

Dear Friends

As I was preparing to write this, news came of the death of my father. It was in many ways timely and welcome, after a long struggle with dementia. It was a great blessing to have our whole family with us on the day and we were thankful for one another's support as well as for the kindness, prayers and support shown by friends in church.

One of the most painful aspects for me has been the finality of it – no more opportunities to say words, to mend, to apologise, to laugh, to be kind, to say things I'd been too frightened to.

This brings me to the thoughts I wanted to share about our District's theme for this year: "Courageous". In Acts, Luke writes: "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realised that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished."

How many issues do we duck, conversations do we avoid, challenges do we set aside for fear of unknown consequences?



The challenge laid down by the District is not to face uncertainty in the future by clinging to what we know and hoping that change will go away (at least for our lifetime), but "to boldly go" – to do something different. To be ready to take risks and journey with God – leave the nets behind and follow. May it never be said that we didn't try – that we ignored the opportunities set before us, so that it's now too late!

Hopefully you'll have seen the publicity about the District Courageous Day Out on 2nd March, hearing the thoughts of Young People in Methodism today. Later there are Courageous Conversations – including one to be held in our church regarding Marriage and Relationships (12th May), and a Courageous Pilgrimage at the end of May.

As a church, we have just taken a decision that *could* be seen by others as the opposite of courageous, in not using one of our cottages for different forms of outreach. May God inspire us to act boldly and faithfully in all the many new things we do, so no-one will think that our decision was taken because we were afraid to try!

"Jesus said to Peter: "Come!" So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water." (Matt 14.29)

Blessings

Kim