

Vicar's Blog

July 2017

From the curate

Thank you to Gwyneth for giving me the opportunity to write the blog for the next few months.

In the church calendar Ascension Day, marks the end of Easter. The 10 days from Ascension Day to the eve of Pentecost is a time of focussed prayer in preparation for the celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. During this period, the Archbishops asked us to pray for the world, for people to grow in relationship, with each other and with God. To pray for God's kingdom to come in this world.

Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the birth of the Christian Church was celebrated this year on 4th June. A 'Celebrate Pentecost Together' service was followed by a joyous afternoon celebration. Many other churches were also having Pentecost celebrations, witnessing to the world that there is life, hope and strength in faith in Jesus Christ.

When we look at the world, it is sometimes difficult to be filled with hope and easy to feel fearful of both the present and the future. The past weeks have been a time when people ask the question 'where is hope?' as we think of the way that terrorists cause pain and suffering, especially in light of the Manchester bombing, and the terrorist attacks in London, with the murder and maiming of so many people. Hope may seem absent with the capacity of human beings to cause such evil actions.

Where is hope? When we look at the response to the bombing, when we look at the response to the people who were stabbed in London. What do we see? I believe we see hope expressed in the response in Manchester of the love and generosity to the victims, Taxi drivers who took people home free of charge, people who opened doors and took people in, the amazing response from the emergency services and in London, people who tried to help and protect those who were being hurt, those being attacked. Extraordinary compassion and love for others has been seen.

We cannot shut our eyes to violence, we live in a world where evil wishes to make us fearful. But we also live in a world where love overcomes fear and hope is seen in acts of kindness and acts of longing to protect others.

It is these acts of kindness and generosity that we celebrate. God calls us to 'love one another as he loves us'. It is by showing the love that God through his grace gives us, that hope can be seen. Our relationships with people around us, whether family, friends or those

that we only meet for the first time is evidence of hope. This love and kindness is plentiful and will overcome all fear.

The results of the elections will have brought a mixed response, I hope that whatever your thoughts on the election results we will be a people of hope and not of fear for the future.

Trinity Sunday, the Sunday after Pentecost is a feast day and the day we celebrated as a church and parish our Patronal Festival. Trinity Sunday symbolises the embracing of all the great themes of the Easter season, and launches us into the summer with a reminder of who it is that gives and fills our daily life. It is a celebration of how God reveals and shares his love, compassion, mercy and power with us, with all of humanity.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he writes:

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

The hope that is love is God's story for all of us.

Caroline