

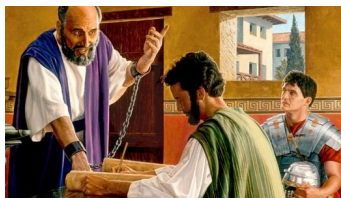


St Margaret's Church

Together we aim to:

Worship God, Proclaim Jesus, Grow in the Spirit
And Serve the World

In Contact



Rejoicing in Lockdown Philippians 1: 12-18 12th July

We have all had our plans disrupted in recent months. For some this is a minor inconvenience but for others much more threatening and disruptive. Life is more uncertain for us all. The life of the early church must also have seemed to the apostles precarious and uncertain. Many things didn't work out the way they had expected. The apostle Paul is writing to the church at Philippi from prison. He is not able to preach freely and he might well have thought that his ministry had come to an end.

But surprisingly Paul writes *'What has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel'* (The Good News story about Jesus and what He has done for us all). How was this? Firstly through his witness to those who were guarding him. He didn't miss an opportunity to speak to them. He obviously made an impression as it became known throughout the whole imperial guard.

The second way in which the gospel was spread was that people knew that Paul's imprisonment was for Christ. People saw that he suffered for the sake of the gospel. Wherever there is suffering for Christ it is a powerful witness, even today. The witness of the persecuted church is a powerful testimony to the gospel of Christ.

Thirdly the gospel spread because of those being made more confident in the Lord. When a church leader is no longer there, it is natural to wonder what will happen next. But that is when others step up to continue the ministry. Paul was greatly encouraged that most of the brothers and sisters dared to speak the word with great boldness and without fear. In Paul's absence that power of the Spirit was given to many people and the gospel spread as a result.

Paul rejoiced that the gospel was proclaimed. So he could truly say *'what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel'*. In his own witness, in his suffering for Christ and in the witness of others Christ was proclaimed.

What about our situation? We have been forced to learn new ways of working so that we go on meeting the needs of those within our own fellowship and beyond. We have changed the way we do things in ways that would have been unthinkable a few months ago and when we do get back into church it won't be just the same as before. The changing situation gives new opportunities as well as new challenges for the gospel and what it means for us to be the body of Christ here in Burnage, just as it did for Paul. May we be those who, led by the Spirit, rise to meet those challenges. May be we those who, in the words of Philippians 1:11, 'Produce the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.'

Peter Capon



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Bible Verse for 2020:

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. Ephesians 1: 17



Daily Hope is a free phone line which offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

16th July- DAY OF PRAYER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY WORKER.

Please use the accompanying sheet or your own prayers during this day when we unite as a church in prayer. Please pray that we get a good selection of applications by our closing date of 17th July. Interviews will be the first week of August.

Church Open for Private Prayer:

The church will be open from 3.00pm to 4.00pm Sunday **12th July** and 12.30pm to 1.30pm on Thursday **16th July** (distancing & hygiene measures will apply).

Services in church:

The PCC are meeting on Monday 13th July and will be discussing the re-opening of church for Sunday worship. We hope to be open for some form of worship from Sunday 19th July. We will make an announcement in the next edition of In Contact.

Zoom Meetings:

Join online zoom meetings on your landline or mobile phone, contact Matt for details.

July 12th to 18th Pray for:

- ♦ People living in Heathwood Road, Angleside Avenue & Ivylea Road.
- ♦ Spiritual growth of our church children & young people without teaching activities.
- ♦ Inspiration for those planning the 5th July Celebration service.
- ♦ Wisdom for Governor of HMP M/c as lockdown begins to be eased.
- ♦ Pakistan's anti-blaspemy law not to be used against Christians & other minorities.
- ♦ Everyone laid off from work, particularly Cynthia (Duke's sister-in-law) in Ghana.
- ♦ Wisdom for Boaz considering how to accommodate their clients in the winter.
- ♦ Year 6 school children preparing for high school with little preparation.
- ♦ God to provide a replacement church warden for Ruth.

Television & Radio this week:

BBC 1 - 10.45 am Sunday Morning Live: Sean Fletcher and Sally Phillips take a look at the week's talking points and explore the ethical and religious issues of the day.

1.15pm Songs of Praise : Aled Jones counts down to the UK's favourite hymn as voted for by you. Performers include the Kingdom Choir, Lesley Garrett, Russell Watson, Katherine Jenkins and Daniel O' Donnell.

BBC Radio 4 - 8.10am Sunday Worship, Sowing in a time of uncertainty.

A service from South Wales Baptist College led by Rev Dr Craig Gardiner, with a reflection on the parable of the sower from Rev Dr Rosa Hunt.

Sunday Evening 8 o'clock: Light a candle and break bread when others from our St. Margaret's family are doing the same.



Help is available if you need it: **Call 0800 234 6123**



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