



The Methodist Church
NORWICH CIRCUIT

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TO THE NORWICH METHODIST CIRCUIT FAMILY

The unwelcome news last week that we are in for another month - at least - of lockdown restrictions has been followed by the breaking news that a vaccine seems to be a realistic expectation, possibly by the end of the year. The questions now being asked in the media are 'Who will get the vaccine first?' and, 'Will there be enough for everyone?'

It's also good that the moral question of vaccine distribution is being highlighted. One consequence of wealthy nations buying up stocks as fast as they can be produced is clearly that others will be deprived. Will any 'developed' countries adopt a just approach to their poorer neighbours? Will there be support from the 'haves' for the 'have-nots?' Such a selfless attitude will most likely not be a vote-winner.

These are serious ethical considerations which are beyond our control, but nevertheless we should pray that, having been exposed to such a dangerous virus which at times has seemed to pose a threat to 'life as we know it', we might together reach a higher level of justice and morality based on our common humanity.

However, for those of us who belong to Christ, there is an even greater imperative. The very nature of God within us directs and compels us to work and pray for such tectonic shifts in human affairs to become a reality. We are to be 'salt and light.'

As church begins to emerge from its enforced physical inactivity, hopefully in the next few months, I believe that there will be a window of opportunity for our churches, for you and me, to rethink how we are the voice and hands of Jesus to establish a genuinely loving presence in our communities.

Since Ruth and I arrived in Norwich in late August, it has not been possible to get to know you all while the shadow of the virus has been hanging over us. That will change, and I look forward to us being able to explore together the purpose our faithful and almighty God still has for us all. I invite you to begin praying - if you haven't already started! - for a vision of what might be once we gather again. That vision might well be very different and unfamiliar to us in terms of how we worship and witness but, if it is indeed a vision of God's design and inspiration, it will undoubtedly lead to opportunities to grow His Kingdom. May we be bold enough to pray for what we may find challenging, but rewarding beyond our imagination.

'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.'
(John 16:13-14, NRSV)

Yours in Christ,



Superintendent Minister

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