

**Warwick Methodist Church**  
**Keeping in Contact During Covid-19**  
**Number 29 – 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

Dear Friends,

"Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" So said the White Rabbit in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, the very image of hurry and worry. I know how he feels – I've been running round all day trying to get things done, arrived home to find the fence blown down and a message from the Chair of District which needs responding to, and the deadline for this week's letter is fast approaching. So forgive me if this missive is a little short.

It has, however, been an exciting few days. Last Saturday, I led a short act of worship on the grass outside Whitnash church -a brief prayer, a reading, reflection, and some more prayers – followed by half an hour or so of general social conversation. It may not sound much – but with the exception of a few funerals, it is the first time I have stood in front of a congregation since March. This morning and in the early part of the afternoon, I was rushing to assemble all the components needed for the prayer stations we are putting up in Warwick church, ready to meet the person who had volunteered to help me put it together.

Well, I say "help" – but this person (who shall remain nameless, because I didn't ask permission to name them) took my ingredients and arranged them with an art and talent I don't possess. The resulting display is vastly more engaging than I what I would have come up with on my own. Indeed, had I involved them at an earlier stage, it would be better still. As for Whitnash – for my 15 minutes of prayer and reflection, someone else spent probably half an hour (or more) laying out cones and sticky tape and tables and hand gel and notices..... and then clearing it all away afterwards.

None of us has all the gifts, or the time, the energy, inspiration or ideas. We truly are better when we work together and enable each person to offer what they can. But how very human it is to get used to a particular way of doing things and a certain division of labour – so that when someone who has filled a certain role for a long time stands aside, we assume we have to find a like-for-like replacement.

But you know, God is infinitely creative. There are no two people alike, so whenever there is a change of personnel, there is going to be a period of adjustment. The mistake is to think that you have to mould the new person into doing things the way of the old. Likewise – there are many, many ways of praying, of worshipping, of serving, of caring. If we can't do exactly as we used to do, there is bound to be sadness. But may there not also be excitement?

It was strange going into Warwick today, seeing all the chairs pushed back, leaving just the few which are going to be available for people visiting the prayer stations, the hand sanitiser on the walls, the signs and markers and one-way notices, as well as the Noah's Ark and rainbow being gradually assembled as part of the on-line Holiday Club. But it was also joyful.

The Church is not the building – it is the people. And therefore, it is perfectly in order for the building to be used in different ways in order to facilitate the Church's mission of making God's love known. The building has some flexibility, and some constraints – much like the people!

What gifts do you bring? What is your unique part in the life of the Body of Christ? Do not underestimate your worth – you bring something that no-one else does.

How much flexibility do you have, and where are your constraints? Are you able to adapt, and be adapted, to serve the present age?

Warwick will be open for private prayer on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2-4pm, starting on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August. Feel free to pop in and see the combined fruits of the labours of my co-worker and me. Do you have ideas for changing or adding to the existing displays? Feel free to share them.

Keep safe; keep caring; keep praying.

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