



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings

As we draw towards the beginning of the new Methodist year, we find ourselves facing many challenges – be it at global, national, local or personal levels.

Covid may not be as potent, but it is still very present. The cost of living is higher than we have known. We all lament that wars are still being fought as many are experiencing the destruction of their communities. The heat of the summer (in some parts of the UK!) has caused us to realise the potency of global warming.

In our Circuit and churches, we are experiencing reality checks about what we can do following the two-years of restriction and living differently. As congregations we seek guidance about the call that God continues to have on our lives in these new circumstances.

Often in such circumstances we would talk about 'rebuilding' or 'building back'. Are these the right phrases?

Maybe we should be seeing how we can, by the grace of God, 'build forward' with all that we have learned over this last while. I believe such thinking begins with dreaming; gaining a vision from God – and not simply trying to remember how we did things before. Yes, do the necessary organisational things properly – but then let God steer us in the directions we need to be guided in.

This is nothing new – such experience happens time and time again in the Bible. It is about reliance on God through prayer, seeking to understand how we 'build forward' and follow the vision God has for us as individuals and together.

In Numbers 12:6, God descending in a Pillar of Cloud says to Aaron and Miriam, "Listen carefully to what I am telling you. If there is a prophet of God among you, I make myself known to him in visions, and I speak to him in dreams."

I pray that you have had a restful summer and you experience those dreams that will cause you to be energised for the work which God is calling us to – those visions which continue to affirm God's presence guiding us to simply be the gracious and authentic church God calls us to be in the communities we live and serve.

I encourage us to keep each other, and especially those facing challenges - be it health, financial, opportunity, of missing loved ones - in our prayers.

Grace and peace,

Eddie



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The Forth Valley Circuit serves the Methodist people in Edinburgh, Fife, the Lothians, the Scottish Borders and Stirlingshire.