

A Reflection from Leisa for the 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

**Romans 12:9-21 Matthew 16:21-28 Jeremiah 15:15-21 Psalm 26:1-8**

**Take up your cross and follow me.**

What does God's call mean for us, today? What will we need to re-consider in our own lives and for our church and community, to follow God's call, now and in the times and seasons to come? Many of us have reflected on what we treasure most in our lives, during lockdown and beyond. We have all faced loss and gain. It is hard to imagine what life will be like, especially when we cannot clearly see the whole road ahead. We can comfort ourselves that, once we are through this pandemic, we will get back to something close to normal but, the landscape of our lives has dramatically changed.

So, I invite you to consider our opening questions again. What does God's call mean for us, today? *What is God asking us to re-consider*, in our own lives and for church and community as we follow the call of Jesus, now and in the times and seasons to come?

Today's readings invite us to re-consider our commitment to following Jesus, when the road ahead seems diminished in view, but open to new horizons. Not all of us will be called to dramatic acts of change, but all of us will be called to the virtues that Paul is asking a Christian community to exercise along the way - love, respect, patience, perseverance and welcome to the stranger. I wonder who God will invite to join us on our continuing journey? God calls us to follow him, in spirit and in truth, with both sadness at our sense of loss and indescribable hope, as we seek to understand more of the future that will be revealed, step by step, in each new day.

As Colin and I take a pause to rest, to pray and renew our hearts and minds, I leave you with a '*Barefoot Prayer*' from Stephen Cherry – to help us all on the way.

**We Pray Lord,**

That we may be given prudence to seek your truth, however uncomfortable or unsettling.

That we may be given courage to work for economic and social justice.

That we may be given the wisdom to seek your kingdom before all else.

That we may be given faith to follow wherever you call us.

That we may be given hope to see beyond the troubles of today.

That we may be given the constancy to endure all kinds of trials and tribulations for the sake of your gospel.

That we may be given the love which makes us credible advocates of your will and purpose.

That we may be given patience to wait for your final coming in glory.

That we may be given the vision to glimpse your glory and to see the signs of your love.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. **Amen**