February 2023

Dear Friends,

Travelling in the winter months probably has more variety than that of the summer. In the past couple of weeks, we’ve experienced ice, frost, rain and sun. Dry crisp weather is much easier than the drab, clinging wet drizzle that seems to make cars very dirty within seconds of starting out. Over the past couple of days some of my journeys have experienced driving in conditions I can only describe as misty and murky, maybe they could also be considered as mild fog too. It was the sort of weather where you could see where you were going but not as far as would have been liked. It certainly led to some increased concentration.

Once the conditions had eased and I was reflecting on the contrast, I considered how this might relate to our faith and journey with God. There can be times where everything seems so clear that it is just wonderful. However, sometimes our journey of faith may not be quite as clear. We have the visibility of the next step, and sometimes not even that is as transparent as we’d like, but we certainly can’t see as far as we would like.

In 2 Corinthians 5, verse 7 reminds us that ‘we live by faith, not by sight.’ The opening of Hebrews chapter 11 reminds us that faith is the assurance of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. I hope that these may be verses and metaphors for our relationship with God which bring us some comfort. We can trust in God, who revealed himself in Jesus and who leads us by the Holy Spirit today. We may not always be able to see the next step or to know that the decision we have made is quite the right one. Living by faith and not by sight is to place our hope and trust in God who does know the path of life.

Over the next few months we will be continuing to discern where God is leading us as individual churches and as a Circuit. As we come towards our SPA day (Serving the Present Age?) on Saturday 4th March, the encouragement is for us all to come together, to share with one another and to discern the next step. The way ahead may not be filled with total clarity but with every step the next will be revealed. We can trust in God to open up the way with the truth that comes from Jesus, and which brings life to us as individuals and as church communities. I hope that you will be able to come along if at all possible.

As disciples we live by, and grow, in our faith as we come alongside one another. Whether the way is full of bright sunshine or a little bit misty, let’s continue to share with one another as we seek to grow with God.

God bless,

Chris