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**Weekly Letter – 4 August 2024**

**Ephesians 4:1-16**

**Growing in Christ**

When Sue worked in childcare, there were different areas in the setting where she worked: the home corner; sand and water play; the outside area with bikes and a mud kitchen; and inside various toys to play with and 'mark making' opportunities to help develop big movements and controlled fine motor skills. The aim was to create an environment in which the children couldn't help but learn. That learning happened through the children playing and working out things for themselves, the adults around observed their play and put out toys and things that would lead them on the next step of their journey.

Ephesians describes the church as a people where members can't help but grow in Christ. The environment is created by sharing in one Lord, one faith, one baptism, which come from one God and Father of us all. The ascended Jesus gives the church the gifts that the church needs to help people grow and these are people, who are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. And we grow through love and honest speaking, aiming to be Christlike in our words and ways. We become the body of Christ, guided by him as the head, when we are gathered in worship or sent out to be part of God's work in the world.

What more can we do to make Christ Well a church where people can't help but grow to maturity in Christ? What areas and activities do we need to help each other take the next step of our faith journey (for we never quite reach the full stature of Christ this side of eternal life)? What are the roles we need and the gifts we could pray for that will equip us for continuing Christ's ministry?

Each of us has received a special gift in proportion to what Christ has given (v7), so take a moment to ponder what your contribution to helping others grow might be. And all of us have more growing to do, so pause to consider what might help your next growth spurt. Perhaps you can share your answers with me or a friend in church? And together we may build up Christ Well through love.

***Simon***

**Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Simon Walkling  
We will celebrate Communion. Bible Readings:**

**Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Christ Well**

**Prayers for every household - we will pray for Manor Road nos. 73-127**

## **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. On 11th August, St David's Uniting Church in Pontypridd will be joining us again for their monthly Zoom service, which gathers people from Derbyshire, Africa and Grand Cayman.

## **Saturday – 3<sup>rd</sup> August - 10.30 -12 - Coffee Morning in the concourse**

You are welcome to join us for a coffee morning when we hope that some of our neighbours will also come and along with sharing a cuppa we can chat about what would improve our local environment and what we can contribute to reducing the impact of climate change more widely.

## **Discussion Groups**

Our Summer sessions have finished, but look out for more opportunities in the Autumn to reflect on faith and how it relates to our lives now. If you have any suggestions for questions or themes that you would like to include, then please tell Simon.

**On Sunday 25th August, the service will be called Songs of Praise:** a service celebrating people's favourite hymns and learning from them why the hymn is a favourite for them? So I invite you to think about what your favourite hymn is.

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 and then I will read out the reason for your choice. Many thanks. Adella

## **A Prayer of confession**

*Sue McCoan (URC Prayer Handbook 2024)*

(2 Samuel 11.26-13a and Psalm 51.1-12: Exodus 16.2-4, 9-15 and Psalm 78.23-29: Ephesians 4.1-16: John 6.24-35)

Loving God,

You know our human needs for food and shelter, for security, for love and joy.

Forgive us for the times we seek to meet our needs in unhealthy ways:

in ways that dishonour you, or cause harm to others.

Forgive us for the times we meet our own needs without thought for the needs of others

or for the well being of creation.

Loving God,

You know our spiritual needs for fellowship with each other and unity in you.

Forgive us for the times we have harmed our fellowship,

when we have used our gifts to show off rather than to serve.

Loving God

You are the bread of life able to meet all our needs, able to feed us in body, mind and soul.

Give us the grace to accept your forgiveness and to fill ourselves with you.