

Tracey Fellows

Romans Chapter 8: 1-2, 14-17

'Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.' Vs: 1-2

'For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.' Vs: 14-17

Jesus paid the price once on the cross for us all and by his death he defeated our sin so we can share eternal life with him. Such overwhelming gratitude and praise fills my heart when I reflect upon this. This sacrifice became real to me in 1997 after I committed my life to Jesus through an alpha course. I realised Jesus was actually alive! The wonderful never-ending journey began of getting to know Him in my life instead of just knowing *about* him through stories at Sunday School and hanging onto my mum's faith. I witnessed the awesome privilege of seeing my husband Steve give his life to Jesus 4 years later in August 2001 after a holiday at New Wine. Following this, we committed ourselves as a family of 4 (which, due to bereavement, grew to a family of 7 in 2008) to follow Jesus and included serving in many areas of church life during our time here at Whitfield Parish since 2003. Life group membership, worship group, prayer ministry, youth work, Street Pastors, leadership of Whitfield Mission Area Team and associated outreach activities including Whitfield Fun Days. I supported the start-up of Whitfield Community Cafe with Joyce Phillips and the team. I also worked with the youth work co-ordinator and curate to bring the Eden Bus to Whitfield and helped run a Sunday afternoon discipleship group within the Pure Vibes Centre in Whitfield in response to the need and commitments to Jesus that took place on the Eden Bus. In July 2019 illness forced early retirement at the age of 47 from both my nursing job and leadership of the Whitfield MAT. Subsequent shielding from covid, removed both Steve and myself physically from church for a long period of time. That time had felt spiritually dry and we truly valued the regular zoom meetings with our growth groups and online services whilst shielding. Our return to church after shielding was joyous and I celebrated being amongst my brothers and sisters at church once again. My strength and stamina have stabilised since retirement and I have recently taken on the role of Growth Group leader. Since March 2020 I have had safeguarding responsibilities as Parish Safeguarding Officer and have also served on PCC since the APCM in 2021.

I am a people person and enjoy a good sense of humour and can relate to all age groups, I have experience of working in and also leading teams for many years with good listening skills. I am not frightened of speaking up and asking questions when necessary. I am thankful to God for the gifts of wisdom, discernment and intercession he gives when I need them.

I do believe that the Lord is calling me to stand for the role of Church Warden as Martin Galvin steps down. I have prayed sincerely and often about this calling and received confirmation through my quiet times, prayers and bible readings. I also received a specific word of knowledge from someone via a private message as they prayed for me when we missed New Wine this year due to covid. I don't even know them personally but they responded to a group message I had sent explaining our absence in the camping village.

I do not underestimate the responsibility the Church Warden role takes as we head into a Parish Vacancy, but, as the Lord calls, I believe he will equip me alongside our other church warden and assistants, the PCC, staff team, congregations and Diocesan staff. We can work together and support one another.

I passionately believe that as Christians we all make up the Body of Christ and are called to worship and serve Jesus in the unique ways he has planned as we discover our spiritual gifts and make him known. We may not all agree all of the time but we can maintain a united heart attitude, still love one another and look to our leader Jesus as our role model who took on the position of a servant and washed his disciples' feet. May we be united and serve one another with the same heart.

Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labour in vain. Psalm 127:1