

PSALMS
OF HOPE

@UnitedChurchFerdown

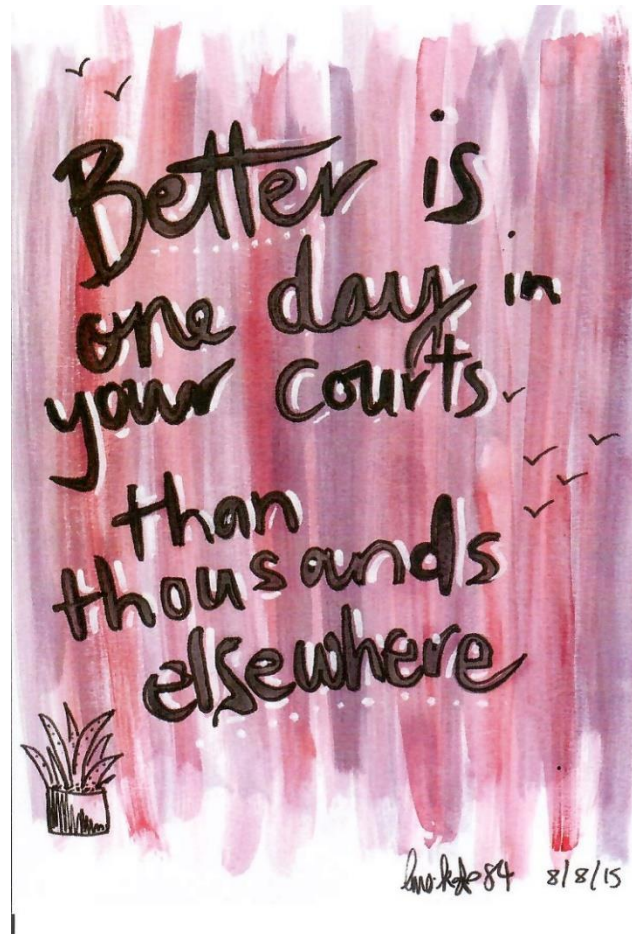


United Church Ferdown's 2023 Lent Programme

Saturday 18th March

Reflection #25

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CHURCH?



Pray:

My LORD: thank you that nothing is hidden from you. You know our thoughts from afar, you search our minds and know our all our anxieties. You know me so much better than I know myself. You see all the grime and rubbish that swirls inside me and around me and which I get caught up in, tripping up and flaying around like a ship in a storm-force gale. Yet even through my failings and flaying you don't give up on me, you don't leave me to flounder and fall. Thank you that by your grace you forgive me and counsel me, you teach me and, most wonderfully, you provide me with a new horizon, a new hope and a new beginning. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Introduction:

I like Sunday mornings. Well, most Sunday mornings! I especially love Christmas morning and Easter morning. You see, there is an excitement in our house on special days like Christmas and Easter and, to be fair, most Sundays, because we are going to church. Even now when there are very few of us on a Sunday morning, it's exciting. The thought of going to share time with our friends and be in church worshipping our God, with those friends, is exciting. I love to see our kids' faces when they are off to church and can chat to their friends about their week and laugh with them. I love the fact they want to join us in church. There is a joy in going to church. There is a joy in being with family.

**Read:****Psalm 84:10-11 (NIV)**

¹⁰Better is one day in your courts
than a thousand elsewhere;

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

¹¹For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
the Lord bestows favour and honour;
no good thing does he withhold

from those whose way of life is blameless.

Consider:

This psalm was written before churches existed, but was written about a temple, which we today can think of as the same. It talks about a longing to be in God's presence and verse 10 says how it is so much better to have a short amount of time in God's presence than be anywhere else. Do we feel like this? Would we rather be in God's presence than anywhere else? What does that actually mean? We all understand that 'church' is actually the people not the building, but it's the people being together that is important. Do we crave to be with other Christians? Do we long to be with God? Do we get excited about the thought of going to church on a Sunday? If not, why not? Do we need to change our attitude and thoughts about it? Do we encourage others to be in church too?

Pray:

If you're not excited about being in church or with other Christians, ask God to help you find that excitement.

Try it out:

Meeting together in God's house should be a priority! Not something that you do if there is nothing better to do. Put church in your diary so that you don't book other things to do in its place. So you say to others "I'm sorry but I can't make that because I have an important meeting, I have church!"