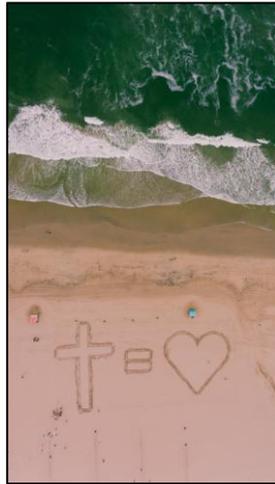


Saturday 6th July



Justice, Mercy and Humility

*He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Micah 6:8 [NIV]

My journey to ordination has been a long one – almost thirty years. I was only a child of seven or eight when I began to tell people that when I grew up I was going to be a teacher, a missionary and a vicar. I remember pointing to the church as a child and telling my Nan that one day I would work there. Although I wouldn't have used the word 'calling' at that age, those thoughts never left me; God kept them in my mind.

I became a teacher, then after a few years I went to teach in Africa before returning to train as a local preacher. At that time I had also begun to realise that those words I had said so often were more than words: I now knew that it was a call; but I fought against the last part – surely local preaching was what God actually meant?

Now as I sit preparing for my ordination, (which will, God willing, have happened by the time you read this) I wonder why I ever argued with God. It was the best step I have ever made, and I finally feel a peace that passes all understanding, knowing that I am doing what God called me to do all those years ago. This is just a small part of my own testimony as we, as the Methodist Church, enter into a time of sharing testimonies. If God is calling you to do something, then I encourage you to take a leap of faith, to get out of the boat, to let go and let God; who knows where it will lead you? Even if you have felt called for a long time and ignored it – it's not too late if God is still placing it on your heart.

There are many hymns I could choose about this. Two of my favourites would be 'I the Lord of sea and sky' by Daniel Schutte (*Singing the Faith*), which has the words 'Here I am Lord'. Also, 'Have you heard God's voice?' by Jacqueline Jones (*Singing the Faith*), which asks if we will walk the path that God places before us.

*Generous God,
you call us to be your people
in unexpected ways and unexpected places.
Help us to follow your call, wherever it may lead.
Give us the courage to step out in faith,
knowing that you go with us every step of the way.
Amen.*