

Liverpool District Newsletter – December 2012

Dear Friends,

There's been an awful lot of rain in recent weeks and months! As I write this I look out on grey skies, heavy with moisture, trees bending in the wind. I turn on the television and there are reports that, again, parts of the country are suffering the agonies of flooding. Whilst the lack of any summer to speak of, grey skies, wind and rain can make us all feel miserable, one glorious consequence of all this rain is the rainbow! And the sky has been hung with some wonderful rainbows recently. And the rainbow reminds me of Covenant, that first Covenant of our God with the world and all living beings [Genesis 9] – a Covenant fulfilled, we believe, in God's gift of Himself in Jesus His Son.

You will be reading this, I guess, over the Christmas and New Year period. As the people called Methodist we renew, at the beginning of each New Year, our Covenant commitment to live in relationship with the living God, who out of love is come to us as a baby, born in a stable, yet who is Light shining in our darkness; we commit ourselves, again, to service of Him in this His world.

Covenant has become something of a theme for us as a District over this past year or so. The seven Chairs of District in the North West entered into a personal Covenant – a commitment to each other to support and share wherever possible, when it makes sense, in our ministries across the North West and within the Districts that we serve. The seven Districts, at our autumn Synods earlier this year, have entered into a Covenant commitment to work ever more closely across the boundaries. All this is in order to serve the mission of the Church – our calling to serve the communities in which we are set; to offer ever more effectively the hope which is ours in Christ to those communities and their people. We already do a good deal together in the areas of training, development, probation, complaints and discipline. But if we are to make the best use of the resources available to us in people, time and money, it will make sense to do more. To this end officers and others from each of the Districts of the North West will be gathering in April next year to work together further on what it means for our future working to be in Covenant relationship with each other.

On a personal note, please allow me to say thank you to all those who wrote or offered assurance of their prayers when my mother died at the end of August. To know that you are held in prayer is a wonderful and humbling experience. To welcome our first grandchild into the world at just about the same time has been a wonderful joy. You will also know that I will be retiring in the summer of 2014, and, as is the Methodist way, the process of discerning and nominating my successor as Chair of the Liverpool District has already begun and should be complete by next spring. Please pray for all involved in the process.

Christmas and New Year remind us once more of the Covenant relationship that lies at the heart of all things – our relationship with the living God through Jesus. In all your celebrations may the rainbow arch shine through – and with it, the assurance of God's constant and continuing love for you.

May His blessing be with you at this season of the year.

With every good wish.

*Jim Booth*