

**Bulletin for Sunday 22 May 2022**

Good morning friends.

The joint elders meeting of all three churches met last week, and amongst other things talked about the future of this Bulletin. Started during the lockdown, to keep in touch and provide worship for everyone to follow, we are unsure whether there is still a significant need for it. We are aware of some people still using the service on the Bulletin, but it's obviously difficult for us to know quite how many of you do still use and appreciate it. Could you contact me if you are still using this service, so that we are aware of the level of interest, please. No decisions have been taken, as yet, and we certainly don't want to take away something which is being used and appreciated - we are just trying to measure the continuing need. Thank you!

Let's pause as we prepare to worship... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn:           Awake, awake to love and work     (R&S 608)

Prayer:           God of life,  
                  you light up this world with your glory -  
                  and sometimes we become aware of it...!  
                  You understand our pain and regrets -  
                  and offer us healing and forgiveness.  
                  We praise your glory....  
                  and we thank you for the light of hope you offer.  
                  We ask your blessing on everything we do,  
                  and on everything we give in your service,  
                  today and every day.     Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings:       Revelation 21: 10, and 21: 22 - 22: 5     and     John 5: 1-9

Reflection:     Looking for a prayer to open a committee meeting, I found myself drawn to one entitled, 'For the day when our world seems to be falling apart'. There has certainly been a lot of very gloomy - and serious - news recently. The reading from Revelation describes John's vision of the future, of the New Jerusalem 'coming down out of heaven

from God'. It was written at an extremely difficult time, for a community of Christians facing terrible persecution, and it provided them with a powerful image of hope to cling onto, a story of light triumphing over darkness and all creation being healed. A vision of a city where God dwells and everything comes from God. The river of life flowing from God's throne waters the tree of life, which produces varied, abundant and constant fruit, and leaves which bring healing and fuller life to the nations - to everyone. Light and life, healing and hope, flowing abundantly from God to absolutely everyone. That is surely a vision to hold onto, and to be thankful for - not just for the persecuted early church, but for us too, especially when it feels rather as though the world is falling apart! Amen.

Hymn: Do not be afraid (R&S 591)

Prayers: God of compassion,  
we pray for our needy world:  
that where there is pain and brokenness  
you will bring healing for now and hope for the future;  
that where there is poverty and hunger  
you will bring a spirit of justice and generosity;  
and that wherever there is need...  
you will show us how we can help.  
We pray for places and people we've seen on the news  
and for our own communities and those we love..  
In Jesus 'name we ask all our prayers,  
including the unspoken prayers of our hearts. Amen

Hymn: For the healing of the nations (R&S 620)

Blessing: May we also have a vision of God's healing,  
and hope for the future;  
and may the blessing of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be with us and with all those we love,  
this week, and always. Amen

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There will be a ' Sunday at Six 'service on Zoom at 6pm on Sunday - all welcome.

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