

Weekly Devotions
South Holburn Church
26th May 2020

READINGS

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart;
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.
I will be glad and exult in you;
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

Psalm 9:1-2

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.

2 Corinthians 2:14-16

Jesus hands were hands that were blessing, healing, comforting, guiding, welcoming hands, if we are the body of Christ, then we also are the hands of Christ in our community"

Right Rev. David Lunan

REFLECTION

One of the churches in my first parish, was an old and little used building. It was a traditional country church, surrounded by a graveyard, quite a distance from anywhere. The only services were funeral services. I took it on myself to have a good explore of the old building. There were several rooms as well as the sanctuary, one of them was clearly the old vestry. It had been a long time since it had been used. A previous minister had cleared it all out so that only an old desk set in the middle of the room. As I looked around, I noticed that on the wall a cross had once been affixed. I could tell this because, though the cross was long gone, the outline could still clearly be seen. Whatever had happened to the cross, wherever it had ended up, it had left its mark behind.

As we start to come out of lockdown and beginning to image what the new reality of the world after COVID 19 will look like, I wonder how things will change? There is in our society a hope that this lock down will make us more caring, more compassionate. But will things change at all? Will we just revert to what we were before?

Our readings today reflect that the church is already called to be that different society of which so many dream. We are to be Christ's hands and feet. We are to be the examples and the expressions of that welcome and that love and that care which defines God. Like the old cross in that little used Church, we are to leave a cross shaped mark on our society.

It will be some time yet before Churches are open for worship. But, as we have been saying throughout this crisis, the church building may be shut, but the church has not stopped. Each of us, as God's people, lives Church where we are. Each of us is a witness to the love of God, each of us bears testament by our words and by our actions to compassion of God.



Prayer

Most of our prayer for this week (the part in italics) comes from writer and Baptist pastor, Nick Fawcett.

*Lord, when I am downhearted,
teach me to open my heart to your joy;
when I am anxious, to let go and know your peace;
when I feel vulnerable,
to trust in your protection while taking every sensible step to stay safe;
when I am frustrated, to be patient,
focusing not on my time but on yours;
when I am angry –
railing against what I perceive to an inadequate response to this crisis
and against apparently irresponsible behaviour on the part of a minority –
to make allowances,
recognising that things are not as black and white as I like to imagine,
and that there is not always a clear right or wrong way to proceed;
when I feel isolated –
longing to see family and friends,
and simply to enjoy the company of others –
to put my hand in yours
and know that you are by my side;
when I don't know where to turn next –
what to do or how to cope –
to turn to you,
and so to find guidance.
Whatever I'm up against, Lord,
however I feel,
teach me find in you the strength I need to get through.*

And wherever I am Lord,
Whatever I am doing,
Whatever my thoughts and my hopes,
May I bear witness to you.
May my words of faith and of doubt,
May my actions each day,
Point beyond myself
Towards you.
Amen.

