

Sunday 14th June

Read Matthew 9.35-10.8

Reflection

Revd Ben Edwards (Curate)

At the time I am writing this, lockdown restrictions are being eased, and we are beginning to see more people out and about, albeit with restrictions and social distancing measures in place. I am afraid I shrugged my shoulders to hear that shopping and spending money seems to be the priority rather than spiritual nourishment, but of course that might be sour grapes on my part!

However, when I have been in town picking things up for those self-isolating, I have seen people seemingly lost in their own environment, not sure if they're doing the right thing or not. And many eyes peering out from behind masks, hoping to see someone they can talk with, to connect to. I have seen many members of our congregations, stopping for a brief chat and our hearts are sore with wanting to be together worshipping the Lord.

And here we see in today's reading Jesus sending out his disciples to cast out demons, cure sicknesses and to proclaim the Good News that the Kingdom of God is right alongside us, next to us, happening here and now. And yet that directive might seem something of a taunt at this time – we are not able to get out amongst people as we have been doing. Our baby and toddler groups are on pause. The small groups we meet to pray in ceased. Our school assembly visits stopped. Our after school kids club not running. No weddings. No baptisms. And deeply saddening, only funerals.

BUT! *We have not ceased! We have not stopped! We are changing! We are still called to be 'sent out', but in a new way. The Spirit of Christ within us is able to reach out past the threat of the virus, as we have called each other on the telephone; we have 'Zoomed' each other to pray together, read and contemplate the Bible together, be Still together and to wrestle with our faith together. We have written to each other and prayed together in the Spirit. We have found ways to help each other and the community, to feed each other physically (Food Bank and the Lunch Club 'Meals on Wheels') and spiritually.*

God has unveiled new ways for us all to be 'sent out', not just physically and spiritually, but digitally too. From the darkest time in my living memory, God's light shines forth reaching people who were only dimly aware of His Kingdom before. And whilst we rightly mourn these times, we, the rainbow people of God, look forward in hope to the horizon. And to help those who are following God's light for the first time, we will be 'sent out' in new ways to point the way, to follow Jesus Christ.

“And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” scripture says in Revelation 21:5. And together, we can be part of the new things that God is doing in His church today.