



Image of the day - Masonic skills

Reports

Reclaiming the Sabbath for rest could reduce work anxiety says Christian think tank

The biblical idea of Sabbath is an ancient answer to modern anxieties, according to a new report from the Christian think tank, Theos.

“Just work, Humanising the Labour market in a changing world” by Paul Bickley and Barbara Ridpath, says the pandemic has intensified working practices with people spending more hours at their desks or responding to work emails and that employees are increasingly expected to work unpaid overtime.

Describing current working practices as “dehumanising” the authors say the pandemic should be an opportunity for societies to think about what they value highly.

As part of the research, they conducted polling with YouGov on perceptions around work and found that 33% agreed that “work is just a way of earning to provide for life’s necessities,” compared to 16% who agreed that “I feel that in work I’m doing things that are really meaningful” and just 10% who agreed that “I believe my current work is part of my calling and vocation”.

The authors say attitudes towards work are clear in Christianity: “Genesis makes clear that we are made in the

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image of the Divine Worker, and St Paul writes to the Thessalonians to remind them to keep working, despite their belief in the imminent return of Christ. Perhaps you could sum up the Christian pro-work stance most simply like this: Work is not just necessary but good: it connects us to prosperity, to community, and gives meaning."

Paul Bickley said the report hopes to encourage attitudes towards work that are informed by a Christian idea of what it is to be human:

"Biblically speaking, we want to say that the work is a profoundly human thing to do. But we have to acknowledge human vulnerability, as well. One of the things that we have said in the report is that the last year has really broken the link between workplace and work for many people, and that means that we can be in a situation where we're always on.

"And because the link between workplace work time and the work we do has been severed, we can find ourselves in that situation where we really lacked rest and opportunity to turn off. And that's bad for people's mental health.

"One of the arguments we're making is that it's really important for us to re-integrate a principle of Sabbath and rest into our economy."

Recommendations include giving more support for unpaid but essential forms of work;

Finding ways to "eliminate at least some of the vast quantity of unpaid overtime in the economy";

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Countering the culture of overwork by recovering shared practices of rest.

Paul Bickley says rediscovering the principle of the Sabbath can take many different forms:

“In the last 2030 years having dumped that principle of Sabbath, we need to find a way of recovering it. And that could take a very contemporary form, it could take the form of a right to switch off, which some people are calling for, it could take the form of more Bank Holidays.

"So we're not necessarily talking about literally saying no work on a Sunday. But what we do say is that those practices need to be shared, they can't be left up to kind of individual decision, because all the gravitational pull is towards switching that laptop on and getting a few emails out or spending an extra hour in in the office to get those tasks done.”

[<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk>]

Environment Bishop to tell J&P Conference: 'Time for action is now'

"The time for action is now" is the message the lead bishop on the environment for England and Wales will give at the annual conference next weekend of the National Justice and Peace Network.

Bishop John Arnold of Salford says: "this meeting, a few months before COP26 in Glasgow, allows the voice of the



church to come together, unite and look at ways we can take the call for action back to our parishes and communities to create a different legacy for the next generation."

He feels: "this conference comes at a unique and vital moment for we are seeing weekly more and more evidence of the irreversible damage that climate change is having on our common home." This refers to, "clear evidence around the world" of "severe and long term droughts, floods, rising

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sea-levels and extreme record-breaking temperatures that our actions and our way of life are inflicting on our world." The chair of CAFOD noted that, "these events have affected millions of people, most often in the poorest countries of the world and people who have done least to damage our environment."

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, is to chair the three-day conference. '2021: Moment of Truth - Action for Life on Earth' is the theme of the 43rd annual conference of the National Justice and Peace Network of England and Wales (NJPN). It will take place 23-25 July in Derbyshire with nearly 200 participants and taking Covid precautions.

Keynote speaker Lorna Gold, acting Chair of the Board of the Global Catholic Climate Movement and author of 'Climate Generation: Awakening to Our Children's Future', will also stress the urgency of the challenges faced in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss against a backdrop of Covid. "The pandemic and the ecological crises are increasingly intertwined" she will say, and "besides a personal conversion, what is needed now is community conversion - and this can be embodied in concrete plans on how our communities will change." She added that, "after a year and a half of confinement, I hope that participants will leave energised and inspired, with lots of practical ideas on how to create bold Laudato Si' plans for their communities."

Other speakers include Lord Deben (Independent UK Committee on Climate Change), Andy Atkins, Fr Eamonn Mulcahy and Mark Rotherham. NJPN Chair Paul Southgate, from Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, says: "our Conference will ask what must be done to build a viable

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future as we battle climate change, the biodiversity crisis and the pandemic? He hopes, "participants will feel inspired, empowered and equipped to meet the challenge and create the deep change required by ecological conversion in themselves, their communities and the world." Underlining the inspiration from Pope Francis he says: "The future has a name", says Pope Francis, "and its name is HOPE".

Liturgy will be led by Colette Joyce, Justice and Peace Fieldworker in Westminster Diocese, in collaboration with liturgical composer and pastoral musician Marty Haugen online. He has written a special chant 'For Our Common Home' for the occasion.

More than 20 stalls will be available in the Just Fair and around 15 workshops available on such topics as: 'Fossil Free Churches', 'Sustainable Development Goals' 'Conflict and Environment' and a 'Nature Explorer Walk' with a botanist. Justice and Peace Scotland will give a briefing around 'Attendance at COP26 - real or virtual'.

So, on the sixth anniversaries of both the Paris Agreement on Climate and Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the conference will stimulate moves towards "ecological conversion".

The conference aims to launch a decade of transformative action - in lives and communities. Since 2005, NJPN has regularly taken an environmental theme for the national conference and its Environment Working Group, formed that year, has been involved in planning the 2021 conference.

LINK Justice & Peace Conference -
churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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[www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/]

Women's role in global media tracked in World Association for Christian Communication report

At the present rate, it's going to take nearly seven decades to close the gender gap

The most recent Global Media Monitoring Project report indicates that all things remaining equal, it will take 67 years to close the gender equity gap in traditional news media around the world.

No country, the sixth edition of the report said, has attained gender equity, either in its newsrooms nor among the sources it relies on for its stories.

UN Under-Secretary-General Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka called for more stories that “reflect the diversity of women’s expertise and perspectives.”

“By hearing more women’s voices in the news as experts and leaders, and by seeing their stories featured centrally in ways that push against simplistic stereotypical gender roles, the media can create the more accurate, inclusive and empowering representation we need as the world rebuilds,” she said.

The report has been issued every five years since 1995 by the World Association for Christian Communication, which

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describes itself as “a nongovernmental organization that builds on communication rights in order to promote social justice.”

WACC has members in 120 countries, which are divided into eight regions. Read a summary of the preliminary findings in the GMMP report, which were released in April, [here](#).

Among the findings in the GMMP report, issued last week:

Women were only 13% of subjects and sources in the television newscasts monitored and 21% in the digital news stories and tweets. “While the results have improved,” the report notes, “women’s invisibility remains even more marked in influential international media that serve formidable audiences.”

The pattern of underrepresentation of women even in stories that concern them, such as #MeToo stories, more than spills over in news content on gender-based violence.

“That girls and women are underrepresented in stories about sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault particularly now, during COVID-19 times when such acts have reached epidemic proportions, signals a serious deficit in news media accountability to women.” The failure to represent the diversity of people and opinion present in society “not only has implications for public discourse in decision-making, but it also plays a role in eroding trust in news journalism.”

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Women's voices as spokespersons have increased by eight points since 2005, and as experts by seven points in the same period. Currently, 24% of expert voices in the news are women.

Gender equality in the world depicted in the news still lags behind gender equality in the physical world. In addition, people older than 80 rarely get attention in the news: only 3% of the subjects of newspaper news stories were in that category, and less than 1% in television news. "Women 80+ were even more invisible than the men in that age group," the report states.

Compared to the most recent previous report in 2015, women's visibility as reporters has increased by three percentage points overall across print and broadcast news. The reporter gender gap is exactly the same in Asia, Europe and Latin America. Pacific media have progressed slower than the rest of the world, but they are currently the second-best performers after their Caribbean counterparts

The sex of the reporter matters for the gender dimensions of the story. GMMP findings across time indicate that women reporters are more likely than men to turn to women subjects and sources. Currently, 31% of the people in traditional news covered by women reporters are female, in contrast to 24% of subjects and sources in stories by men reporters.

Dr. Susan Jackson Dowd, executive director of Presbyterian Women, Inc. and a member of the North American board of the WACC, said Monday that even though the report shows "an overall trajectory of gender representation in the media

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is improving in some areas of the world, results of the research are concerning.”

An example, Jackson Dowd said, is that the rise in stories about the pandemic in the category of science and health was accompanied by “a fall in women’s voice and visibility in stories.”

GMMP findings related to gender stereotypes “show that news media may be contributing to the persistence of gender-based violence,” Jackson Dowd said. Between 7 in 10 and 9 in 10 stories on gender-based violence or inequality “reinforce or do nothing to challenge gender stereotypes,” Jackson Dowd said, quoting the report, which indicates “that the quality of the news across research measures is stagnant or in decline.”

Jackson Dowd said that Presbyterian Women, Inc., in partnership with the World Council of Churches, women’s organizations, and other partners nationally and around the world, “consistently work toward eradicating gender-based violence.”

“The 2020 UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) revisited the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action’s Millennium Development Goal of promoting gender equality and empowering women,” Jackson Dowd said. “This goal became a UN Sustainable Development Goal in 2015.”

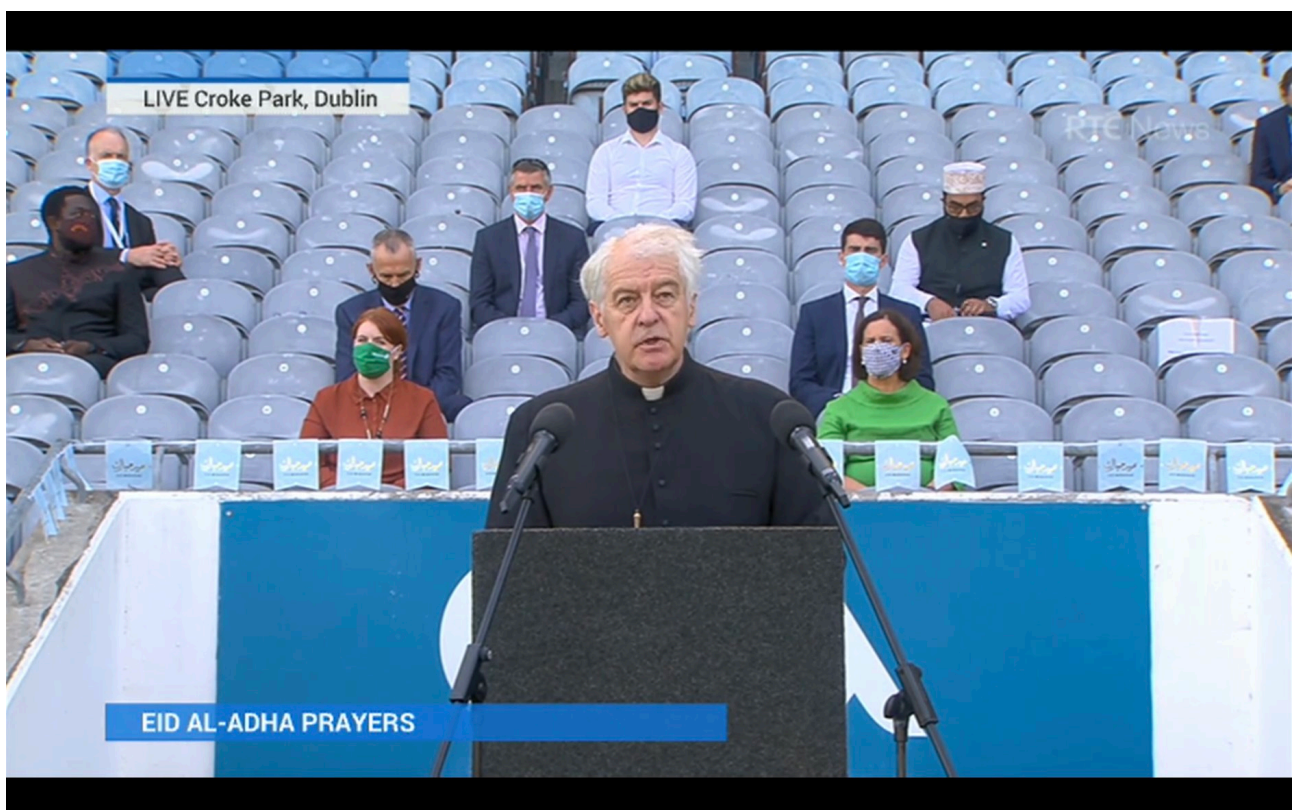
“The 2021 UN Commission on the Status of Women focused on women’s full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the

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empowerment of all women and girls,” Jackson Dowd said. “Yet, the research shows that news reporting works against these efforts and any sustainable progress.”

People and places

Archbishop joins Irish Muslims in celebrating Eid Al Adha



Archbishop Michael Jackson addressing Eid Al-Hada in Croke Park. (Photo from RTE)

Five hundred members of Ireland’s Muslim community gathered in Croke Park on the morning of Tuesday (July 20) to celebrate Eid al-Adha. Eid Prayers were led by Shaykh

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Dr Umar Al–Qadri of the Irish Muslim Peace and Integration Council and Blanchardstown Mosque.

Archbishop Michael Jackson represented the Church of Ireland and joined other Abrahamic faith leaders, Archbishop Dermot Farrell and Rabbi Zalman Lent. The gathering was also addressed by representatives of the Government and Opposition as well as a representative of the Traveller community and the President of the GAA.

Addressing the gathering on the theme of togetherness, Archbishop Jackson noted that since the arrival of the coronavirus religious communities had found new ways of gathering and praying together.

“We have dug deep into our religious and spiritual traditions for wisdom and for perspectives we had never thought that we needed before. But, as everything moved forwards, we instinctively began to think that this is all now about yesterday – but it is today; and it is also tomorrow. As children of God and as children of the world, we have learned something profound and enduring: being together in the solidarity of silence and being together in the deafening silence of absence. Living as we do in a world of 24/7 noise, this is something new. Such being and such being together are strengthened and sustained by prayer,” he said.

He added that it was now time to explore new opportunities created from the strengths have found during the pandemic. These opportunities must be explored by people of faith, people involved in Inter Faith encounter, society and politicians.

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The Archbishop said that the gathering was a gift. “Today’s gathering is, in itself, a gift: as a gathering, as a generosity and as a gratitude from us to our hosts and friends who celebrate Eid in Croke Park. There is no underestimating the togetherness expressed in being in such an iconic venue in the living history of Irish society and Irish culture. There is only one Croke Park,” he commented.

Link to full text of The Archbishop’s address at -
[[<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2021/07/20/archbishop-joins-irish-muslims-in>]

All Ireland Mother’s Union President June Butler walks in the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross



From 14th to 16th June 2021, All Ireland Mother’s Union president June Butler walked 21km in the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross as part of her “21 in 21” fundraising project.

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She is walking 21kms in each diocese in the country to raise money for the MU Mums in May fund which provides grants to support ongoing projects.

June was joined by the Diocesan President of the MU in Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Hilary Dring, and together they started the first of three walks in Youghal at St Mary's Collegiate Church on Wednesday 14th June. They were joined there by Jean and Helen from the local branch and by Canon Andrew Orr, who also led the service which was held before the walk.



On Thursday, June and Hilary started their second walk at St Peter's Church, Carrigrohane, where Rev. Robert Ferris sent them on their way with prayers. Together with Patsy Devoy (All Ireland VP), Pam Wood and Deirdre Whitley (Diocesan Trustee) they walked along the River Lee, over the "Shakey" Daly's Bridge and via UCC into the City Centre, where they finished their walk at St Fin Barre's Cathedral. Rev. Ted Ardis received them with prayers and the group also took a tour of the cathedral and its organ.

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The last walk in the Diocese took place on Friday 16th June in Doneraile, where branch leader Ruth Sherlock received June and Hilary. Rev. Meurig Williams took the service at St Mary's Church and sent two groups of walkers on their way; those who undertook a shorter walk in Doneraile Park, and a group of seven ladies, including June and Hilary, who took the path around the perimeter of the park.

At the end of the walk they returned to St Mary's Church and June was presented with a book about Doneraile Park by the Branch and Hilary gave her a bag of food items, all originating from Co. Cork with which to remember her walks in the Diocese.

Triple Celebrations in Stillorgan and Blackrock



Canon Ian Gallagher (right) with Dean William Morton, Canon Aonghus Mayes and the Very Revd Roderick Smyth following the Service of Installation in St Patrick's Cathedral.

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There was a triple celebration for one Dublin Rector this weekend as two special anniversaries coincided with his installation as a Canon in the National Cathedral.

On Sunday morning (July 18) Canon Ian Gallagher and his parishioners celebrated the 20th anniversary of his arrival as Rector of Stillorgan and Blackrock. It was also an occasion to mark 30 years since Ian's ordination. Meanwhile, parishioners also congratulated their Rector on his appointment to the Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

Meanwhile, later on Sunday afternoon, Canon Gallagher was installed by the Dean of St Patrick's, the Very Revd William Morton, as Prebendary of Tipperkevin on the Chapter of the National Cathedral.

He was installed alongside the Very Revd Roderick Smyth, Dean of Killaloe and Canon Aonghus Mayes, Rector of Moy and Charlemont.

Canon Gallagher was elected by the Chapter in January. The lengthy delay between appointment, election and installation is a result of restrictions relating to the pandemic.

Pastor McConnell a great prayer warrior, funeral told

One of Northern Ireland's best-known preachers was remembered as "a great warrior" as he was laid to rest on Wednesday.

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The funeral of Pastor James McConnell took place at the Whitewell Tabernacle church he founded in north Belfast, Rebecca Black writes in the Belfast Telegraph.

DUP MP Sammy Wilson and former DUP leader Edwin Poots were among those who attended, while many others watched online, including children from as far away as Ethiopia.

Pastor Michael Bunting led the first of three tributes to Mr McConnell at the service, but said there could have been 300 more and 300 more again.

He recalled his strong faith, how he founded the Whitewell church, recalled his work overseas and impact in the USA, describing how his influence stretched from “Newtownards to Nebraska”, as well as his love for a fish supper.

“He was a great prayer warrior who loved the gospel,” he said.

Pastor Jeff Wright of the Green Pastures Church in Ballymena also led a tribute, before Mr McConnell's son-in-law Norman Hobson delivered the third on behalf of the family.

Mr Hobson recalled a humble start to Mr McConnell's career, from a first meeting in 1957 to set up the Whitewell Tabernacle to how he had to patch up his shoes with cardboard.

Whitewell is now one of the largest churches in Northern Ireland.

The 84-year-old died on Saturday following an illness.

He had been receiving end-of-life care at the Royal Victoria Hospital in recent days.

Mr McConnell is survived by his wife Margaret and his daughters, Linda and Julie.

DUP leader Sir Jeffrey Donaldson expressed his sadness at the weekend. He said: “Pastor James McConnell touched lives around the world. Bringing the good news of the gospel and leading a ministry which personified the parable of the Good Samaritan. My sympathies go to his family and friends who will feel his passing most dearly.”

First Minister Paul Givan said: “It is with sadness we mourn the loss of Pastor James McConnell. A faithful servant of the Lord loved by many. Remembering especially his family and church community.”

Announcing his death, Whitewell Metropolitan Tabernacle senior pastor David Purse said: “It is with profound sadness and indescribable pain that we announce to you this morning that just a short time ago the Lord Jesus called our beloved Pastor McConnell home to glory.

“Having been in hospital now for approximately seven weeks, 'the Bishop', as we affectionately knew and loved him, deteriorated to the point that the hospital, despite their best efforts, could no longer do anything for him, other than make him as comfortable as possible.”

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Mr McConnell hit headlines in 2014 after calling Islam “heathen” and “satanic” during a church sermon.

He was questioned by police and was later found not guilty of making grossly offensive remarks against Islam, after a trial at Belfast Magistrates Court that garnered worldwide attention

Books, broadcasts, resources, and Webinars

Short reflection by The Archbishop of York

The Archbishop of York has recorded a short reflection on this Sunday’s gospel reading, Matthew 20.20-28, for the Diocese Of York. "Our leadership must be marked by service, because the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. That is how it must be with us".

Watch here:

Songs of Praise and English Heritage

Sunday BBC TV - Rev Kate Bottley is at Boscobel House English Heritage site with a Catholic family. Sean Fletcher hears about the faith and prayers of Frank Skinner and poignant words from a couple who lived through grief. BBC TV 1.15 and bbc.in/2VQXN0v

Poem For Today

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Inniskeen Road: July Evening

By Patrick Kavanagh

The bicycles go by in twos and threes -
There's a dance in Billy Brennan's barn tonight,
And there's the half-talk code of mysteries
And the wink-and-elbow language of delight.
Half-past eight and there is not a spot
Upon a mile of road, no shadow thrown
That might turn out a man or woman, not
A footfall tapping secrecies of stone.

I have what every poet hates in spite
Of all the solemn talk of contemplation.
Oh, Alexander Selkirk knew the plight
Of being king and government and nation.
A road, a mile of kingdom. I am king
Of banks and stones and every blooming thing.

Pointers for prayer

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee,
that the course of this world
may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance,
that thy Church may joyfully serve thee
in all godly quietness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord of the Church, we pray for our brothers and sisters throughout the world who acknowledge your presence and power in their lives. We pray for those who are laughed at or victimised because of their faith in you. We pray that you will give us strength to be true to our faith when it is questioned or belittled.

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We pray for our church and our community and for a renewal of our vision and dedication to the work you have called us to do.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord of all nations, we pray for the needs of this world.

We pray for those nations where communities are broken by prejudice and hatred, where the fear of violence is never far away. We pray that where human endeavours to find peace and reconciliation seem so inadequate your power to draw people together will bring renewed hope for the future.

We pray for those who have knowledge and power in the fields of medicine and science. Let them not be corrupted by greed and ambition but grant them wisdom, integrity, humility and compassion to use the knowledge they have gained only for the good of all people.

Throughout the world-wide community of nations may there be a sense of responsibility for each other and a desire for equality and justice for all your children.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of compassion, we pray for all those who are suffering with anxiety, stress, grief or pain and illness.

Long ago a woman believed she would be healed if she could just touch the clothes of Jesus. May we today believe that if we pray to you for those we know and love, your healing power will also flow into their lives bringing wholeness of body, mind and spirit.

In a moment of quiet our hearts reach out to you in prayer for the needs of those we love.

Grant us strength in our weakness, comfort in our sorrow, peace of mind in our anxiety and stress and the renewed hope for life which only your presence and power can bring.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

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Lord of time and of eternity, we pray for those who have died and are now with you in your kingdom

We thank you for the communion we share with all those who have gone before us and pray that our lives may reflect on earth the light that surrounds them in your eternal kingdom.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord, be present among us this morning and may the transforming power of your Spirit work in us and through us today and throughout the coming week.

Merciful Father accept these prayers, For the sake of your son, our saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Speaking to the Soul

It's true that some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry. But others preach about Christ with pure motives... Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice.

Philippians 1:15 & 18 NLT

From time to time we probably all think how nice it would be to live in a dream world where everyone agreed with everyone else. We could then get on with living our Christian lives with the confidence that what other people said was a mirror image of our own thoughts. But now we must leave our dream world and enter the one in which we actually live! In our world people disagree on almost every subject and Christian faith attracts the complete spectrum of

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reactions. There are people who love every word we speak, and others who hate it with a passion. And, as Paul observed, people speak in a whole variety of ways. Some are loving and gracious, others are bitter and divisive. It's all very confusing but Paul draws a strong and interesting conclusion. Amidst all the confusion he recognises that what really matters is that the name of Jesus is being preached. Of course, he would much rather everyone spoke of Christ in the same way as he did, but that belongs to the dream world where God hasn't asked him to live. In the real world we have to get on with the confusions that come with it.

In the middle of summer it may seem strange to think about Christmas but I am really grateful that our country stops for Christmas and pays so much attention to it. My reasons are exactly the same as Paul's. I fully recognise that many people will just see it as a holiday, or a season to make a lot of money. But I love the fact that in our post-Christian and materialistic society we are given the opportunity to promote the story of Jesus' birth. More than three times as many people attend church over the Christmas period when compared with the rest of the year, and millions more will sing carols which clearly affirm the Good News. I think we ought to stand with the apostle Paul and rejoice.

QUESTION

How do you react when people speak about Jesus in a way that you dislike?

PRAYER

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Loving Father, help me to do everything I can to help people to hear about Jesus. Amen

