

NOVEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER **from Rev Trevor Capstick**

(contact Trevor on 0191 413 2494 or email: trevorcapstick88@gmail.com)

Dear friends

You will be aware of the long awaited **COP26 Climate Change conference** taking place in Glasgow at the start of this month. A host of very varied people have turned up – from President Biden with his multicar motorcade to 13 year old climate activist Elsie Burrows who cycled 600 miles from Devon to Glasgow to attend, setting off 3 weeks ago.

Her Majesty the Queen has called upon world leaders “to answer the call of future generations” in showing true statesmanship in the decisions they will make at Glasgow – to rise above the politics of the moment for “the sake of our children and our children’s children.”

The great majority of scientists agree that this is a critical moment. According to Sir David Attenborough, “we are already in trouble” as our earth and the stability we have long enjoyed “is breaking.” “If working apart we are a force powerful to destabilise our planet, surely working together we are powerful enough to save it.” Change is needed but our motivation must come from hope, not fear, he said.

As Christians we believe that “the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” (Psalm 24:1). The world is not ours, but God’s – it is our responsibility to care for it. What is more, we belong to Christ, the one who called us to love God and neighbour, the “one in whom all things were created...all things have been created through him and for him.” (Colossians 1:16).

As the Methodist hymnwriter Fred Pratt Green put it: “*God in his love for us lent us this planet*” (Singing the Faith 727) and whatever the political arguments, economic pressures or vested interests involved, the insight of faith adds a compelling reason for us to urge the participants in COP26 to take radical decisions to enable humanity step back from the brink of catastrophe. Fred Pratt Green’s hymn ends with these words:

*From its pollution, misuse, and destruction,
Good Lord, deliver us, world without end.*

A Prayer by Kathy Galloway, Church of Scotland minister, former Head of Christian Aid Scotland and former Leader of the Iona Community.

Creator God, we give thanks that we have heard the Spirit of God in the freshening leaves and the rush of water.

So we pray for the creation which nourishes and sustains all our lives.

Renew in us the sense of its values that we may not squander its riches, or so bend it to our will that we find we have destroyed it.

A Season of Remembering

We have held at Fellside (October 10th), Burnopfield (Oct 17th) and Sunnyside (Oct 31st) services of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, particularly for families with connections to those villages or churches who have lost loved ones in the last year or two. At each church, along with some regular church attenders, a number of family members have attended and several have expressed gratitude that they were able to be there, and to know that they, and their loved ones, were being remembered and prayed for in this way. And others, unable to be present, have also felt glad to know that their loved ones were being mentioned by name in the service.

On Armistice Day (Nov 11th) and Remembrance Sunday (Nov 14th) there will be opportunity "to remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts past and present, have been given and taken away."

We shall pray for them: *"Ever-living God, we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence; may that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."*

A tip when seeking to pray (from "Being Christian" by Rowan Williams)

Take a few minutes to become settled, still and silent. Detach yourself from the thoughts and feelings that crowd in on you. Slow down your breathing and, as you gently breathe in and out, repeat to yourself, (in) O God, (out) make speed to save me. Or breathe in silently and say to yourself as you breathe out, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner." Do that for as long as you need to slow the rhythms of your breathing and heartbeat, and then continue with the rest of your prayer.

From Julian of Norwich

"From God we come, in him we are enfolded, to him we return."

"You have grounded my soul deeply in you, God. I am endlessly treasured."

"Love is his meaning."

"Our courteous Lord does not want his servants to despair because they fall so often and grievously, for our falling does not hinder him in loving us. In our sight we do not stand, in God's sight we do not fall." (Both insights are true, but the greater belongs to God, says Ann Lewin, Christian retreat leader and writer on Julian).

From Tommy Cooper

I went into a pub and had a ploughman's lunch – he wasn't half mad!

I had a meal last night, I ordered everything in French, which surprised everyone. It was a Chinese restaurant.

I slept like a log last night, I woke up in a fireplace.

Now here's a quick laugh. Do this tomorrow. Go into an antique shop and say "What's new?"