



Worship and Pastoral Resources for “Staying Connected – week 7” Week Beginning Sunday 3rd May 2020

Dear friends

It is a joy to be sharing thoughts and prayer and worship with you today. We are not together physically but we are united through our Lord Jesus Christ and One Body with him. I hope that we are continuing to feel a strong connection with each other as a Circuit through the different means we have available to us at the moment.

One of those means is through building our fellowship through caring and watching out for each other and I know so many are doing this through telephone conversations. How great it is to hear an encouraging friendly voice down the phone bringing love and news and folk listening to ourselves and how we are. This is a real ministry that everyone of us can share in. I know the Ministers are blessed when we have received encouragement and offers of prayer. We want to let you know also that you can call us if you have any kind of need or worry or just if you're on your own and need to chat to someone.

Staying Connected through worship is such an important part of our lives, in our churches and our Circuit. I wanted to share how blessed I was last Sunday to know we had three different possibilities of sharing worship together.

A huge thankyou to Tom and Chloe for their worship (SC 6). I must say Graham and I can't wait to be able to go for a walk on Curbar Edge and look for all four of the bible stones.

Julie shared with us that she had been in the fantastic worship that Karen had led online for all the families. What a great ministry. Let's keep praying for all the families who are part of the regular children's worship provided by Karen and her teams.

I found last Sunday evenings online worship together a really heart-warming time of faith and fellowship. I loved seeing all your faces and knowing that we are one in Christ and we were all there because we wanted to worship the Risen Saviour and we wanted to do it together. St Paul reminds us of how precious that is: “Now you are the **body of Christ**, and each one of you is a part of it.” (1 Cor 12:27). It was such a really happy time as one by one faces popped up on our screen – 37 of us managed to join in and I know others tried, but technology failed them and others wanted to join but had slots booked with family around the world to link up with. One comment made afterwards was: “It was such an uplifting time”. The journey of the two on the road to Emmaus and their discovery of Jesus with them in the breaking of the bread is such a beautiful, and also, miraculous story. Their return to share with the others “It is true! The Lord is Risen!” must have been a moment of pure joy for the believers! And so it is for us, and we have that message to share with others!!!! (Thanks to Adrian for all the work put into making it happen.)

So we come to this week and we are aware that not everyone has technology or even the Singing the Faith hymn book, so I've put together a service of worship on paper which does include all the prayers and readings and song words, so we can move through a whole service in the comfort of our homes and everyone can access the same worship experience.

My prayer is that God will prepare our hearts, speak to us, challenge us and bless us all.

Rev Fran