

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Dear Friends,

As I sit here today, I am reflecting that next week is Holy Week and this letter is going out for Palm Sunday, how strange it is that we will not be meeting for Holy Week Reflections or sharing the Walk of Witness on Good Friday, and stranger still that we will not gather on Easter Sunday!

I wonder how you all are, and how you are coping in these days, as I said last week, I know that you are in touch with one another and that you are checking up on one another. I hope that these letters from me are also helping you to stay connected in some way, as the poster outside Wesley Hall says "The building is closed, but the church is still open and worshipping and praying in our separate homes", that is of course true for every one of our churches.

So, as we come to Palm Sunday, what are you praying and hoping for?

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, he was told by the religious leaders to tell his followers to be quiet, to stop disturbing the peace, essentially to go home!

Stop disturbing the peace, well I intend to disturb the peace this evening as along with most others in our road I will send up a cheer, not only for the NHS but also for all Key Workers aware that our Circuit Staff, from building managers and community workers, youth workers and family workers, to lay pastors and ministers all fall under that category.

So, when I reflect on the cheer that will go up this evening and hopefully every Thursday evening as we walk through these strange days, I ponder the crowd who gathered to cheer for Jesus. They were in that place a people of hope, deep hope, people looking for justice and mercy, people who were attracted by the life and person of Jesus, the one who walked among them and declared them worthy perhaps for the first time.

Who might have been in that crowd?

The leper, the untouchable leper who was cleansed and healed, maybe by this point his other 9 companions might have cottoned on and joined him.

Mary, Martha and Lazarus and their friends, those who had seen death overcome, maybe also Jairus and his daughter, the widow from Nain and her son.

The Samaritan woman, the one he met at the well, the one excluded by her community, but included by Jesus!

The children, those even Jesus disciples would have turned away...

The young boy whose 5 loaves and 2 fishes fed 5,000

The woman caught in adultery, and maybe her accusers as they encountered grace first-hand....

The list could go on and on, who would you include?

All those people had been touched by Jesus, had been challenged by Jesus, had been included by Jesus. So as we deal with what has been called the great leveller, the Corona Virus Covid-19 how do we live out our walk of faith in these days?

Please stay in touch, share concerns and prayer requests, share your thoughts and feeling, and right now whatever you are feeling is valid, share your faith, I went for a walk today wearing my collar and one of the questions I was asked was this:

“What do you think God thinks of all that is going on right now?”

People in our families and communities have questions, just like the crowd gathered around Jesus on Palm Sunday had questions, and while we don't have the answers we can share the hope that we have, that somehow in Jesus, through his life and death and resurrection we have hope, hope in the one who overcame death and made a way for ALL things to be made new.

Even in these difficult times we have that hope, and we can pray for family, friends, our communities, our city and more, we can metaphorically cry out as Jesus followers did on that Palm Sunday!

You might also like to mark the day by making a cross from paper or paint or whatever you like and putting it in your window if you do, maybe you can send a photo that we could share.

So, I leave you with a song, reminding us that Jesus will make a way, if we make way for the King of Kings to enter.

Make way, make way, for Christ the King  
In splendour arrives.

Fling wide the gates and welcome him  
Into your lives.

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

For the King of kings!

*(For the King of kings!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

And let his kingdom in!

And those who mourn with heavy hearts,

Who weep and sigh;

With laughter, joy and royal crown

He'll beautify.

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

For the King of kings!

*(For the King of kings!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

And let his kingdom in!

He comes the broken hearts to heal,  
The prisoners to free.

The deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,  
The blind shall see.

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

For the King of kings!

*(For the King of kings!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

And let his kingdom in!

We call you now to worship him  
As Lord of all.

To have no other gods but him:

Their thrones must fall!

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

For the King of kings!

*(For the King of kings!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

Make way! *(Make way!)*

And let his kingdom in!

Many blessings

Sally

Reverend Sally Coleman

