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Weekly Letter – 11 August 2024

Ephesians 6:10-20

What to Wear?

This Sunday will be the closing ceremony for the Olympics. There have been amazing human athletic feats, medals won and near misses. Athletes have specially designed clothes and equipment to help them excel. They have routines as they prepare to compete to get them in the best physical shape and frame of mind. Some probably dress and prepare in a particular order to get luck on their side. I remember hearing an army chaplain talking about soldiers going out on patrol in Afghanistan putting on their boots in the same way each day in the hope of staying safe.

And in the last chapter of Ephesians, Paul talks about putting on the armour God gives us, not for luck, but for building up our strength in union with the Lord. In the first chapter he has said that God has put all things under Christ's feet, so the war is won, but there are still battles along the way. The trouble with military images is that they can lead us to feel embattled and act either aggressively or defensively.

The letter to the Colossians covers similar themes to Ephesians, but there it says, 'clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience... and over everything, put on love' Col 3:12. Colossians is talking about what we need to put on to promote unity and Ephesians is talking about coping with the destructive forces at work in the world. We only need to think of the evil that can come out of the misinformation on social media, or the devastation that results from the logic of war.

Truth as a belt counteracts fake news. Righteousness as a breastplate defends against short term expediency. Readiness to share the Good News as shoes, keep us moving with the changing times around us. Faith as a shield gives us assurance of God's presence. Salvation as a helmet helps us to have the courage to stand up and be counted. The Word of God as a sword means that we are not empty handed as we cope with what comes at us.

Take a moment to pray and ask God to help you pick the right 'clothes' to help you tackle your tasks today.

Simon

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Simon Walkling

Bible Readings: Ephesians 6.10-20: Psalm 33

Zoom Congregation

We are pleased to be able to welcome people week by week on Zoom including friends from Brynamman, Newport and South Africa, and those closer to home.

St David's Uniting Church in Pontypridd will be joining us today for their monthly Zoom service, which gathers people from Derbyshire, Africa and Grand Cayman.

Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Hall Street, Llanelli

Prayers for every household - we will pray for Elgin Street nos. 1-34

On Sunday 25th August, the service will be called Songs of Praise: A service celebrating people's favourite hymns and learning from them why it is their favourite, so I invite you to think about this then send the information to me on adellapritchard@gmail.com or phone Carol at the Church by 15th August please.

At the service it will be lovely if you will share the reason why a particular hymn is your favourite, or I can read out the information you send me. People who attend on zoom, please do share your favourite hymn if you want to. Many thanks. Adella.

Fastening our belts of truth (Ephesians 6.10-20)

Righteous and Mighty Lord, Creator of the diverse world, we thank you for your steadfast love for all colours and tribes of humanity. We thank you for your age-old promise that you will be faithful if we will be faithful too.

So, we call upon you, O Lord! Help us fasten our belts of truth, to proclaim the Gospel of justice and peace!

Let us cry out against the oppressive and destructive empires of our world, built on power, war and money, in the name of safeguarding our interests, our identity, our religion, our God.

Let us cry out against the demonising of the “other”, those who are different, or come from across the borders – asylum seekers and refugees, migrant workers and immigrants, those whose “evil” is to need compassion.

Help us fasten our belts of truth, to expose and decry racist policies, corrupt rulers and authorities and to resist the very forces of evil.

Let us cry out until governments reduce spending on guns, bombs, fighter jets and submarines, and fund the fight against poverty, disease and climate change.

We call upon you O Lord! Help us fasten our belts of truth to proclaim your Gospel of justice and peace!

