

Dear All,

Practice it with me... 'I do not know.' Try it again, 'I do not know' Once more 'I do not know.'

This is a season where people are looking for certainty and it is not real.

Once thing I can say with certainty is that church will never go back to how it was. How so? Because people we love have died and life will never be the same again.

All the way through we have been changing what we do. Kingston URC is used to this.

Our expectation is that for a significant number of people worship on a Sunday morning will stay as it is. The zoom/phone video sandwich will stay. For some people it suits them well. They can hear. See. They can understand because of the subtitles. They can get it whereas going to a church building- before covid-was too much. All major pluses.

Others though are ready to gather. Our plan today in August is to have a something on a Sunday afternoon, starting probably in September. No singing. Everyone in masks. Social distancing. Everything needing cleaned afterwards. The service will be short. It will be interactive in style. There will not be a sermon. At this stage we will not be doing Holy Communion. There will not be coffee. To make this happen we need volunteers. Would you be part of the gang to make this work? Please reflect on what you can do. Do not put yourself at risk. The Lord does not require that of you. We need people to lead the worship, set up, play music, clean and set down ready for Monday.

We might put in something else. Something for children using zoom. Sally is exploring this. We might put in something bilingual.

All of this is going to change. It is today's plan. Today though there are things we definitely need. Prayer to make sure we are heading in the right direction and within God's will for us. Money to pay for our staff and building. Volunteers for the coffee service. We particularly need someone on Fridays just to keep an eye on the space. We need participation. Come to the events. Bring yourself completely to worship and make the time when you worship a holy time.

In the meantime let me ask how are you coping with the fluidity of life at the moment?

How does it square with your model of the faith? Your model of life?
What is your model of the faith?

If I gave you a piece of paper and said, 'draw an object from nature that shows what you believe?' what would you draw?

Some would draw a rock. 'fastened to the rock which cannot move.' (Ask someone who knows about the BB)

It is strong. It is reliable. It is unshifting.

Some would draw a tree.....like the tree the mustard seed would grow into. Where all the nations can come and build their nests. It would be growing. Slowly changing, adapting, gradually.

Yes these are regular pictures.

But what about now? What does faith mean when the world has been turned upside down? What does it look like today? What picture would you draw in a time like this?

What about faith as a sand dune? Blown by the wind. Always moving. Always changing. You may think it is still but it is not. Faith as something that demands that you keep on moving otherwise you will sink.

At the moment we are in the middle of a sand storm. What shape our particular dune will return to we do not have an idea. We know for certain that we are moving and changing.

And what about the idea of the Holy Spirit as the breath of God that drives the change? Things that would have happened gradually like the church using technology for meetings have been blasted ahead. This has saved energy and increased linkage around the country and around the world.

That is not to say or imply this is a pain free time. It is not. There are many losses.

What picture would you use? Why? In all this movement, change and pain is it possible to acknowledge some good? Maybe it is too early for you.

There is the other certainty of this season. However dark the valley may be God is with us in it.

Best wishes, Lesley

7 August 2020