

Friends,

In today's letter you get to hear something from me that I have never told anyone in my life before. It goes right back to maths lessons at school when I was about 12 years old. The way the lessons worked were that there were hundreds of small maths books in labelled boxes at the rear of the class, we simply had to chose a book, work through it, then take the answer book from the back of the box, mark our own work and tell the teacher what grade we had got. Maths was not my strong point but I began to get between 95-100% for every single book. That was something to do with the fact that I quickly learnt I could write the correct answers down from the answer book when I 'marked' my own work.

The result of all of this? I never learnt my times tables. If you ask me to measure anything or estimate the size I have no idea what I'm doing (my dad can tell you about the curtains I measured which turned out to be a foot too short because I misread the tape measure). If my sat nav tells me that the next turning is 300 yards away, I have no idea if I need to drive for a few seconds, a few minutes or another half hour. By cheating at maths all those years ago, I missed the basic skills and building blocks which could have helped me in life today.

I've been reminded of this recently as I've been thinking about discipleship; the calling which comes to each of us individually to follow God. Discipleship is not something that is done for us or given to us as a complete package, instead it is a journey we make, exploring God, wrestling with scripture, transforming our lives, challenging our thinking and learning how to walk in faith together. We can cheat and borrow the answer book from the back of the box, not thinking for ourselves about God but just taking the thinking of others, not questioning it but accepting it as the complete answer. But that doesn't help us in the long run, we miss the foundation stones and building blocks on which we build our relationship with God.

Is there any part of your discipleship that you've been cheating over? What can you do to put things right, to explore and learn the basic skills on which to build the rest? If you would like to talk anything through please do contact me, your pastoral visitors, or a trusted friend. Blessings, Rev'd Bekkie

Notice re: OMC Services rota

Could those who take part in or assist at morning services please let the following know your unavailability dates for August and September by 12th July. Thank you.

Readers: Clare; Stewards Adrian

NORTHGATE

The weekly notices of

OAKHAM METHODIST CHURCH

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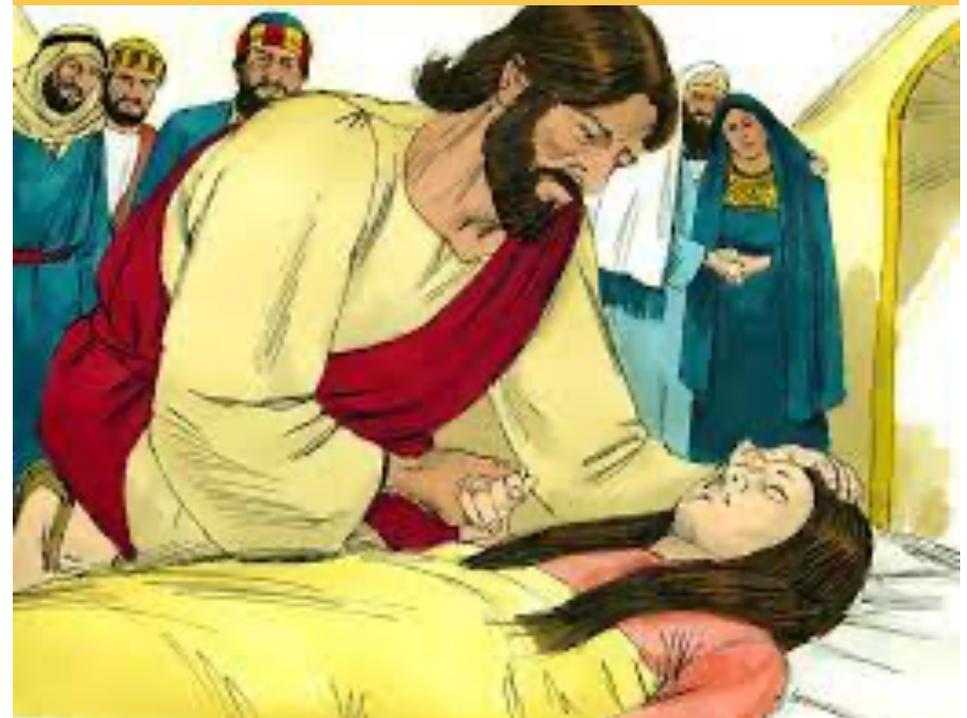
www.oakhammethodistchurch.co.uk

Sunday 27th June 2021.

OMC Service led by Mrs. Moyra Collins.

..."Don't be afraid; just believe."

Mark Ch. 5 Verse 36



Call to Worship: Healing God: **we come to praise you.** Life-giving God: **we come to hear and receive your life-giving word.** Transforming God: **we come to you in an awareness of the need for transformation.** As we gather to worship in God's name: **may the Lord be with us. Amen.**

Hymn: 648 Singing the Faith

God to enfold you,
Christ to uphold you,
Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight;
So may God grace you,
Heal and embrace you,
Lead you through darkness
Into the light.

Confession: We confess that we have given in to the sin of pride – individually and collectively. With our lips we confess you as Lord, but the time and energy we expend in dealing with daily challenges, local disagreements and international conflicts demonstrate that we think we control our destiny. Jesus, because you are who you are, Son of God and fully human, you can heal the consequences of our wrong choices, when we recognise and acknowledge them. Having withstood the temptations in your human person and having suffered betrayal, violence and death there is nothing we can go through that you do not understand. You stand alongside us, reaching out wounded, healing hands. Forgive us our sins and grant us healing and a new humility as we seek to start over to live as you would have us do in our personal, community and international lives. **Amen.**

Reading: Mark 5:21-43

Reflection: We are not reading two stories here, one jumping into the middle of the other. Instead, this is one story which connects two female characters and through them shows us the healing which comes through faith. This healing is not just about physical healing, it is about the deeper healing of reconnection with God and community which makes us whole.

The haemorrhaging woman has been living in death for 12 years. Her uncontrolled bleeding means that she will have been an outcast from her community; touching her makes you unclean. She is alone, she has spent all of her money trying to get help from doctors and it has failed, in fact the symptoms are getting worse. She has nowhere else to turn but Jesus who has been healing lepers and all sorts of illnesses with just a touch of his hand. She won't put him at risk,

but maybe if she can just touch the edge of his cloak, she may be healed.

Jairus' daughter has been living in life for 12 years. A child whose father is one of the leaders of the synagogue, she will have been surrounded by community and by God for her whole life. But now she is ill and the prayers and faith of the community aren't healing her, in fact the symptoms are getting worse. Her father has nowhere else to turn but Jesus who recently healed a man with a withered hand in a synagogue with just a touch of his hand. Jairus is risking everything because the hate campaign against Jesus grew after that last healing, but if Jesus will just come into the privacy of the girl's room, they won't put Jesus at risk but she might be healed.

Two women, from completely different worlds, but in exactly the same need and when they come to Jesus in their desperation, with nothing of their own to give but needing simply to receive, Jesus sees them and hears them and heals them. Heals them back into community, heals their relationship with God and heals their families' relationships with God.

Where do you need healing and wholeness in your life? Come to Jesus, touch his cloak, kneel at his feet "Do not fear, only believe".

Prayer of Response: When I am wild with worry, when I am frozen with fear, when I am divided with doubt, Lord, deliver me and fill me with your life-giving Spirit. From the uncontrollable blaze of anger, from the destructive rage of hatred, from the slow-burning fuse of depression, Lord, deliver me and fill me with your cleansing Spirit. Take the memories that haunt me and hold me back. Take the shame that clings to my spirit and limits my freedom. Take the poor self-image that stunts my growth and prevents me from becoming whole. Lord, deliver me and fill me with your liberating Spirit.

Hymn: 648 Singing the Faith

God to enfold you, Christ to uphold you, Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight;
So may God grace you, heal and embrace you, Lead you through darkness
Into the light.

Sending Out: Take the healing presence of Jesus with you into your homes. May all our homes be filled with the love and healing of Christ. **Amen.**

Prepared by Rev'd Bekkie Wright