

'From the fig tree learn it's lesson, as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near' Against the dark foreboding of Jesus' prophetic word he offers nature's redeeming work in the sign of the fig tree. And to this Summer ahead, we are looking with renewed hope, even if yet there are dark months ahead, the mornings will be brightening, there will be new beginnings, there will be joy in our New Day.

From last week's prayer 'Stir up the wills of your faith full people', as Stir up Sunday, to this week's parable of the fig-tree, we are reminded in our darkness to look for that burst of light ahead which is our Dawning Star in the fragile dependency of the new born. God's gift of himself born in the weak fragility of our reliance on each other which is too our strength and our salvation. That truth we see writ large in our dependency on each other at this time to keep our most vulnerable family, friends, and neighbours safe. And as vaccine emboldens our hope we hear call to our common humanity, all peoples bearing God's image, against pandemic, none of us are safe until all of us are safe. So we invest in the poorest, the most vulnerable in vaccine delivery, and hold still to restrictions awhile longer for their sake. Do we look to share the delights of fig and Christmas pud', then stir up our will, open our eyes to the signs of this season of waiting and keep the watch, keep awake.

I had a letter to deliver this week, and knocked on the door of a household whose garden was bedecked with Christmas lights. When Mum answered I - suitably distanced - praised her for her early start to Christmas cheer. She had decided for her children's sake, who wouldn't be able to share in the usual forays into the night, to be sure her home would be as a beacon of hope, that her children would delight amidst our waiting darkness to see the light shine.

Hope for our little ones, as Jesus' prayer for humanity's little ones, the weak and helpless new born, those dependent on other's gifts, the poor the needy the vulnerable. May we learn the lesson of pandemic, none are safe until all are safe, and re-align our society so that our most-needy, the marginalised and excluded may have hope and share with us our New Day.

