**Living as children of light. 22nd March 2020**

I love dappled light; I think it’s one of the most beautiful sights in the world. We are all dappled, sometimes lighter and sometimes more shadowy but that is what it means to be human.

Life can’t exist without the darkness and the light, so what do we do when the darkness threatens to overwhelm us. We can remember that one of the most repeated sentences in the scriptures are “Do not be afraid”

This strange and uncertain time can be experienced as a time of darkness and fear and

I’ve noticed that people show fear in different ways. Some try and control things that are uncontrollable others go hide in a corner, some just panic and make a lot of noise. There’s no good way to be afraid except to realise that to some degree our capacity for fear has kept us surviving as a species. If we weren’t afraid, we’d have been easy prey for predators.

So ‘Do not be afraid” doesn’t mean ‘You shouldn’t be afraid’ it means that in Gods reality there is nothing to fear, there is nowhere to go but God, whatever befalls us.

The problem is God is more of a theory to many rather than an experience. Religious people are the best at making God a theory, a distant untouchable image. The religious people in Jesus time were no different. They were so enamoured with their theories and the laws and traditions they created around their theory, that God became an inhumane idea and the cause of suffering and darkness was seen as God’s punishment of people.

But Jesus story challenges us with the new idea of, what if God is here in this dappled place right now, sharing our feelings our situation, knowing our fear, our loneliness? What if God is right here in this beautiful creation, suffering with all the creatures and the plants and trees that have been used and abused over the decades. What if God is deep within you waiting for you to see, to feel the deep love he has for all of this dappled light. What if he is waiting for us to open the eyes of our heart to a new seeing where our understanding will grow into knowing that there is no separation between creator and created. How differently would we live and love this creation?

Because in some ways we were all born blind to this knowing, and we are blinded too by other people’s theories and ideas even by our inherited traditions. Yet Life constantly calls us beyond these, to grow into our full humanity which is human **Being**, creatures who know they are intrinsically woven into the warp of the created world with the weft of divine being. Often its only in the shadowy times that the discomfort startles us to wake up out of our comfort and look around us and question the accepted theories and ideas of our tribe, our traditions our societies and our own thought patterns.

This is what I think the story of Jesus, healing the man born blind is about, because the main part of the story is Jesus challenging those in power who say *they* know what is right, and Jesus points out that the exercise of their authority is causing suffering. Even worse it is making people believe that they are worthless and separated from God. That made him furious and it makes me furious too.

Jesus points this out to his accusers; that to believe that any living thing is outside of the love of God is a lie, a kind of living death, the only kind of death that exists, because at the end of our physical lives we will see and know that we have never been separated from the love of God. But he’d rather we see that now, because if we did, we would live differently, we would challenge those in authority over us to change their theories and practices and treat all of creation with a respect and reverence it needs to flourish and thrive and we would know the beauty of life in all its fullness, which is wall that God wants for us.

God never causes suffering, God is here with us in all our experience, experiencing it with us guiding us through the shadows to become children of light who can see through the veils of the fearful who react to life by trying to protect themselves with whatever powers they can muster. This can be a rich time for all of us as the church to re-discover our faith and Jesus wisdom as we wait quietly in our enforced retreat this Lent.

So maybe we can take this precious time over the next few weeks of distancing from each other to come close to the Living presence waiting in your hearts to be found. We can make a time during our day to quieten our minds by moving our awareness into our body and feel for the presence of love that is written into our cells. Then we shall know communion like we’ve never known it before, as our own bodies being the body and blood of the Living Presence of The Christ, who is there in you waiting for you to find, and show you that there is nothing to fear.

Grace peace and love to you all

Bev x