

Caroline Hodgson *reflects on*
Colossians 1:15-28

At the beginning of chapter two Paul writes, "I am struggling for you... and for all who have not seen me face to face... though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit". It suggests that he was encouraging and supporting the Colossians remotely, and indeed nobody knows whether Paul ever visited Colossae in person. It's thought that Epaphras, a native of Colossae who's mentioned in the opening verses of Colossians, heard Paul preach in Ephesus and became a Christian, before going back home and founding a church.

In today's passage Paul describes Jesus at "the image of the invisible God". Christ was God on earth. After his death and resurrection, Paul became Christ's earthly representative. Since Paul, for all his zeal and energy, couldn't cover the whole earth on his missions, Epaphras brought the word to the people of Colossae. So a pattern emerges – a game of tag.

Christians have always known that, having heard the word of God, it is both a joy and a solemn responsibility to pass it on. It's not easy or straightforward. We might be shy and reserved, for example, or plain embarrassed, or compensate with off-putting over-zealousness. Each of us has our own individual contribution to make, our God-given potential – and that, in the Christian life, can be discerned through prayer, reflection and, importantly, experience – getting out there and getting on with it.

Okay, so you're "it". When are you going to set aside time to pray about it, with the real intention of acting upon God's word to you in prayer? 🙏



Lord God, with the examples of Paul and Epaphras before me, I ask you to be with me in spirit as I try to fulfil my potential and discern how I can be your representative on earth. Amen.

Poetry and faith

George Herbert (1593-1633)

by Julia McGuinness

"Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back, / Guiltie of dust and sinne." So opens "Love (III)", George Herbert's poem, where God is personified as Love.

Herbert is widely held to be the English language's greatest devotional poet. As a dedicated parish priest at Bremerton, he harboured no artistic ambitions, describing his poems as "a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul, before I could subject mine

to the will of Jesus, my Master, in whose service I have now found perfect freedom".

"Love (III)" is a lyrical dialogue where Love draws the reluctant sinner into divine grace. Finally, the poet accepts Love's eucharistic invitation: "You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat. / So I did sit and eat."

On his deathbed, Herbert sent his poems to his friend Nicholas Ferrar, asking him to decide whether to publish or destroy them. When 160 of Herbert's poems were published in 1633 under the title *The Temple*, they were immediately well received. 🙏

Walking with Rosie Going home

by Gillian Cooper

It's hot today, so Rosie and I head for the shade. We walk along a tree-lined path by a river from one village to the next, and enjoy ice creams outside the café. Then we have to walk back. Now that she's walking away from the ice cream place, Rosie is much less enthusiastic. She's hot and tired, but we need to get back to the car. "Come on,"

I say, "you can do it. Tea-time is this way." We make it home in time for tea.

It can be hard to keep going. There are times when life feels like an effort, a plod along a hard and never-ending path. But there is a voice that says, "Come on, you can do it. I will help you. It's always tea-time here, and there is place set for you at my table, in your eternal home." 🙏

“The Eucharist involves more than just receiving; it also involves satisfying the hunger of Christ. He says, 'Come to Me.' He is hungry for souls.”

St Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997), Roman Catholic nun and missionary

Blandford Methodist Church: Sunday 20th July

Good morning and welcome to our Morning Worship with Holy Communion which is being led Reverend Keith Beckingham. The stewards today are Christine Lydford, David Wild and Jean Peck. Thank you to Tina for the flowers. After the service, please join us in the hall for refreshments.

Dates for your diary:

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| Sunday 27 th July | 10.45 am | Morning Worship led by Mr Mark Priestley |
| Sunday 3 rd August | 10.45 am | Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Reverend Peter McNeill |
| Sunday 10 th August | 10.45 am | Morning Worship led by Mr Colin Besant |
| Friday 15 th August | 12.00 noon | Lunch Club get together |
| Sunday 17 th August | 10.45 am | Morning Worship led by Miss Liz Ward |
| Sunday 24 th August | 10.45 am | Morning Worship led by Reverend Peter McNeill |
| Sunday 31 st August | 10.45 am | Ecumenical Service at BMC hosted by Reverend Dr Mark Kimber |

Colehill Methodist: Every Monday, 11.00 am to 12.00 noon(ish), Bible Study, coffee, prayers and plenty of chat. All welcome.

Bible in a year: 13th – 19th July: Psalms 7 – 25 and Acts 18 - 21

Meet Reverend Dr Mark Kimber: Most Fridays Mark will be available in the Okeford Room from 10.00 am to 11.00 am for anyone who wishes to have a chat with him. However, on the third Friday of each month there will be a session entitled '**Meeting with Mark**' to which you are cordially invited.

PLEASE NOTE: Mark will not be around for a couple of weeks including Friday 25th July and Friday 1st August.

Lunch Club Summertime Get Togethers: Looking for a chance to stay connected over the summer whilst Lunch Club is on a summer break? Reverend Mark – along with a few friendly helpers – will be hosting relaxed lunchtime gatherings filled with good conversation, fun, and maybe even a quiz or activity! **Bring your own picnic lunch** We'll provide drinks, biscuits, and (if you're lucky) some cake! **Fridays 12:00 noon – 1:30 pm**

- 15 August

Come along for a friendly catch-up and a bit of summer cheer. Everyone welcome!

Reverend Dr Mark Kimber

Kurling Club: The Church agreed in principle to manage the Kurling Club at our GCM on the 26th June. On Wednesday 16th July we held our first meeting to cover the most important matters. The Club's Constitution was signed and dated by Judi Briggs on behalf of the Kurlers and John Cornish on behalf of the Church. Membership forms received from Blandford Group Practice will be used for the time being. The next step is to find the organisations that can help provide the necessary training.

The Blandford Group Practice has closed the Kurling Club account and transferred monies held to the Church's account. Members will start paying their monthly subscriptions to the Church starting on 1st September, which is the start of the new Connexional Year.

Please talk to David or me if you have any queries or are willing to offer any help. Thank you.

John Cornish

Woodlands Methodist: Worship for You led by Canon Simon Tong, Sunday 10th August, 6.00 pm. Details on the poster in the hall.

Blandford Foodbank is urgently in need of (updated 16.7.25) – Baked beans, Cereal, Jam/ marmalade, Tea bags 40, Coffee, Tinned fruit, Tinned meat balls, Tinned tomatoes, UHT milk. Any other donations of food or household goods are also welcomed. For those able to support the Foodbank with items, a box has been placed in the Narthex as a collection point.

John Cornish

Prayer: Please can we remember to uphold in prayer those members of our congregation we know are ill or suffering in some way.

Can we particularly remember those of our congregation who are helping family members through illness, and those who are awaiting operations.

If you know of anyone who would like prayer and be mentioned by name in The Link, please let me know (having obtained their permission first to mention them by name).

Minister: Reverend Dr Mark Kimber

Enquiries via Lead Steward, John Cornish, on 07799 516 735

Pastoral Support: Joyce Wild: Tel: 01258 454091