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28<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## Falmouth and Gwennap Circuit Pastoral letter – May

Dear Friends

Those of you who, like me, are awake early will be well aware that the dawn chorus has been particularly 'vibrant' in recent weeks! Whilst the sound is beautiful I cannot usually distinguish one species from another, but that was not the case this morning.

Today I heard my first Cuckoo, which made me smile, but then I was filled with a wave of mixed emotions, joy about spring and also sadness due to their life cycle.

It made me happy due to the Cuckoo's connection with heralding spring arriving, as they do, from Africa in late March/April. In the middle ages people thought they brought spring with them, and festivals were held in their honour. They remain surrounded in folklore; from hearing its call bringing good fortune, to the state of health you are in when you first hear the cuckoo being how you will remain for the rest of the year. Fortunately I'm not superstitious, however, as I felt pretty rough this morning after a terrible night's sleep!



One reason I am happy to hear a Cuckoo is because they are in decline, it is good to know that they are around, they are classified as Red on the UK Birds of Conservation Concern list and Vulnerable on the global IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. But there is something many find discomfoting about them. Cuckoo's lay their eggs in other birds' nests, whilst strange eggs will be normally be removed, Cuckoos have evolved to mimic the eggs of specific birds, such as meadow pipits and reed warblers. The female watches a chosen nest, gliding in when it is unattended, replacing one of the existing clutch with her own egg and leaving, off to do the same elsewhere to increase the chance that one of her eggs will survive, and ending her role in parenting.

Within hours of hatching her chick begins to remove any other eggs and chicks from the nest, so that it has the full attention of the unsuspecting 'hosts' who, as nature's own 'foster parents' care for it as if it were their own, even once it grows much larger than themselves!

**For all the latest news about the Falmouth and Gwennap Methodist Circuit please check our online presence:**

Website – <http://fandgmc.org.uk/>

Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/Falmouth-and-Gwennap-Methodist-Circuit-126416989738/>

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Prayer Requests can be made at - <https://www.facebook.com/Falmouth-and-Gwennap-Methodist-Community-Prayers-103448721360972/>

Anyway, natural history lesson over, I want to reflect on what we can learn from this oddity of nature.

As we move cautiously towards easing lockdown restrictions, and things slowly begin to open again we can feel torn between excitement about seeing those we have missed and anxiety about what this may bring. Something that was once familiar to us can feel as alien to us as a Cuckoo is to a Reed Warbler.

Our churches stand at the brink of a new opportunity to rise again with Christ, but we will only be able to do this if we are willing to engage with the changes that have occurred over the last year. Some members will struggle to return, due to anxiety or reduced mobility, some of the groups that hire our premises may be slow to return, but other opportunities may 'pop up' in their place.

As congregations we will have to be open to changes in the groups we once relied on and the leadership, location, time (possibly even they day?) of our main acts of worship. As we open our doors to meet the needs of communities that are reborn but forever changed by what we have experienced, can we, like the Reed Warbler, devote as much care and attention to this new reality as we did for what came before?

The Church is perfectly placed to meet the fears and concerns that people have, if we can find ways to share the love and hope that we know, lives can be changed too.

### **Thy Kingdom Come**

From May the 13<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> we are all invited to join the global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come everyone who takes part is encouraged to:

- Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray daily for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness



As we 'emerge' from lockdown – I like to use the imagery of a butterfly breaking out of the hard shell of a cocoon. It can never be a caterpillar again, but in that moment of fragility, as its wings begin to unfurl and dry, it holds all the potential to become something beautiful and take flight. My prayer is that we can do the same!

Stay safe until we meet again, yours in Love and Prayer,

*Jane*

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