

Letter from Rev Jacqueline – June 2023

Dear Friends,

This comes with the warmest of wishes and blessings and I am delighted that they come your way as hopefully the weather is warming and nature is blossoming and coming into full life bringing renewed energy and hope for us all ...

By the time you read this – we will all have received the Parish leaflet that reached out to everyone to help bring sustainability for St Peter's Church in the future. As I write, we don't have any facts and figures on the support – but what I do have is a heartfelt gratitude for all who are pledging to do what they can to help make that happen. Thank you so much for taking the time to read the information and to either offer a monthly commitment via PGS – a one-off donation or legacy – a prayer for the cause or a practical action that helps us to maintain our beautiful building and churchyard. It is really true that every little act of generosity makes a difference...

Also, by the time you read this – the celebration for the Day of Pentecost will have passed - a time when the Holy Spirit - appearing as 'a mighty rushing wind' and 'tongues as of fire' rested upon the disciples who then were able to communicate the good news of God's love shown to us through Jesus to people of all languages who had gathered into Jerusalem. They in turn were baptised and followed Jesus – thus marking the beginnings of the early Christian Church – the birth-day of the Christian Church.

This Holy Spirit was promised to us by Jesus when he departed the earth, a spirit of love and truth that can be lived out by us and through us when we believe it to be so, turning to its power and grace each day to empower our daily living tasks and relations with one another.

The Holy Spirit is an experience – an inner 'nudge' that moves us on towards the place where we are to be most fulfilled and most useful in the world. The way we understand the 'nudge' will vary for each of us, but there will always be that power for good quietly working through us and will equip us with the needs of the day when we give ourselves enough time to be still and to allow its presence to break through into our hearts and minds and therefore to outpour into our daily actions. I wonder where that might be – and how that might be for you?

My own experience tells me that whatever we think we know about ourselves and where we're heading, when we take note and follow signs and try new things - no matter how confusing or strange or out of our comfort zone they might seem – and try to be useful to those around us and to contribute to the stream of life, then God is able to move us along his pathway that leads to a deeper sense of purpose and fulfilment and peace, and closer to his loving presence even in the challenges of life. Perhaps there are some signs in your own life that might be indicators of new horizons and new hopes and new adventures awaiting you or a deeper peace even in trials. The signs might not be high-hitting or far-reaching - but very often they are the nuggets of joy and hope in our everyday life - small, subtle signs – the appearance of a plant we once thought had died – the finding of a long-lost object of sentimental value – an uncanny and connected conversation.

When we recognise gifts of blessings - things to be thankful and grateful for, very often we are then able to bless others in some small way. This is the fruit of being part of a more connected, positive stream of life. This is the fruit of being part of something – of not being isolated – of being part of a bigger story of knowing that we are, actually, connected through that one spirit of unity and love – and that we are in it together, whatever the weather 😊

So here's a challenge for us all – let's be bold and willing to step into the unknown – just like I did once when someone said 'have you thought about going to church' – just as the disciples did when they upped and followed someone who was just so compellingly charismatic and appealing that they simply had to follow, despite not having a clue where it would lead them.

You never know, in stepping out you too might receive so much more than you bargained for – perhaps a deeper sense of belonging and purpose in the rhythm of your life – a blessing that is priceless beyond measure in our unsettled and seemingly aimless times.

During this month of June, enjoy the longer and lighter days that herald the coming of the hazy days of summer to come, and I pray that the signposts along the way lead you to your own blessings of joy, adventure and self-discovery.

Blessings and love,

Jacqueline