

Dear Friends

I was recently able to attend a retreat, sharing with no less than four Chairs of District and a number of probationer ministers from the South West of the country. Many stories were exchanged, including one of the annual Chairs' involvement in the annual Covenant service which takes place in the Crypt of the Palace of Westminster. This year proved to be a historic occasion as at the very moment the Covenant Prayer was being said, the Prime Minister was in full flow defending her Brexit deal ahead of the "meaningful vote" in the parliamentary chamber above them. As the service was drawing to a conclusion pagers went off and serving MPs drifted away to the division lobbies.



For me there's something powerful about that image - Christians, with little direct power over events, nevertheless in the very place of earthly power, proclaiming their allegiance to the one who is the source of all power and truth and wisdom -

the God who has revealed himself to us in Jesus. Christians passionate about and praying over world events.

The Covenant we embrace each year is not for ourselves but for the world. Our faith is not about a holy huddle on a Sunday. It *is* about being equipped on a Sunday (as well as on other occasions) to be world-changers, in however great or small a way we are able.

On our doorstep we see services for young people and vulnerable families being cut and children going without food as there isn't the money to buy it.

We need to be that presence - whether as a voice in or near the corridors of power on behalf of the weak, or whether as hands at the coal-face, relieving the hurt brought about by political decisions.

We can't stand by and let the world do its worst while God's children suffer.

Let this be a year when the voice from the crypt is heard in the chamber.

God bless you

Kim