

## Vicar's Letter – September 2018

### 'Open your doors on new adventures'

#### Dear friends

Over the summer Sharon and I took up membership of the Caravan and Motorhome Club. The main benefit to us was that it would provide us with the opportunity to stay in small picturesque (CL) campsites at a reasonable price in many different parts of the country. When our membership pack arrived through the post it came with this enticing invitation: 'Open your doors on new adventures'.

The idea of a new adventure can be enticing or it can be quite threatening. We can respond to that invitation in any number of ways. For some it might be a resounding 'Yes – that's what I want' or it may be greeted with a sense of hesitation; 'What's involved – how much will it cost of my time, money, energy'. For others it might be a 'Yes but... I have responsibilities, commitments, obligations etc'.

The Christian life holds out the possibility of adventure. It presents us with the invitation to follow Jesus who said; 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head' (Luke 9:58). We are not all called into a physical adventure such as that of our mission partners, who have left everything behind to follow Jesus to foreign countries but we are called into a fresh adventure with him right where we are.

At the beginning of this new academic year as we pray for our children, young people and students starting new schools, classes or university, I wonder what might be the new adventure the Lord is calling you to step up into? Perhaps it is to engage in something completely outside of your comfort zone in order to respond to a prompting that Jesus has placed on your heart. Perhaps it is simply to walk across the road and greet a new neighbour who has just moved into the area. Perhaps it is to be more intentional about spending time with the Lord in prayer and learning to hear him speak with you.

**A familiar story.** I have often related this story in my previous letters but it is worth repeating as I believe God is calling us to take our place in a great adventure of prayer and in particular praying for a spiritual revival in our nation.

*Five young College students were spending a Sunday in London, so they went to hear the famous preacher, CH Spurgeon. As they waited for the doors to open, the students were greeted by a man who asked, "Gentlemen, let me show you around. Would you like to see the heating plant of this church?" They were not particularly interested in seeing the boiler room, for it was a hot day in July. But they didn't want to offend the stranger, so they consented. The young men were taken down a stairway, a door was quietly opened, and the guide whispered, "This is our heating plant, this is the boiler room". Surprised the students saw 700 people bowed in prayer, seeking a blessing on the service that was soon to begin in the auditorium above.*

To see a spiritual revival in our nation and the local church to be effective in its witness to the community around us we need to keep the boiler of prayer stoked up. Corrie ten Boom said:

**'Don't pray when you feel like it. Have an appointment with the Lord and keep it. A man (or woman or church for that matter) is powerful on his/her knees'.**

So friends, the challenge on this STEP UP Sunday is to ask the Lord to give us a passion for prayer; to see the world through His eyes and to have that yearning for more of His presence. Prayer is hard work, but if we give ourselves to it with all of our hearts, we will see God's Kingdom come amongst us and his power released to break strongholds and to set the captives free. May we open the doors of our hearts to new possibilities, new capacities and yes, new adventures with Him in this new season of ministry.

**Stephen**