



Murmurings from the Manse

“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's”

Rarely do I begin my Murmurings with a Biblical quote but these words have been in my mind these last few days.

I write this following the visit to the UK by the President and First Lady of the USA.

I give them their title because it seems to me that most of our country chose to refer to him in other ways, most of which showed no respect, either for the individual or the office he represents.

He is a man who divides opinion – so do other world leaders who have visited our country but have not been treated in such a way or subjected to such unseemly protests.

And all this went alongside the commemorations of the 75th Anniversary of the D Day landings, which showed our Country at its best.

Division seems to be commonplace and sadly increasing but those who shout and argue and protest and refuse to listen to any other argument do themselves no favours, rather they show themselves for what they are.

We are all allowed to exercise a right to free speech, some would argue that was one of the reasons we fought the second World War, but in exercising that right we should afford those who disagree the same rights as well.

Jesus made it clear that he did not support division and neither should we.

The Church these days is increasingly selective of the times it raises its voice, and that worries me.

Speaking out against injustice or abusive behaviour should be part of the DNA of our faith – as should promoting the idea of respect for all.

Maybe we need to go back to basics in order to ever move forward.

Yours in Christ

Special Birthday Oct 30th Dennis Cousins 90

Malmesbury United Reformed Church

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REV. SARAH SIMPSON

Tel. 01666 826866 Minister

JULY 2019 - OCT 2019 SERVICES

21 July 10.30 Rev Sarah Simpson Jnr Church AGM (after Service)

28 July 10.30 Rev Andrew Francis H/C

4 Aug 10.30 Café Style Service Sara Crabb

11 Aug 10.30 Bernard Crabb

18 Aug 10.30 It SERVICE AT CRICKLADE Rev Sarah Simpson

25 Aug 10.30 Rev Sarah Simpson H/C

1 Sept 10.30 Café Style Service Sara Crabb

8 Sept 10.30 Bernard Crabb

15 Sept 10.30 Brian Leitch

22 Sept 10.30 Rev Sarah Simpson **Baptism** Jnr Church

29 Sept 10.30 Martin Osman

6 Oct 10.30 Café Style Worship Sara Crabb

13 Oct 10.30 Bernard Crabb

20 Oct 10.30 Terry Riches Jnr Church

27 Oct 10.30 Rev Sarah Simpson H/C

AN EVENT TO REMEMBER 6th July 2019 at Malmesbury URC

The Barber Shop Quartet *Close Enough* treated us to a wonderful blend of serious, humorous and though provoking music across a range of genres. A highly appreciative audience tapped and hummed to the strains of cross cultural and cross national songs and the lively interplay of words, actions and sounds.

From the first song the audience was involved and amazed by the quality of the singing and the individual personalities of the musicians.

It was a delight to discover that £500 had been raised for the Pestalozzi Charity and for Church projects. Thank you Singers.

Oh we can't think how it's happened, that we have reached the big FIVE OH.

How did our eyesight grow so weak, and our hair all shot with snow
It seems to us like yesterday, we sat on grown-ups laps
ate toasted marmite soldiers, got put to bed for naps
There was no telly then, to keep us nice and quiet
we listened to the wireless, the Huggets were a riot
Dick Barton, special agent, solved every single case
and if he wasn't on, we journeyed into space.

Oh how has it happened that we've reached the big FIVE OH

our middles get so round, and our joints so stiff and slow
It seems to us like yesterday, we clattered off to school
And teachers rapped our knuckles, when we laughed and played the fool
We ran around at playtime, and drank our milk through straws
The boys in flannel shorts, and the girls in navy drawers
and everyone wore socks, gripped at the knee with elastic
leaving bright red weals on our legs, when we stripped off for gymnastics.
In the sweetshop we queued with our penny, for black-jacks, gob-stoppers, chews
The choices we had were many, if we had a copper or two
We had crisps that were plain, with packets of salt
we had Vic on our chests, and cod liver oil with malt
Glass bottles of Tizer, with stoppers that screwed
no one knew what condoms were, and bare bosoms were called "rude"
Hopscotch in the playground, and inkwells in the desks
gloves on elastic, and freshly boiled vests.

Oh how did it happen, that we've reached the big FIVE OH

and round our eyes are footprints, left by unseen crows
It seems like only yesterday, the Beatles made us scream
and life was so exciting, for we were in our teens.
We sat for hours in coffee bars, and listened to the jukebox moan
we jived to Buddy Holly, later on it was the Stones
And off on their Summer Holiday, went the Shadows and dear old Cliff
and boys looked cool and moody, with their tight blue jeans and quiffs
and girls wore petticoats, and sticking-out skirts
and pointy stilleto shoes, that pinched our toes and hurt
and they piled up their hair into beehive shapes
and hung around with boys, who wore creepers and drapes.
And later on there were flowers everywhere
on skirts and waistcoats, and also in our hair
with kaftans and sittars, and guru's galore
we meditated on love, as we squatted on the floor.

Oh how has it happened that we've reached the big FIVE OH

How did our chins, and our bosoms sink so low.
It seems to us like yesterday, that we were newly wed
and struggling to pay the bills, and keep our children fed.
We had to take out mortgages, to buy the kids their shoes
and those they didn't ruin, they'd take to school and lose.

And sometimes we had rows, when we were feeling fraught
and the statement from the bank, on the bottom line read nought
and sometimes our careers, didn't turn out as we'd planned
and somehow the dreams we'd shared, were blown away like sand.
Sometimes there were tragedies that seemed so hard to bear
but we always got back up, and someone came to care.
And what have we given them, these kids that we raised
Oh they can programme VCR's, that leave us oldies fazed
and they know enough biology to practise in gynaecology
They're far more honest, but they're ruder than we were, at their age
and we never thought to ask, the questions that they raise.
They're selfish, but they're thoughtful, their manners are quite awful
They never write to grannies, to thank them for their gifts
But they'd stop in the street, to give some tramp a lift
and did we ever tell them, and did it ever show
how we are very proud of them, more than they can know.

And what lies before us, now we've reached the big FIVE OH

will our bodies grow all weak, and our faculties all go
The kids will soon be off, leaving tidy empty rooms
will we sit and start to wither, sunk in never ending gloom
or will we grasp the challenge, live life with a capital "L".
Take up bungy jumping, or run our own hotel.
Or we could travel overseas, to the places we've never seen,
life's full of possibilities, we'll revive our ancient dreams
and we'll roll into the second half, with our boilers on full steam.

During the month of May I attended the Church Discussion group. The subjects that were up for discussion was "Why did Jesus die?" "The Resurrection"; "The existence of the Devil/Satan; The Holy Spirit.

Hmmm, I thought. These are not easy topics and require a lot of thinking about and some time was spent pondering over the various possibilities. These are deep and sensitive subjects, making people face perhaps subjects they would prefer or choose not to think about, especially when talking to a group. Each of us had our individual thoughts and reasons behind these thoughts. Many of us had experienced other religious teachings under various denominations, which I found interesting. Interesting? Why? Because some points arose that were more poignant to one individual than another. Each of us was finding a different outlook on the words we were studying which prompted a fresh take on our own ideas. I felt that at the end of each session I had a different view and even if I didn't necessarily agree with everyone it prompted questions. The one strong point we all agreed on is **being together and having faith in one God.**

Linda Clark