

June Magazine

As I write this next Sunday is the Feast of Pentecost then the following Sunday is Trinity Sunday. With Easter being early this year, these events have come along in very quick succession and then we continue into the long season of Trinity!

Also coming up in June is the great annual baptism and confirmation service led by Bishop Paul, which will be the last time will see him before he retires in July. This year five candidates will confirm their relationship with God and the church.

When I think of Pentecost and Trinity, I automatically think of one word, 'relationship'. The amazing event of Pentecost saw the creation of the universal church, people coming together in a new relationship, transformed, empowered, and inspired by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The record in the Book of Acts begins with the words, *"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place."* 'All together...' just two words which carry so much significance for us in our church and communities but which sadly we often find difficult to achieve. The history of the church and society are a catalogue of argument and divisions, acrimonious splits, prejudice, and hatred, many of which remain unreconciled, leaving people alone and isolated from humanity. As the great Archbishop Desmond Tuto said, *"Transformation begins in you, wherever you are, whatever has happened, however you are suffering. Transformation is always possible. We do not heal in isolation. When we reach out and connect with one another - when we tell the story, name the hurt, grant forgiveness, and renew or release the relationship - our suffering begins to transform."*

In his prayer recorded in John chapter 17, Jesus prays that his followers 'be one' in order to be an effective and credible witness to the world. Sadly, again this has often and continues not to be the case because selfish motivations and attitudes get in the way of humility, reconciliation, and trust.

To become 'one' we must come together in loving caring relationships, reach out to people where they are with compassion and care without agenda or judgement, simply to convey the love of Jesus as our motive and aim.

Our lives are all about relationships, with those we love, our families and friends. We are called to extend these relationships to our communities, to reach out to people who may be different to ourselves but nonetheless fellow members of our communities who may be seeking to belong.

In the coming weeks and months, I hope to arrange a few community 'get togethers' simply to bring people together and form relationships. If any of you have any thoughts or ideas on this, please let me know.

Every peace and blessing to you all.

Rev James