

June 2020 Newsletter

Dear friends,

Change is never easy, is it? There are some people who seem to thrive on adventure but most of us are rather more wary when it comes to tackling new life-changing situations.

I discovered last week that the same is true for rabbits – well, at least, for my pet rabbit! Having some time ago purchased a new hutch for her as her existing one had seen better days, Mike and I finally got around to assembling it. That we managed this without an argument was itself quite an achievement since we have different approaches to self-assembly jobs (I like to read instructions!). Chuffed by our harmonious success, we filled the hutch with wood shavings and hay and waited for Rabbit to enjoy her new des-res. Only she was having none of it. She hated it! It smelled different I guess, and it looked different. The downstairs had a more open aspect than the previous hutch which maybe made her feel less secure. It was also a bit smaller and clearly she wasn't willing to down-size in her old age. She looked thoroughly miserable (yes, you can tell!) and when she was let out to run round the garden, she point-blank refused to go back into it voluntarily.

There was nothing for it but a trip to the hardware store, the purchase of some plywood and the laborious repair of Rabbit's old hutch - a far more time-consuming process than building the new one. We now have an old hutch which looks a lot better than it did and a happy rabbit. (We also have a brand new, empty hutch.....hmmmm.....)

June is Bible month and during it we're going to be looking at the Book of Ruth, both in our Sunday worship and in our Bible studies which we're hoping to restart online. You'll no doubt remember that the story starts in Moab with the widow Naomi, who, following the death of her two sons, sets out to return to her home in Bethlehem, Judah. Such is the love her daughters-in-law bear for her that begin the journey with her, even though they are travelling to an unknown country and uncertain future. Naomi urges them to go back to their own people and eventually Orpah is persuaded. She chooses to stay with what is familiar and safe and there is no sense at all in which she is condemned for doing so. However, Ruth pledges herself to Naomi, to her people and her God, and it is through Ruth's bloodline that King David is born and later still, Jesus himself. God is able to use Ruth's willingness to face the unknown and unfamiliar to bring about his purposes.

We too are facing uncertainty. Do we find ourselves longing to return to the well-known and comfortable or are we willing to trust God for the future even though it might be scary at times? Is there a loving hand we can hold on to (as Ruth clung to Naomi) as we slowly move towards a 'new normal'? The hymn by Richard Gillard, *Brother, sister, let me serve you* has the following verses in it which seem to speak to our present situation:

*We are pilgrims on a journey and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.*

*I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.*

As we journey together, may we continue to support one another with our love, care and prayers and remind each other that we are held safe by the hand of God.

To finish, a quote from Minnie Louise Haskins:

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year,
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
He replied,
"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

With every blessing,

Sharon