Week 3 – 20 May

Let us begin this week with a verse from Paul’s letter to the young church in Corinth – ‘God is faithful, who has called you into **fellowship** with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.’ (1 Corinthians 1:9).

This verse reminds us that Christian fellowship is multi-dimensional. We relate to each other in fellowship, and at the same time are joined in fellowship with Jesus. It is this living link with the eternal God which sets Christian fellowship apart from other relationships. As we grow closer to each other, we grow closer to Jesus, and as we grow closer to him, we grow closer to each other.

How does this work? Christian fellowship is sometimes described as a triangle – we reach sideways to each other, and upwards to Christ, who also reaches down to us. Or it can be described as like a bicycle wheel, with each one of us being a spoke, and Christ the hub. We begin quite close to some spokes, but are opposite to some others. As we are drawn to Christ, we become closer to all the other spokes. And there is always room for more spokes, as Jesus draws others to himself. The saying ‘putting a spoke in the wheel’ is often used to imply causing a problem, but we can understand it as progress – someone new being drawn to Christ alongside us. At the front of church are the words ‘Jesus be the centre’ – he is always drawing others into our fellowship together.

Please remember that we each contribute to this fellowship with each other and with Jesus, and that it is not just pie in the sky, but needs to be down to earth, practical, real in the downs as well as the ups of life. Last year we had ten funerals at church. Our fellowship was tested in the support that families and friends needed. On Friday last week we celebrated the life of Audrey Cassidy. Not all will have known her, but we can each contribute in prayer or practically to the support her loved ones need at this time. As the hymn says:

He bids us build each other up  
and, gathered into one,  
to our high calling’s glorious hope  
we hand in hand go on.

*Produced by John Wilkins on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne and John Wilkins).  You can find more information on the Circuit Holy Habits Programme on the Sheffield Methodist Circuit website and also the Sheffield Methodist Circuit Facebook page.*