



Newcastle City Temple Connected

Reimagining Church Together

Dear Friends

The buzz phrase this past week has been 'Road Map' as The Prime Minister set out the government's roadmap for cautiously easing lockdown restrictions in England, last Monday.

Within moments of the announcement social media feeds became flooded with people posting statements which related to that long awaited 'hug', that much needed 'haircut' and that greatly anticipated 'holiday'.

The Salvation Army Territorially is of course following each government announcement closely - and responding with it's own Road Map to recovery which will help individual corps and centres to prepare their own road map towards reopening and recommencing different activities and services.

In all of this it's important that we not only listen to advice of those in leadership - political leaders, faith leaders and health officials - but above all we need to listen to God, and understand what it is that He is saying to us.

I think I've shared with you before that I have the most terrible sense of direction; some of you will know that I got in a real panic the other week—when I needed to meet with someone at Brunswick; I failed to turn left which I needed to do to get to the church, and ending up in a restricted road—had to call upon the assistance of a young policeman— who stopped the traffic, enabling me to turn around, and offered instructions on how to redirect my course that I might avoid those dreadful 'bus lanes' which seem to be the curse of this city; and which my Sat Nav is totally oblivious to.

One of the first devotional books I ever bought as a new Christian, was book by Martha Bolton called *'If the pasta wiggles, don't eat it'* at the end of each short devotion, which uses humour to help young people draw closer to God, can be found a 'Bumper Sticker' and one of my favourites is this...

"I may not always know the way that I am going, but the One I'm following does"

In times of uncertainty this 'bumper sticker' together with those familiar words found in Jeremiah 29:11; have helped to steady my gaze on Him.

***"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord,
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."***

It's important for us individually and also as a corps that we allow God to direct our path; especially during times when the ahead may not look clear to us; as song 772 says;

**When we cannot see our way,
Let us trust and still obey;
He who bids us forward go,
Cannot fail the way to show.**

Let me share with you one of Martha Bolton's devotions;

'Sometimes God leads us down a path that makes us think we need a better travel agent. We take an unexpected turn here, climb a hill there. We can't understand why He didn't choose the easier path that we mapped out for ourselves. Why didn't we get that first job we applied for, instead of having to turn in forty-seven employment applications all over town? Why didn't we pass those cheerleader try-outs on the first try, instead of the ninth? Why didn't we get a driver's licence when we wanted it, instead of failing the test three times (and backing into the Department of Motor Vehicles building once)?

I'm sure the Israelites were baffled when God told Joshua to lead them around the walls of Jericho seven times (see Joshua 6). But they did it anyway. They didn't grumble, "Hey, man, this is so corny.



This is the corniest thing we've ever done". They didn't complain, "Come on, Joshua, our feet hurt. Can't we just attack the city and be done with it? They didn't even worry about how the Jericho Evening News was going to portray them, which, by the way, might have gone something like this: "This just in! Well, folks, it seems the Israelite army is at it again. This time they've been sighted marching around the walls of our city. And they're singing, too. I'm afraid all that wandering around in the desert has gotten to them. According to reports, this is their sixth trip around. There's no cause for alarm, though. City officials have assured us that even if they do try to attack, they'll only be knocking their heads against a brick wall."

But they should have worried, because after the Israelite's last trip around the city, the walls of Jericho fell flatter than one of my souffles. The Israelites conquered the mighty city of Jericho—not because of their strength, but because of their obedience. They trusted God, their Commander in Chief, was going to win the battle for them. All they had to do was follow orders.#

When you think about it, it really is a little foolish not to trust God's leading. After all, we're looking at our journey one step at a time. He's the one with the whole map.'

Scripture to Stand On: "The Lord will guide you always." Isaiah 58:11a

Hello Again, Lord: 'Lord, help me to trust my footsteps to the Maker of the Pathway'

Martha Bolton, 'If the Pasta Wiggles, Don't Eat it'. ISBN 0-89283-852-3

This weeks chosen Band Piece: In Gods presence

<https://youtu.be/hVeR6L1fN4I>

It was only after preparing these initial thoughts that an email arrived in my inbox referencing this weeks chosen Band Piece.

The piece 'In God's Presence' has been chosen by Miriam Robson. Within the composition are two songs; 'Bow the knee' and 'All there is of me'. As I was reminded of the lyrics of these two songs - the first verse of Bow the knee caught my attention, because of the relevance to the thoughts which I had just shared, in relation to our present journey and the road map out of the current restrictions and frustrations due to Covid. And so I add my thanks to Miriam for this helpful contribution.



One day soon

*There are moments on our journey following the Lord
Where God illumines every step we take.*

*There are times when circumstances make perfect sense to us,
As we try to understand each move He makes.*

When the path grows dim

And our questions have no answers, turn to Him.

Bow the knee; trust the heart of your Father when the answer goes beyond what you can see.

Bow the knee; (Chris Machen and Mike Harland)

*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for
and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)*

With every blessing
Major Liz

NCT SA Connected

Reimagining Church - Let's Worship Together



SUNDAY: 28th February 2021

Theme: LOVE BEYOND - MEASURE

Key Text: 1 John 4:17-18

Suggested Song: As the varied way of life we journey (SASB 531)

*As the varied way of life we journey, come the plains and then the mountainside,
Come the days of joy when birds are singing, and the world is fair and sweet and wide;
Then a deeper joy comes, overflowing, from the everlasting throne of love,
And all other joy is but an echo from the ever-blessed heights above.*

In Hebrews 1:1-2 we can read;

"Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."

Scripture teaches what is often called "progressive revelation." Simply put, this means that God revealed Himself to His people over many centuries, periodically giving new information that built on but did not contradict or deny what came before; and I love the way that as we read the scriptures from Old Testament through to the New Testament we are able to grasp a better understanding and appreciation of God and His love.

In Genesis chapter 12 we can read how God called Abram and how he established a framework for mission in the broken and fallen world.

The Lord had said to Abram,

"Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."

So, God promised Abram that his descendants would become a great people, that they would live in a particular place and that their purpose would be to bless the world with God's love.

Fast forward four hundred years, as Moses prepared to lead the people towards the assigned place, God gave them the Sinai covenant (also known as the Mosaic Covenant), which explained how they would be his people and how they would fulfil their purpose of blessing the world with his love.

Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." (Exodus 19:3-6)

In the New Testament, we learn how Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament covenant, He commanded his followers to love God and love others. He also said that by this, all people would see him (John 13:34-35).

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Following the ascension of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the followers of Jesus were sent to the ends of the earth to continue the mission commenced through Abram; to be his people in the place he has sent us, fulfilling our purpose of blessing the world with his love.

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Continued...



Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. (Acts 1:6-9)

In reflecting on the theme LOVE BEYOND - MEASURE, we are of course thinking about Our Partners In Mission - those who will benefit from our Self-Denial offerings; and so we are encouraged to love beyond measure as we consider the gifts which we shall bring; and to pray for those who have responded positively to the call to preach the gospel and minister to the needs of those overseas.

A prayer

Lord of the harvest, raise up, nourish and send more workers to preach the Good News to the poor, to build up the Church in every land and minister to the needs of people everywhere, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

This Weeks Activities

Mon 1st March 1900 Corps Council Meeting Via Zoom
[Meeting log-in has been sent to those concerned via Email](#)

Tues 2nd March 1100 Weekly Coffee & Chat via Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/94036559399?pwd=S3lCVFU1QklkcWVsQnJrRUpWNDlNdz09>
Meeting ID: 940 3655 9399
Passcode: 236837

Thurs 4th March 1900 Heather's House Group - Part 4 of 'From the Ram to the Lamb'
[Meeting log-in will be emailed to those concerned by Heather](#)

Sunday 7th March 1000 Morning Worship inc. Self Denial Altar Service via Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/97311064719?pwd=VXJxWEFBVGU1WFpPSjk2UUFWNWlvdz09>
Meeting ID: 973 1106 4719
Passcode: Worship

DOOR STEP DELIVERY

All active Members of Newcastle City Temple can expect at some point over the next couple of weeks (before the 14th March); to receive a package which will include; a Mothers Day Gift (Ladies only); a 10-day Worship Resource for Holy Week & Easter; A Palm Cross and also the Self Denial Envelope for those households who may not have received one already. If you hear of others who have received their packages - and are concerned that you may have been missed, please be patient and trust that yours will soon be with you soon. For Mother's Day - I will be circulating a special edition of this weekly bulletin (NCT Connected Issue No. 30) those who would usually receive this by post rather than email should find it included in your packs. The 10-day Worship Resource has been issued in place of the regular bulletin and has been marked as Issue 31 and 32.

For those living at a distance – an email version of the Mothers Day, Holy Week and Easter resource will be circulated as normal.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER

Details of services & other activities will be posted in next week's edition of the NCT Connected weekly worship bulletin.

HAVE A BLESSED WEEK—KEEP THE FAITH & KEEP SAFE!