



August 8th 2021

**Greetings in the name of our
Risen Lord Jesus Christ.
In this time of uncertainty,
we declare: Jesus is Lord!**

Stay Awake!(1)

This week I read an article by a wise and thoughtful church leader in South London, Jason Swan Clark, entitled "Stay Awake: Why this might be the most dangerous time." That might sound a somewhat depressing title as we continue to emerge from Covid!!! But the article highlights a crucial aspect of what we face as individuals, society, and as a Christian community – the accumulation of losses during the pandemic, many of which we have scarcely acknowledged, let alone been able to grieve for. Sociologists and anthropologists both liken COVID to a slow-motion natural disaster, where we are going through the expected phases of response to a disaster - but at lumbering pace. He writes:

Sociology can give some perspective, using previous disasters to forecast what might be yet to come. Indeed sociology tells us that this time now, coming out of COVID is the most dangerous of times. We are entering what is known as the 'recovery phase' of a disaster, and it is the most prolonged phase, taking years. And, in the face of a huge disaster, it can take decades. Adrenalin is spent. Exhaustion sets in. Losses have to be counted and processed. Rebuilding in the face of loss takes an effort amid depletion of resources- emotional and financial.

Being back in church (as well as on Zoom) last Sunday was a significant step for us in the recovery phase, and we are grateful for the growing measure of freedom we enjoy. But, like any community, we have been touched by the reality of loss. Some have lost loved ones to Covid or other illnesses, and have been unable to attend funerals and grieve. Lockdown separation and isolation have led to relational losses with people losing jobs, moving away, and in some cases losing touch. As Jason Swan Clark writes: *To name those losses and their accumulation is not a lack of faith; it is the nature of genuine faith to lament them. I keep reminding my church that denial is not a spiritual gift and is more like superstition - if I keep other people's sad thoughts away from me, nothing terrible will happen to me.*

Even Paul the apostle who could worship and see Jesus at work despite being imprisoned or shipwrecked, had occasion and need to lament his losses. He shared with his church community in Corinth that, *"We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death"* (2 Corinthians 1:8-9). Those words of lament are important to acknowledge as we look to the future and to rebuilding as a community. May we 'stay awake' in these coming weeks and months to our losses and the losses of those around us, and have the grace and courage to grieve.

With my prayers and love, *Anita*

A Reflection on Lament

“There is no such thing as a lament-free life. To love is to lament, to let your heart be broken by something. If you don’t lament over the broken things in your world, then your heart shuts down. Your living, vital relationship with God dies a slow death...and you become quietly cynical. Cynicism moves you away from God, lament pushes you into his presence.

Oddly enough, not lamenting leads to unbelief. Reality wins, and hope dies. The reality of a broken world triumphs over the new reality of a redeemed world. You miss resurrection and get stuck in death.” (“A Praying Life”, by Paul Miller)

A Message from Wayne

Wayne and Kismet are getting married this weekend! Wayne writes:

As myself and Kismet commit our lives to one another, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and prayers over the years. Although at times there have been personal challenges I have been able to grow from strength to strength in my walk, thanks to the love and care of those around me to which I thank you all for. I can honestly say I never thought there would be a day that I would get married yet I continue to be taken back by God's grace and blessings.

This last year has been a challenge for us all and planning a wedding through the puzzling guideline rules of lockdown has been an event in itself! However, with God's guidance we have been able to arrange a small intimate ceremony just for family and a few close friends that is meaningful for us. Invitations have been very limited so I apologise for not being able to invite you all, and thank you in advance for your understanding.

We send Wayne and Kismet our congratulations and love. Please pray for them this weekend!

Transform Derby Car Valeting: spread the word!

We are delighted to let you know that our brand-new social enterprise has started. Derby Urban Church (previously Ozzy Road Baptist Church) has been working hard during the lockdown on our vision to create a social enterprise to help people coming out of homelessness or addiction, to get skills that will lead to a sense of achievement and potentially paid employment, as well as helping them to make a connection to church. Working in partnership with Green Pastures homeless hostel we have just trained up 8 people in car valeting led by Steve Clark who is a professional car valet and part of our church.

We are now ready to take bookings and are looking for our very first 24 cars to valet - please call **07954 488212** or email transformderbycarvalet@gmail.com to make a **booking**. If you want to know more, please check out our promotion video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgtvuyvkWdk&t=31s>

We are also on Facebook: Transform Derby Car Valeting Academy where you can see lots of videos of happy people whose cars have been valeted! You can also message us from Facebook.

Praying for the Persecuted Church: Iraq

There are about 175,000 Christians in Iraq – a tiny percentage of the 41.5 million people living in Iraq.

Christians from a Muslim background often keep their faith secret, because of the pressure and threats they are likely to receive from extended family members, clan leaders and wider society. Christian converts risk losing inheritance rights or the right to marry – and they are not allowed to marry Christians, as the law still considers them Muslim.

Islamic extremists remain active in Iraq, attacking and kidnapping Christians. So-called Islamic State (IS) are notorious for their appalling use of women, particularly the sexual enslavement of women from religious minorities. While IS no longer have a stranglehold over the country, the legacy of their attitudes linger and many women are traumatised from their experiences.

The government also discriminates against Christians in various contexts, from the workplace to check points. Blasphemy laws can also be used against those who try to spread the gospel.

After years of violence, an uncertain peace has come to Iraq – but 2020 saw recurrent violent protests and the instability in Iraq is a catalyst for the ongoing persecution of Christians.

This has only got worse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Iraqi Christians take great comfort from their places of worship and the sense of community they get there, gathering despite persecution. When these closed because of the pandemic, Iraqi Christians found it hard. “The believers are very sad; they want to come to church,” says Father Poulos, a priest in Bashiq. “But for now, we have to tell them to stay at home and follow the prayers through the livestream on the internet.”

Discipleship and fellowship have gradually been moving online, including courses run by Open Doors partners, so that Christians can meet, learn and share despite restrictions.

Persecution faced in public and private life has not changed significantly, but the level of violence faced by Christians has increased sharply in the past year – which is largely the reason that Iraq has gone from no.15 to no.11 in the World Watch List. This is due to more reports of Christians being attacked or killed and churches being attacked.

Please pray for our sisters and brothers in Iraq. (From the Open Doors website)

Prayer Meeting

A reminder of our weekly prayer meeting every Tuesday at 11am via Zoom. It's wonderful that a group are gathering each week to pray (and there is so much to pray for!) – please do come along if you can. For more details, please contact Geoff.

Prayer ...

In this testing time, do not hesitate to ask for prayer for any concern you have. We all face difficulties and challenges, but prayer makes a difference. In an emergency, call Bren (07967 183601), and she will ask those on the prayer chain to pray for you.

Zoom Joining Details for the 10.45am Service:

On a Computer, Laptop, Smart Phone or Tablet: Click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/450891605?pwd=czNCTTJuaUJpQ3VlOVlnUm1zS0tKQT09>

Alternatively:

1. Open Zoom and select 'Join' or 'Join a Meeting'
2. Enter the Meeting ID: **450 891 605**
3. Select 'Join'
4. When prompted for the Meeting Password, enter **73837**
5. Select 'Continue' or 'Join Meeting' and you will be connected

By Phone – these are the numbers you must now use:

1. Pick any one of the numbers below (doesn't matter which), if one doesn't work, pick another: 0330 088 5830; 0131 460 1196; 0203 481 5237; 0203 481 5240; 0203 901 7895; 0208 080 6591; 0208 080 6592
2. Dial the number and when prompted for the Meeting ID press: **450 891 605#**
3. You will then be prompted for a Participant ID, just press **#**
4. Finally, you will be prompted for the Meeting Password, press: **73837#**
5. You will be connected and able to hear everything that is happening

If you have difficulty connecting, please call Anita

St. Peter's in the City Staff

Acting Vicar/Associate Priest: Revd. Anita Matthews anita@stpetersderby.org.uk

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Building Manager: Melvyn Wood
Kitchen Supervisor: Gillian Wood

Church Wardens: Tim Benson, Liz Runcorn

We are a community of faith, hope and love in the heart of the city
Follow us on Twitter: [@stpetersderby](https://twitter.com/stpetersderby); www.stpetersderby.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Officer: 07828 280455

Please note that copies of the Safeguarding Policy are available in the Church Office or at www.derby.anglican.org/safeguarding

The church office is currently open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday between 9.30am and 1.30pm. Telephone: 01332 360790, office@stpetersderby.org.uk