

# Distant Socialising

## A Letter from Rev Andrew

Readings for Sunday 28th June: Pentecost 6

Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112; Romans 8:1-11; and Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Stories and the way that they are told can stick with us, and effect us deeply.

What stories can you remember from childhood?

If we play a game called 'What's the story?' how well will you do? In this game, I will give two words or short phrases from which you have to identify the story. For example, 'carpet' and 'lamp' would be 'Aladdin'.

Here are some for you to guess (answers on the next page):

- |                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. picnic/axe               | 5. mirror/apple   |
| 2. a dying rose/candlestick | 6. needle/        |
| 3. shoe/pumpkin             | 7. hair/tower     |
| 4. rats/flute               | 8. bears/porridge |

We may all remember stories we heard as children. Stories are also a brilliant way to teach people about the world. There's a very famous story, by a man called Aesop, about a hare and a tortoise having a race. The hare is so confident of winning that he has a sleep during the race. The tortoise, slowly and steadily, and without stopping, ends up winning the race.

As you know, Aesop's story is making the point that there is value and benefit in doing things in a slow, steady, careful ways. Jesus also makes use of stories. He tells people lots of stories they will remember, and he often uses his stories to teach people things, not only about this world, but about God's world, the kingdom of heaven.

In this week's gospel reading, Jesus tells the crowds a parable of seeds being sown onto different sorts of ground. Later, he explains it to the disciples as an illustration of how different people respond to hearing the word of the kingdom.

Jesus says in verse 9, 'Let anyone with ears listen!'.

Do we have ears, and are we listening?

Are we listening to the parables of Jesus and this world?

Are we searching for the meaning, and seeking to put it into action.

For Jesus, the good news/gospel was not just about life after death, but also about life before death. It is about how we live in a loving way in relation to God and others. It is about how we worship in ways that demonstrate a loving welcoming God; it is about how we care for the church community and the community beyond the church; it is about how we stand up for people who are treated differently because of gender or ethnicity; it is about how we care for a damaged creation; it is about how we make sacrifices not just to get ourselves into God's kingdom, but how we model the life of Jesus that is sacrificial and uncomfortable so that God's kingdom can be offered to people on earth.

We have ears, we are listening, but how are we responding to the gospel in the light of what is going on in the world around us? May God's Spirit guide us.

### Naming of the Courtyard

The courtyard between the church and hall at Anson Street is almost complete, and we want to name it. The Church Council has suggested that there might be someone who is feeling inspired about this!

The courtyard will be a place for meeting, reflecting, eating, resting, praying, crafting and much more. It will have a memorial for Fiveways Congregation and will also have space for memorials for other former congregations such as Wesley Church.

We're not offering a prize, but please let us know if you have any bright ideas!



### Contact Details

Due to the current health situation, the church office is not open to the public.

The care and administration of the church will continue, so if you want to contact us feel free to do so by phone or email.

#### Church Office

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 YouTube

## June Offerings

As I mentioned last month, our budget for 2019-2020 was based on a monthly offering of \$10,500. In the month of June our **offerings totalled \$10,501 plus an additional donation of \$5,000** from an individual to help with the deficit. I want to thank you all again for this, and your prayerful response to the Financial Stewardship letter from myself, the chairperson and treasurer a few weeks ago.

As mentioned previously, when we return to our buildings for worship we will not be passing an offering plate, and so I encourage you to keep making your offerings by direct giving where possible, or by cheque if you are unable to set up the direct giving option.

The Resources Team and Church Council are also considering other options that will allow people to give their offerings and donations via the website, an app on their phone or an iPad/tablet in the church foyer. More to come on this next month.

## Traditional and Intergenerational Worship

Two weeks ago I wrote about the staged timeline for our return to gathered activities, and I mentioned the need to split the main Orange UC service into two separate groups so that we can accommodate people and abide by the four square metre rule. I labelled one of these services as 'Traditional' and one as 'Intergenerational'. What did I mean?! What follows is a brief outline of how these two services might look.



### 'Traditional' Service

- This service will have a more traditional and formal style and structure.
- The structure will not vary much from week to week.
- The music/hymns/songs will be towards the more traditional end of the spectrum, but there will still be opportunity for newer hymns that fit this style.
- The organ will be the predominant musical instrument.
- All ages will be welcome, but children will not be specifically catered for during the service.

### 'Intergenerational' Service

Defining Intergenerational

*"Intergenerational ministry occurs when a congregation intentionally combines the generations together in mutual serving, sharing, or learning within the core activities of the church in order to live out being the body of Christ to each other and the greater community"*

Allen and Ross

- Intergenerational means that the service will aim to suit all ages of people who are comfortable with a variety of styles and activities. It is not meant to simply be a children's service. It is planned to be the service that families and all ages will be encouraged to attend. It will allow for informality, and the use of 'hands on' activities.
- This service will cater for a mixture of styles to suit the mix of people that are hoped to attend. The music/hymns/songs will allow for the very newest songs to be learnt and enjoyed and will have space for music from across the range of styles and ages.
- A variety of instruments will be encouraged to lead worship, and although the organ may feature in the service, it will not be the lead instrument, and will be used as appropriate to the style of music.
- All ages will be involved in the planning and leading of the service and it will be quite appropriate for children and young people to remain in the service for the whole time.

**The World of Jesus and Us: Poles Part but Connected at the Core** with Professor Bill Loader (Poster attached)

Five Interactive Lecture Presentations via Zoom

Mondays, 7.30 – 9.00 pm from the 20th July 2020

Register with the Church Office if you would like to receive the Zoom invitation via email.

**Soul Connections** (Flyer attached)

We invite you to our new group, Soul Connections, on Fridays from 5.30pm-6.30pm, beginning on the 7th of August.

Please register your interest with the Church Office so that we can accurately plan for social distancing.

### Sunday Worship

Worship this Sunday will again be using the YouTube channel and Zoom (using the same Zoom invite as last week, and included again in the email with this letter).

Hopefully see you then.

### Answers to 'What's the Story?'

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. picnic/axe – Little Red Riding Hood             | 4. rats/flute – Pied Piper         |
| 2. a dying rose/candlestick – Beauty and the Beast | 5. mirror/apple – Snow White       |
| 3. shoe/pumpkin – Cinderella                       | 6. needle/thorns – Sleeping Beauty |
|  | 7. hair/tower – Rapunzel           |
|  | 8. bears/porridge – Goldilocks     |

### Giving Direct

Confidential giving via electronic banking can be used for either a regular payment or one-off payment from your bank account to make your offering.

**Account Name: Giving Direct – Orange UC**

**BSB: 634 634**

**Account Number: 100046973**

- all deposits made to this account are taken as offering payments.

- do not use this account for any other church related deposits.