



Peters Green News Sheet Issue No: 24

Sunday 23rd August 2020

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Heb 13:2

Greetings from the other side of Luton. I am the 'new' minister at Stanton Road Baptist Church and Hadrian Christian Fellowship. As a church name it's a bit of a mouthful but it reflects the two congregations of the church – one by the L&D hospital and the other in East Dunstable. As I say, I'm the 'new' minister as I've been at the church for less than 2 years having moved from my first pastorate in a church on the borders of Birmingham and the Black Country (I understood some of the local dialect and accents but didn't originate in that wonderful part of the world – unlike another Baptist minister in Luton!). I was there for 14 years, firstly as what is called a minister-in-training, and then as the minister (it's like learning to drive: firstly you have to have someone with you and have learner plates on the car, then you're allowed out on your own and may put a p-plate on the car, and then it's all down to you). Prior to that I'd lived and worked in the south of Birmingham for nearly 20 years. I remember as I was exploring the call to ministry saying to God I'll go wherever you want me fully expecting to have to move a long way from friends and the places that I knew. In his wisdom, and compassion, He moved me a quarter of the way around Birmingham instead. Now, after much prayer and heart-searching, I feel He's led me to Luton.

It's funny being new. It gives you a certain freedom: 'I'm new so I can't be expected to know how things are done round here'. It brings challenges as well - getting to know new people, new ways of doing things, where things are (people still tell me road names that I've never heard of or refer to things by the names they used to have), and even words and phrases (I'm having to get used to 'going round the houses' again when for many years it was 'going round the Wrekin').

We've all had times when we've been new – a new job, a new house or even a new school. Sometimes it's just one thing that's new and other times everything is new when you move house, area, work and even church. It can feel quite strange when everyone else knows how things work, and who's who, but we don't. It can be very unsettling and occasionally upsetting.

When you haven't been 'new' for a while it can be hard sometimes to remember what it was like and what the person is feeling. It can also be challenging remembering to make allowances for the new person's ignorance about where things are or why we do things in a certain way (it can sometimes be good to have the old ways questioned so that we know that we're still doing them for the right

reasons). It's also a challenge welcoming new people into our social circles and, sometimes, into our church: someone new changes the dynamics. Welcoming people can mean us having to step out of our comfortable places to reach out to them.

The writer to the Hebrews reminds their listeners to remember to show hospitality to strangers – to welcome the new person, to include them, and to make them feel at home. Hospitality is so much more than just providing food – though does help. It's about making space for people and making sure that they are not forgotten or left out of things. The call to hospitality, to welcoming the stranger, is one that echoes through the Bible. It's also important to us today; to reach out to the stranger, the newcomer, and the person who is not the same as us. To let them know that they are welcome with us, and welcome in God's family which, as Revelation 7:9 says 'there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.' There's room for all, and there's room for you as well as that new neighbour.

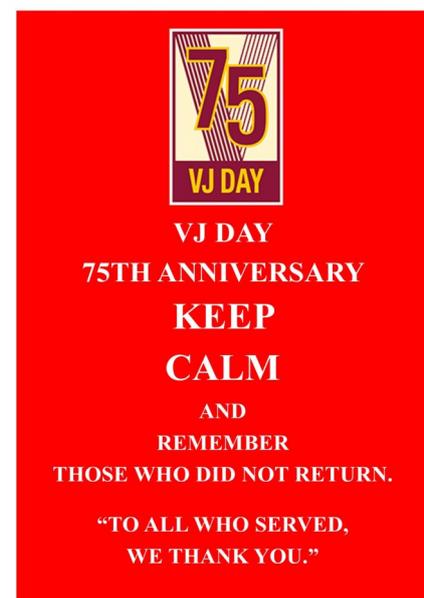
Incidentally the people at Stanton Road Baptist Church and Hadrian Christian Fellowship have been very hospitable to this 'new' minister. Will you take the risk to welcome the new person near you?

Ian Hendry

All the way my Saviour leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my Guide?
Heav'nly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate'er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well,

All the way my Saviour leads me,
Cheers each winding path I tread,
Gives me grace for every trial,
Feeds me with the Living Bread.
Though my weary steps may falter,
And my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo! a spring of joy I see,

All the way my Saviour leads me;
Oh, the fullness of His love!
Perfect rest to me is promised
In my Father's house above.
When my spirit, clothed immortal,
Wings its flight to realms of day,
This my song through endless ages
Jesus led me all the way





A special commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day was held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire on 15th August 2020.

Whilst VE Day (Victory in Europe) marked the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still engaged in bitter fighting in the Far East. Victory over Japan would come at a heavy price, and Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) marks the day Japan surrendered on the 15 August 1945, which in effect ended the Second World War.

A small number of veterans, their families, and relatives of those who did not return, gathered for this special occasion sharing their memories and remembering their comrades who fell.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: 'On this 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, we pay tribute to the heroes deployed thousands of miles away in the mountains, islands and rainforests of Asia.'

Unable to celebrate the victory in Europe, and among the last to return home, today we recognise the bravery and ingenuity of those who, in the face of adversity, restored peace and prosperity to the world.

Their immeasurable sacrifice changed the course of history and at today's commemorations, we take the opportunity to say what should be said every day - thank you.'

The Burma Campaign was the longest campaign fought by the British & Commonwealth Armies in World War II and the Fourteenth Army, was one of the most diverse in history. More than forty languages were spoken by those serving with it and all the world's major religions were represented.

The Fourteenth Army became known as 'The Forgotten Army' but their service and sacrifice must never be forgotten!

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: 'As the Second World War recedes from living memory, our responsibility to educate future generations about the conflict is more important than ever.'

**To All Who Served,
We Thank You.**

