



## Staying Connected Week Beginning Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020 A Call to Prayer

Dear friends

It's September, and we have moved into a new Connexional year as this week has progressed. A time of new beginnings for us all. I guess you'll feel a bit like me that there have been so many new beginnings in the last 6 months – things have changed and are keeping on changing as we deal with Covid 19 in our own lives, but also very much as we have our eyes on the needs of our communities, our country and our world. We are in this together and we ask again what can we do?

Thinking these thoughts, I realise that in my heart there is **a call to pray**, perhaps louder now than before, and to seek God, for his love, grace, compassion and help, to flow to us. In the midst of the recent dark days we have known God to be alongside and we give thanks to Him for his love. He loves to hear our thanks and praise, as well as our hopes and dreams and our needs and deepest heartfelt prayers. And **He always hears us**.

My mind turned to the OT and Solomon's prayer to God when he had finished building the temple (2 Chronicles 6). He leads the people in prayer and asks God to hear their prayers for a variety of situations: crime, enemy attacks, drought, famine, the influx of foreigners, war and sin. Surprisingly perhaps that list could be our intercessions today in 2020.

God is concerned with whatever we face today even the difficult circumstances we sometimes bring upon ourselves. He wants us to turn to him in prayer and to remember, **he hears us**. We shouldn't let the extremity of our situation cause us to doubt his care for us. Wherever we are, we are **called to prayer**, which is "oxygen for the soul" and "a conversation of the heart with God"

Some time after the dedication of the temple, God appears to Solomon at night and says "I have heard your prayer....." And he answers with these words: **"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land"(2 Chronicles 7:14).**

God longs for us to humbly seek Him in all circumstances. He calls us MY People, who are called by MY name – that's his depth of love for us and he says turn from ways that do not honour Him, and he will hear us and forgive and heal. It's interesting that God says: "If my people..." – he never forces us - but gives us options – **IF**. I feel we need to take up that challenge and be God's people in this day and age.

The Methodist Conference has declared 2020/2021 **a year of prayer**. It started on Tuesday this week 1<sup>st</sup> September and we can join in online or pray ourselves at home or wherever we are at the time of 12.45pm to 1.00pm every Tuesday. We pray for God to be at work in our lives, our churches and our nation through outreach and evangelism, as we reach out to those around us. (Details of this to come). Perhaps this could be something we can each commit to.

This Staying Connected letter is sent with love and prayers for each church, and every member and friend of our Circuit, and for all our families and friends.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Rev Fran

