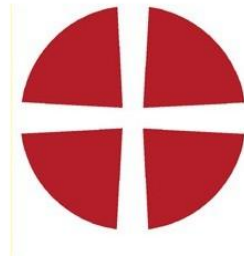


Week 53 – Saturday 30th June



It's Conference Time

At the MWiB conference in April we heard the following reading from *The Message*:

Amos 5:21–24

"I can't stand your religious meetings. I'm fed up with your conferences and conventions. I want nothing to do with your religion projects, your pretentious slogans and goals. I'm sick of your fund-raising schemes, your public relations and image making. I've had all I can take of your noisy ego-music. When was the last time you sang to me? Do you know what I want? I want justice—oceans of it. I want fairness—rivers of it. That's what I want. That's all I want."

The words have stuck with me, for we do spend a lot of time talking the talk but not always walking the walk! Please pray for the Methodist Conference and all the delegates and visitors. Please pray for those being Ordained – it's a very special time. But most of all please pray that we will rediscover our roots of being a voice for the voiceless, championing the poor and needy, challenging ourselves and being prepared to be made uncomfortable. Pray that we may have vision and hope and that all we do is to the praise and glory of God.

So re-read the passage from Amos; or you may like to read Isaiah 1:13–17, also from *The Message*:

"Quit your worship charades. I can't stand your trivial religious games: monthly conferences, weekly Sabbaths, special meetings—meetings, meetings, meetings—I can't stand one more! Meetings for this, meetings for that. I hate them! You've worn me out! I'm sick of your religion, religion, religion, while you go right on sinning. When you put on your next prayer-performance, I'll be looking the other way. No matter how long or loud or often you pray, I'll not be listening. And do you know why? Because you've been tearing people to pieces, and your hands are bloody. Go home and wash up. Clean up your act. Sweep your lives clean of your evil-doings so I don't have to look at them any longer. Say no to wrong. Learn to do good. Work for justice. Help the down-and-out. Stand up for the homeless. Go to bat for the defenceless."

Is God challenging you or your church through these words? The words may not be as lyrical as the King James version, or as scholarly as the NIV, but they come from the heart and speak to the heart. If we are not about justice and fairness, if we are not about doing God's will, then what are doing?

Living by the North Sea, I see the vastness and the strength of the water, I hear the sounds of waves breaking, and see the destruction of land being eroded away...

***May our living God erode away anything that is contrary to his will in our lives;
may he give us the strength to stand up for what is right;
may he flood us with the love and power of the Holy spirit;
and may we listen and hear his voice.***

Lord in your mercy – hear our prayer.

Prayers for June by Denise Creed