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A few words about the new person writing a weekly reflection on the Sunday readings.

Above all the writer tries to be faithful to the words, actions and beliefs of Jesus Christ, and also to the intentions of the writers.

Because there are so many genres in the bible (I've found 15), being truthful about the text is far from easy. So, like any commentator I make certain assumptions, and it would only be right to place these before the reader.

In the bible there are moral, narrative and objective truths, and I believe that the bible tells us things that we cannot tell ourselves.

I hope you will read two of the passages (slowly and possibly out loud) before you read my few words.

If you would like to reflect on anything I've written, please do write and I will do my best to have a discussion with you.

Stephen Baker

6 September 2020

Exodus 12: 1-14, Psalm 149

Romans 13: 8 – end, Matthew 18: 15-20

It probably won't surprise you, but Christianity has constantly claimed that humans are made in the image of God; that His son died equally for everyone, for there is neither Jew nor Greek, nor slave nor free, male or female. But the Church has also used its power to terrorise people, causing terrible suffering and persecution. In other words, for centuries in the garden of Christianity beautiful flowers have flourished but also flowers have been pulled up as weeds, and weeds tended as flowers.

For the church to rebuild and to survive the inevitable strains created by human frailty, the bible reveals, as does 2,000 years of history, that to find our way back to the very high standards God calls us to, we count on the risen Christ to bring us back to our senses.

For Christ is in the midst of our lives, (do spend a few moments and think of how Christ is close to you and how you know He is) and it is for his sake that we try again. It is with this unique insight, and with the gentle nudge from the Holy Spirit, that there is a real chance that we can be faithful to God's aspirations for us.

Christ Well news

As you all know, our Minister Rev Neil Riches, had planned to retire on Easter Sunday in April but, because lockdown came in March due to the pandemic, he decided to postpone this until the end of the Summer, so that he could provide pastoral care, and receive and pass on information as necessary. Retirement Day arrived on Sunday, 30th August, when he conducted his final Service, which was attended by about fifty people – on Zoom - not gathered together in Christ Well as we would have wished.

We thank Neil for his Ministry over the past five years, and especially for the last five months, when he has produced a weekly letter which has kept us informed of news of the Pastorate, and happenings at Christ Well.

Neil opened the Manse garden for people to call in on both Sunday and Monday afternoons if they wished to visit him. Many people accepted his invitation, and on the Monday Wynford (Bevan) presented him with a gift and cards from the Church, which he was very pleased to receive.

We wish Neil a happy retirement, and hope it won't be too long before he is happily settled in his new home. God Bless you Neil.

During our Sunday Morning Worship we will be reading Romans 5.1-6 and Matthew 18.15-20, and will be singing My Jesus, My Saviour, and Love Divine all loves excelling: we will also pray for those who live in the odd numbers in Manor Road, numbers 37-71.