Who sinned, this man or his parents?' Jesus replies with clarity that neither the man or his parents sinned and.. while I am in the world, I am the Light of the World. We need to be cautious of verbal statements or social media posts that say 'Coronavirus is evil...' For those coping with the effects and those working in the NHS, that is not always a helpful statement.

The experts again ask the man who was blind but could now see, to tell the truth. His reply in verse 26 is clear "Whether he is a sinner or not, one thing I do know. I was blind but now I see." We have had such moments of change/new revelations in our faith journey. Maybe in these current times we need to look with new (inner) eyes at a world that more than ever needs some **light and hope**. Note that the (inner) **light of realization** comes to the man at points; in verse 17 'He is a prophet', and finally verses 31 & 33: 'He is a Godly man who must have been sent from God.'

The blind man looking at Jesus' face said, "Lord, I believe." He could now see not only others and the world around him, but he could see Jesus clearly. Contemplate on when you have seen Jesus, not just as a good teacher, or as an historical person but as the One who knows you, loves you, and hears your every prayer.

Some questions for you to ponder: What's behind the human tendency to want to blame someone else? Have we truly seen the light of Christ? How can we help others see the light?

Today is Mothering Sunday, a day that is primarily about a focus on the mother church, perhaps in these strange times it is an even better opportunity to give thanks for our mother church, for the opportunities we have had to know Jesus through our mother church, the friendships we have found and the ways we have encountered God together. The world has turned this day into a focus on physical mothers and we can give thanks today for all those who have mothered us in different ways whether or not we are related to them. We also acknowledge today can be a day of pain for those who have not been mothered well and for those who would delight to mother others but are not able to. Today is therefore a mixed day for many. For some the remembrance is difficult. In many ways, this period under the shadow of the coronavirus will be prompting similar reactions and so it seems appropriate that a call to prayer is made this Sunday. This Sunday 22nd, 7pm, **Churches Together in England** are encouraging Christians to **light a candle** in their homes as a prayer and visible symbol of **the light of life, Jesus Christ**. We hope you might feel able to do this across the Borders Mission Circuit.

Please do not hesitate to contact your minister by phone or email if you need to talk or would like to be prayed for. With prayers and encouragement

Rev Ann Anderson, Rev Nicola Briggs, Rev Loraine Mellor, Deacon Sam Taylor, Rev Peter Taylor