

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide



As a curate in northern England 28 years ago, it was common to preside over two funerals a week. Such was the frequency of funerals that there was a shorthand phrase for the two most common hymns that were played during these services: 'Crimond', the name of the tune for the setting of Psalm 23, ['The Lord is my shepherd'](#), and ['Abide with me, fast falls the eventide'](#). The shorthand was to say that the funeral was a "C&A funeral". This was somewhat cheeky, as C&A was a clothing retail chain, which in the early 90s was a fast-fashion brand in the UK, and so a "C&A funeral" was a kind of off-the-shelf service.

Just to relate that memory of funerals past takes so much explaining these days. Even if you were reading this in the UK, I doubt the references would work now. So much has changed in those intervening years. I doubt many parishes do funerals at that same rate, and I doubt that you could describe a funeral with a simple three-character initialism, when these days we have videos, PowerPoint presentations, recorded music, and so on.

Over time much has changed, almost without it being noticed.

Bill Gates, the American philanthropist and former CEO of Microsoft, is attributed with saying:

"We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten. Don't let yourself be lulled into inaction."

I sometimes feel he could be speaking about the Church. At times we are impatient to see things change and at other times we are impatient to see things not change. And yet, we also sometimes underestimate (or feel shocked) by the change that has taken place over the last 10 years or more.

I think the Bill's quote offers me two challenges. Firstly, to identify the things that are changing and those that are abiding. Secondly, to not be lulled into inaction by the tides that are swirling around us – to take some sense of reassurance that some things do abide.

'Abide with me, fast falls the eventide', itself has these stirring words:

"Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me"

This year a new hymn was released for the Thy Kingdom Come initiative – a global movement started by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to encourage Christians to pray from Ascension to Pentecost that more people come to know Jesus.

This new hymn uses the same tune as 'Abide with me, fast falls the eventide', but changes the lyrics to a more missional direction. You can [download](#) the video (with lyrics), chord sheets, backing track and more.

['We Seek Your Kingdom'](#) by Noel Robinson, Andy Flannagan, and Graham Hunter

We seek Your Kingdom throughout every sphere
We long for Heaven's demonstration here
Jesus, Your light shines bright for all to see
Transform, revive, and heal society

Before all things, in Him all things were made
Inspiring culture, media, and trade
May all our work serve Your economy
Transform, revive, and heal society

Peace, truth, and justice reigning everywhere
With us be present in our public square
Fill all who lead with Your integrity
Transform, revive, and heal society

Forgive us, Lord, when we have not engaged
Failing to scribe Your heart on history's page
Make us again what we were made to be
Transform, revive, and heal society

Faithful to govern ever may we be
Selfless in service, loving constantly
In everything may Your authority
Transform, revive, and heal society
Transform, revive, and heal society

With so much change taking place in the world all around us, it is perhaps easy to be lulled into inaction, but we are still called to seek the Kingdom and to transform, revive and heal society and to worship that one that truly abides.

Sunday Devotions • Monday 4 October 2021 • By The Rev'd Eleanor Mancini

Sunday Devotion: 10 October 2021, Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Living out our faith



Main Readings: [Job 23.1-9, 16-17](#); [Psalm 22.1-15](#); [Hebrews 4.12-16](#); [Mark 10.17-31](#) [[Amos 5.6-7,10-15](#); [Psalm 90.12-17](#)]

Supplementary Readings: [Psalm 101](#); [Mark 12.13-17](#); [Job 28.12-28](#); [Psalm 90.12-17](#); [Hebrews 4.1-11](#)

Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me" ([Mark 10.21](#)).

I grew up in a big family with not enough food to eat. My dad had a poor stipend. We ate from our garden and from the sea. We did not have a car or bike, so we walked to and from school and church. We did not celebrate birthdays. Mum sewed a new dress for me for Christmas. We lived in a vicarage with two rooms, where the children slept on the floor. The family was very close together for we lived out our faith.

The rich man in this Gospel story knows the commandments and what is required, and yet he asks Jesus for advice. Sadly, the rich man could not follow Jesus' advice and left, feeling shocked.

God loves us no matter where we are on our journey of faith. He calls us to live out our faith in loving and bringing hope to others. This love connects us into relationships that lead us to action. The Holy Spirit is always with us to help us to go beyond ourselves to assist others in the wider community and in the world.

Faith without action is dead.