



The Superintendent reflects...

This is a tricky letter to write this week – knowing that by the time it is circulated, we may have had announcements from the Government which will bring further changes to life, but needing to write it in good time so that it is with Erica in time for the weekly mailing. I don't know about you, but one of my greatest challenges over these past few weeks has been learning to live well, or at least 'well enough' with uncertainty, learning to inhabit a new way of doing things without assuming that each new normal will last more than a few weeks. For the record, Uncertainty and I are not, in normal times, good friends!

I am also trying to make friends with Hope, in all her various guises. A few of you will know that I had the great excitement of a new bike at Christmas time. Even fewer of you will know that a friend encouraged me to name it, and I named my bike 'Hope'. For a few weeks we cycled through Leeds, delighting in the freedom of the cycle lane... and then two things happened at once. Life changed with 'lock-down', and I managed to put oil in Hope's disc brakes – a very bad plan for safe cycling. So all through these past weeks I have been riding Andrew's old bike - serviceable, heavy, a bit too big for me and hard work. And every time I have taken the boys out for a ride, I have given thanks that I still have a bicycle to ride at all.

Holding hope with and for one another in these times can be hard work. For me, the Easter prayer of confession is a powerful way of resetting our relationship with hope, and reminding ourselves that God both knows that despair, fear, and hopelessness are part of our human experience, and is also constantly drawing us back towards life and hope...the kind of life and hope, which, like joy, do not deny sadness or pain, but illuminate them with love.

If we have fallen into despair  
If we have failed to hope in you,  
If we have been fearful of death,  
If we have forgotten the victory of Christ,  
**Lord, forgive us.**

May the living God  
raise us from despair,  
give us victory over sin  
and set us free in Christ.  
**Amen.**

I wonder when you usually pray the Lord's Prayer? For some of us, it is a regular part of the pattern of each day. Others pray it when they are with a particular group of people, or in a particular place. I have even heard of people who are using it as their 'handwashing timer' (it takes most of us more than 20 seconds to say it)! As part of our engagement with the global prayer initiative 'Thy Kingdom Come' (eleven days of prayer between Ascension Day on 21<sup>st</sup> May and Pentecost on 31<sup>st</sup> May) we are inviting this Circuit to pause and pray the Lord's Prayer at either 8am and/or 8pm each day (8am/8.10pm on a Thursday!)...

***Could you commit to praying in this way, and encouraging others to do so too?***

**June is Bible Month**, and we are encouraged to spend time this year with the book of **Ruth**. In the mailing over the next couple of weeks we will be sharing material to encourage us to find different ways to think about Ruth's story. There's an excellent booklet to help us, and some other resources, at <https://www.preachweb.org/biblemonth>. If you do not have internet access, and would like a copy of the booklet, please let us know as soon as possible and we will send you one (you could ring the office on 0113 279 4816 between 10am and 1pm, Tues-Fri). We expect to host four Circuit Bible Studies meeting to reflect on 'Ruth' during June, meeting both in the daytime and the evening. If you would like to join one of these, please also let us know as soon as possible – this time ringing me on 07528 359341, or dropping me an email at [jolightowler@gmail.com](mailto:jolightowler@gmail.com)

Peace, Jo