



Sunday Worship

Rev'd Phil Nevard

10:30am



We have been asked by Cathy Michell (Local Preacher, Toft) to share the funeral details for Rev. Kenneth Wallace. He was a minister in our circuit, based in Orwell.

A Service of Thanksgiving for his life will take place at Orwell Methodist Church on Monday 12th August at 11.30am.

In your prayers this week, please remember Ian and Mike & Pauline



Wheelbarrow

Harvest!



At Church Meeting we announced a plan to invite individuals/families/groups/neighbours/church committees to decorate a wheelbarrow and fill it with items for the foodbank/Jimmy's Nightshelter for Harvest (Oct.)

We will have a wheelbarrow parade! So - get planning!!



Reading for Sunday:



Elijah and the Angel, Ferdinand Bol

Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water.

1 Kings 19:5b-6a

Craft Group is meeting on Mondays

12th & 19th August
in Footprints Cafe 10.00 - 11.45am
N.B. These dates work around
the August Bank Holiday

Bring along a craft to work on
or just come enjoy the chat
Drinks Available
Further Information from
Yvonne Sparrow

email: yvonesparrow@virginmedia.com

PLEASE EMAIL THE EDITOR WITH ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE INCLUDED NEXT WEEK AND WITH ANY ADDITIONS TO THE MAILING LIST.

Reflecting on Tragic Events

We have been shocked, over the last week, by the dreadful murder of three children and attacks on others in Southport and by the riots which have followed those tragic events. I prepared the following material for the Church House prayers this morning and it's been suggested I make them available more widely. They can be freely used in any way which you find helpful.

With every good wish, The Rev'd Andy Braunston (Minister for Digital Worship)

Revelation 21: 1 - 5 (NRSV)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Reflection

One of the hardest things about being a minister is knowing that, sometimes, there are no words. I've had to conduct tragic funerals - suicide and death by misadventure are always difficult - two will stay in my mind forever; an 18 year old who took his own life in the aftermath of a relationship breakdown and the other, a young man in one of my congregations where we'll never know the reasons why he took his own life. I've taken funerals of those who have injected or drunk their lives away and funerals where there was no one except the undertakers who stepped in to mourn. Thankfully, I've never had to officiate at the funeral of a person who'd been murdered - let alone a murdered child. I can't begin to imagine the pain and grief of the parents of Elsie, Alice, and Bebe slain whilst dancing last week. We hope and pray that the new heaven and earth that the author of Revelation wrote about includes a place for little children to dance.

Since those tragic deaths we've been given no time to process the shock as riots erupted in Sunderland, Rotherham, Liverpool, Tamworth, Belfast, Middlesbrough, Manchester, Stoke on Trent and, last night, in Plymouth. Rioters targeted Black and Asian people, asylum seekers even seeking to set a hotel on fire where they are housed, and have shown particular hostility to Muslims. Social media influencers stoke the flames for their own ends, using the tragedy of murder to manipulate and incite violence. Even children have been rioting. We hope and pray that the promise of tears being wiped away in the hereafter includes provision for that solace now; that there is a place where children can grow with healthy values and attitudes.

The writer of Revelation promised the old order would pass away; we long for change, for the tired, narrow minded, hate-filled rhetoric about immigration and asylum to pass away; for a world to come to pass where no one needs to flee rape, war, poverty and climate change but, in the meantime, hope that the values of our society will include love, tolerance, and diversity. We hope and pray that these words come true and there's a place where children are safe.

In 1996, following the horrific tragedy in Dunblane where 16 primary school children were murdered along with their teacher and 15 others were wounded, John Bell wrote the hymn, There is a Place Prepared for Little Children. It's evocative, tragic, and yet offers a sense of hope that we need in these days of hatred and division. the words are on th next page.

There Is A Place Prepared for Little Children

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There is a place prepared for little children,
those we once lived for, those we deeply mourn;
those who from play, from learning and from laughter too soon were torn.

There is a place where hands which held ours tightly
now are released beyond all hurt and fear,
healed by that love which also feels our sorrow, tear after tear.

There is a place where all the lost potential
yields its full promise, finds its lost intent;
silenced no more, young voices echo freely as they were meant.

There is a place where God will hear our questions,
suffer our anger, share our speechless grief.
gently repair the innocence of loving and of belief.

Jesus, who bids us be like little children,
shields those our arms are yearning to embrace.
God will ensure that all are reunited; there is a place.

Prayer

O Suffering God,
we long for a place of healing,
a place where children can dance without fear,
a place where the refugee is safe,
a place where diversity and difference are welcomed,
a place where Muslims can declare your greatness,
a place where strangers are welcomed,
a place where terror is no more.

We long for the tears to be wiped away,
for you to hold Elsie, Alice and Bebe in your love,
for you to suffer our anger and to share our speechless grief.

We long for peace O God for those frightened by these riots,
especially those who have fled here for safety
only to be met by hostility and murderous rage.
We long for grace for wounded police officers,
and wisdom for our political leaders
that they learn when to speak and when to remain silent,
and we long for astute perception for judges and magistrates as justice is given.

Remind us O God,
that there is a place where healing, justice and renewal are found
and that we must work for it now. Amen.