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¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. ¹³ That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God. Ecclesiastes 3

‘No mow May’ enables the grass to grow wild, enabling further pollination and an ever-fruitful autumn. Or is it just an excuse not to mow the lawn?!

May is a beautiful month. So many colours and the vivid greenness, ringing with bird song, it is easy to appreciate how beautiful this world is. Nature runs wild, whilst we seek to tame it with good stewardship making our gardens ever more delightful. The month to plant your beans and to encourage the lettuce.

As the old saying goes; ‘if you want to be happy for a day – get drunk; happy for a year – get married; happy for a lifetime – take up gardening.’

Gardening is actually hard work. It is part of the ‘burden’ God has laid on the human race. To till the soil, to build foundations, to water and to nurture needs dedication, wisdom and a willingness to work in cooperation with God. It is part of our ‘doing good while we live.’ It is a source of happiness.

Yet, there are many who do not have this privilege. My daughter lives in a flat without a garden and is missing this nurturing. Trinity Safe Space receives many denied access to work, let alone a garden, and for many the ‘toil’ is not one of leisure or pleasure, but one of necessity, often with little reward.

The Easter Offering Service at Norley on May 11th really brought this home. We live with such importance of education, especially for women, and this learning brings hope, hope of a better life, of a better world. Empowering women leads to the most profound of changes in whole communities, and it was a privilege to hear some of the stories of hope during our time together.

May is also Christian Aid time. ‘We believe in life before death’, is a strap-line worthy of the God who seeks to bless us and allow us to eat drink and be merry. The work of Christian Aid, and many other Aid agencies increases whilst resources are diminished. Successive UK Governments have cut the Overseas Aid budgets – and diverted some of this money to domestic policies in ‘paying for refugees and asylum seekers.’

We, as Christ’s Easter People, can take a back seat in our safe and beautiful country. We can embrace no mow May and let nature takes its course, or we can get involved in the world, through prayer, through action, through giving. Getting involved might, sometimes, seem like a ‘burden’, yet this action in this beautiful world makes this world ever more beautiful, and prepares our hearts, minds and very being for the eternal life, that hope placed in our God shaped hearts, and brought to fulfilment in Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour.

Gordon



Sunday June 8th – Pentecost – 4.00 PM – Oakmere Methodist Church

This is an invitation to come and share memories with the lovely Oakmere folk as we bid farewell to this faithful Chapel. Former Vice-President of Conference, our own John Bell, will be preaching, and this will be ever more uplifting if your voice is added to heaven's chorus as we gather.

We also celebrate 3 Local Preachers with Long Service Certificates; Malcolm Pearson (60 years) Mike Ridley (50) and Ruth Lane (40). Amazing achievements and such faithful Service is a real cause for thanksgiving to Almighty God for their example.

Please do join us.

If anyone has any news to share, good or bad, please do let Liz Barton and myself know and we will publish it in this monthly letter.

Finally; I am going on the Rural Mission Course in Cirencester next week; thank you Circuit; where I hope to learn about how we engage in missional activities across this Circuit, and in neighbouring Circuits. We have been meeting for prayer at Oakmere in the hope that our Farewell Service is not the end, but a new beginning. We are a Resurrection people. I hope to feedback and as we walk, together, with Jesus, we can take inspiration from the Chester and Stoke District Synod this month that used metaphors from 'Race across the world', a BBC programme that shows us we can be taken out of our comfort zones as we travel the Way together.