



TOGETHER

NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk

Summer

Revd Nathan Falla

Yesterday the children finished school for the summer holidays and a different rhythm has started in the Falla household, with a less frantic morning routine and generally more time and less pressure (at least in theory). It is good to have a break from the normal routine, to recharge the batteries and to take time to rest and relax. In August congregations tend to get smaller as people take their summer holidays, and there is also a rest from many of the church activities so that we can then begin again in September fully refreshed.

As I wrote in my last article in issue 90 (13th July) TOGETHER is also taking a break for August as the ministers are largely away. I am on tour with the National Methodist Youth Brass Band (4th-13th August) and on holiday later in the month, so am not around much in August. Peter Hibberts also has holiday to take, and we look forward to welcoming Peter Bates back from his sabbatical mid-August. The principle reason for TOGETHER is currently to provide worship resources for those unable to attend face to face worship and with this issue of TOGETHER there is also the *Worship at Home* material produced by the Methodist Church.

For face-to-face worship you may have noticed on the August plan that for the morning on 28th August there are two circuit resourced services, one at Balderton (led by Revd Peter Bates) and one at Southwell (led by Revd Peter Hibberts). This is hopefully a creative solution recognising the limited resources available at the end of the plan and on a bank holiday weekend, but is also I believe a real opportunity to see what gathering in two centres is like.

Whatever your summer is like, I pray that it would have space for rest and renewal.

*For rest and relaxation,
switching off phone and e-mail,
the release from the demands of diaries and calendars,
the blissful luxury of solitude.
God who rests with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you.*

*For travel and exploration,
adventuring to new places,
discovering beauty and strangeness,
exploring new food and ways of life.
God who rests with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you.*

*For making and creating,
forming shape in clay, wood or stone,
splashing colour with paint or thread,
words or music echoing in our souls.
God who rests with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you.*

*For play and leisure,
games on beach or field,
delighting in fun and laughter,
sharing time with friends.
God who rests with us
for holiday joys, we praise you.*

by Jan Berry from "Summer" Wild Goose Publications



With us in the storms

Online Circuit Service Sermon | Revd Nathan Falla
Mark 6:45-52

1. Online Service

Join us from 10:30am on Sunday for our online Circuit Service which this week is led by Revd Nathan Falla live from Charles Street.

Find it on the 'Newark and Southwell Methodist Circuit' YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/NewarkSouthwellMethodistCircuit>) why not invite a friend to watch it with you and share the link with them on your social media or by email!

2. Zoom Opportunities

If you're feeling isolated, are not ready to be face to face yet, or can't, but are happy to meet on Zoom, there is a weekly coffee time at 3pm on a Monday run by Charles Street but open to all, email Mel Watson for more details: mellwatson42@gmail.com.

There is also still a weekly Zoom fellowship called 'The Gathering' which is part of Southwell Methodist Church and run by Philip and Francine Holmes. You'd be most welcome, contact Philip to connect: philipholmes8100@gmail.com.

3. Radio Services

BBC Radio 4 (Also [online](#).)
08:10am – 31st July 2022

Grateful in all circumstances

For three weeks each summer thousands of Christians gather in the beautiful setting of the Lake District town of Keswick. The theme of the Keswick Convention this year is 'Grateful in all circumstances.' The service, recorded in the Convention's main tent, is led by Jodi Whitehouse & Martin Salter. The address is given by Matt Searles, a faculty member for Crosslands Training, who preaches on Psalm 32 with music from Ben Slee and the band of Christ Church Mayfair. Keswick Ministries exists to inspire and equip Christians to love and live for Christ in his world.

I don't know about you but there are times in my life when I am afraid; when events seem all-consuming, when the future is uncertain, when I feel vulnerable. At these times I find it both comforting and reassuring to hear and to remember Jesus' words "do not be afraid." In my experience these words do not necessarily take the fear away completely, but they point to, and they remind me of God's love, faithfulness and strength which are greater and help me to live with the fear, knowing that God is with me. Our reading today helps us to recognise the truth that just as Jesus came to the disciples in the storms, then Jesus also comes to me and comes to you in all that we are facing.

In chapter 4, Mark records Jesus fast asleep in the boat whilst a great gale arose. The disciples wake Jesus up fearing for their lives and Jesus calms the storm with his words of authority "peace, be still", and then asks the disciples the question "why are you afraid? Now two chapters later there is a similar incident with the disciples back in a boat and the lake getting increasingly rough, although this time Jesus is not in the boat, but comes to the disciples walking on the water and once again declares "do not be afraid." Jesus gets in the boat and the wind calms.

The disciples still do not get it and often it takes time for us to get things too. As we let the reality sink in that God is with us in the storms let us explore the reading in a bit more detail and how it can help us with our understanding.

Immediately before our reading is the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand which begins with the disciples gathering around Jesus, and Jesus inviting the disciples to rest. Even though the disciples and Jesus are wanting to rest, and they withdraw to a quiet place, they are met with a large crowd which leads to the feeding of the five thousand.

Knowing this background, we can see that in our reading today Jesus instructs the disciples to get in the boat to cross to Bethsaida and Jesus goes up on the mountain to pray. Finally, they get the space they need to think, to pray and to come to terms with the news of the death of John the Baptist.

Evening comes, the disciples are in the middle of the lake and the wind begins to pick up, the waves begin to surge, and it gets increasingly difficult to row. From where Jesus is, he can see the struggle and so comes to the disciples walking on the water. The disciples failed to recognise Jesus, all they see is a ghost. They are terrified!

Do we sometimes fail to recognise Jesus coming to us because we are so consumed? The disciples thought that Jesus was a ghost, was this the only rational explanation for this human-like figure to be moving across the water in an extraordinary way? Were they just not expecting Jesus to come to them in this miraculous way so the only reasonable explanation was that this figure was a ghost? Jewish superstition held that the appearance of spirits during the night brought disaster. The disciples' terror was

prompted by what they may have thought was a water spirit. No wonder they were afraid and needed to hear Jesus say, "Do not be afraid." Do we expect for Jesus to come to us, to be concerned about us? Or maybe we fall in the same trap as the disciples and not recognise Jesus, or fear the worst. Is it sufficient for us to know that Jesus is near, so that we feel safe or do we need to experience Jesus getting in the boat like the disciples did so that we may know God's peace?

I have discovered that there are times when it feels that God is more present and when it feels that God is more absent. But faith declares and affirms that God will never leave us nor forsake us. God is not asleep in the storms but is with us, coming to us in sometimes unexpected ways but reassuring us that we do not need to be afraid.

Mark records that the disciples were astounded, and surprisingly he links this to the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand rather than referring back to Jesus calming the storm in chapter 4. Donald English has very helpfully suggested that the reason for this is tied up in understanding the Old Testament and its background. "God is there [in the Old Testament] described as feeding his people, not only with the manna but also in other places. He was therefore known as a God who feeds his people. In sharing in the feeding of the crowd they had first hand experience of this God feeding his people miraculously yet again, through Jesus. This is the link they ought to have seen, for the Old Testament also speaks of God walking on or through the waves."

Are we sometimes astounded and amazed at how God comes to us, do we always recognise Jesus?

Today in all that you are encountering, do you need to hear Jesus say "do not be afraid, I am with you, you are loved." Do you need to know that Jesus is with you in the storms that you are facing, and he will not abandon you? Do you need the presence of Jesus to come into a situation that you may know God's strength and peace?

God is with us through the storms, offering us protection and peace, comfort and hope. Let this reality sink in, let us take to heart Jesus' words "do not be afraid."

*When the winds of change drive us in directions that are alien to us:
God, keep us on a steady course towards the goal you have set for us.*

*When our lives are rocked by circumstances beyond our control:
God, keep us from sinking beyond our depth.*

*When storms shake our composure and fill us with fear:
God, hold us and reassure us of your presence with us.*

*When doubts overwhelm us and we feel that all is lost:
God, calm us and help us through to a renewal of our faith.*

*When the crisis is over and the storm has passed:
God, help us to remember the experience as a promise for the future.*

Amen.

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Prayer Space

Opening Prayer

God of quiet, God of calm,
we know your presence
at many different times,
but significantly in times of trouble –
when our lives are buffeted by storms,
or overcome with waves of fear,
and we are anxious for our safety.

Come to us with words of encouragement,
fill us with your strength and peace
and lead us from fear to worship –
with all our hearts,
and the whole of our lives.

Amen.

Martin Hazell (slightly adapted)

Prayers for others

Lord, it is you who comes when we cry out
in storm-tossed moments.
Reach out to your Church when sight of the
strong wind brings fear...
Open our ears to hear you say 'take heart.'

Lord, it is you who sends your disciples
to cross the lake.

Be with all who travel by land, sea and air
for holidays, business and missions of
mercy...

Direct those who guard our safety.

Lord, it is you who went up the mountain
to pray alone.

Come to us in the still moments to refresh,
revive and reignite the fire of living...

Increase in us thanksgiving for your saving
mercy.

Lord, it is you who reaches out to us,
offering us comfort, strength and peace.

We lift before you those whom we know
who particularly need to be surrounded by
your love and filled with your peace...

Lord, it is you who appears in the early
morning on the water and later in the
garden.

Bring all who have died to delight in the
sound of your voice...

With the whole host of heaven we worship
your holy name.

Fill us this day with your love, your peace
that we may know you with us and that we
do not need to be afraid. Amen.

Ian Black (slightly adapted)

Hymns and worship songs

Songs chosen for inclusion in the YouTube service:

Blessed be your name – StF 41, SOF 1193

Bless the Lord, O my soul – SOF 2231

My soul finds rest in God alone – StF 633, SOF 1974

Faithful One – StF 628, SOF 89

Cornerstone – SOF 2976

In Christ alone – StF 351, SOF 1346

Please click on the song title to access YouTube clip of each song.

Discussion Questions

Church is best done together but we know that this isn't always possible - particularly if you're housebound, isolated or even shielding. But why not contact a friend and arrange to watch the church service online or read the newsletter simultaneously and get in touch by telephone afterwards to talk about it. Below are some questions that might help you to reflect together!

1. What are you afraid of?
2. What does it mean to you that Jesus is with you in the storms?
3. Have you been surprised where you have seen Jesus at work that at first do you did not recognise him?
4. Do you need to hear Jesus say to you "do not be afraid"? What assurance does that give you moving forwards?

In person worship across the Circuit during the next five weeks...

		31st July	7th Aug	14th Aug	21st Aug	28th Aug
Balderton	10.30am	A Trowbridge	Hucknall T	LA	Dalby	Bates HC / JS
	Other		LA 4pm			
Charles Street	10.30am	N Falla HC	K Trowbridge	Hardy	Pailing	Joint Service at Balderton or Southwell
	6pm	Hart	at North End	N Falla HC	Bates	Gibson
Collingham	10.45am	Hall HC / US	Morley	Hibberts	Bates HC	Joint Service at Balderton or Southwell 10.30am
Elston	10.45am	LA		Ward T		Joint Service at Balderton or Southwell 10.30am
Hope Community	10.30am	N Falla SoP / at H'ville / 3pm	Dalby at B'gate	N Falla at H'ville / Breakfast / 9am	West at B'gate	Joint Service at Balderton or Southwell
Long Bennington	10.30am	Winnington	Gibson	Adams	Hart HC	Joint Service at Balderton or Southwell
North End	6pm	LA	Hibberts	LA	Gibson	Bates
North Muskham	10.30am	Hart		LA		Joint Service at Balderton or Southwell
	2pm		Hibberts Café / HC		Ward Café / T	
Southwell	10am	C Falla	Hibberts HC	Hart	LA MHA	Hibberts HC / JS
	Other		Gibson 4pm		Hucknall HC / 4pm	
Sutton-on-Trent	10.30am	LA at Tuxford Cafe / 2pm	Winnington US	LA Breakfast / 09am	Gibson HC / US	US at Parish Church HC / 10am

The September-November Plan should be out imminently, please check the Circuit website or pick up a copy from your local church.



Pray for the President & Vice-president

The Revd Canon Graham Thompson and Mr Anthony Boateng took office on June 25th at the Methodist Conference. You can follow their year on the Methodist Church website (just the diary for July-September is currently available).

Graham has asked that people uphold them in prayer and if you would like to join an email prayer support and be informed of particular concerns and areas for prayer then please email Colin Beckett on colin1244@gmail.com and he will keep you informed.

Colin also runs a more general email prayer chain, as part of Southwell Methodist Church. If you have prayer requests and have permission of all those they include, you can send them to Colin for distribution. You could also join his email list to receive requests for prayer. Do get in touch.