



The United Parish of Chinnor, Aston Rowant, Crowell and Sydenham.

September Pastoral letter

Margaret Writes

It's mid -August as I write this pastoral letter for the September magazine and already, after a very long hot Summer, we have started to notice the days beginning to slowly draw in and getting cooler.



These past few months have been a challenge to us all trying to cope with the extreme heat. Being truly British, I could say that we are never really satisfied with the weather, its either too hot, too cold, too windy, too still, too wet or too dry.

Yet as I write I was reminded of a profound and timeless truth in the Bible passage from, Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8:

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven,” words which were written many centuries ago. These words still speak to us today with the rhythm of life- the ebb and the flow of joy and sorrow, planting and harvesting, beginnings and endings. They remind us that life is not randomly sequenced, but a divinely ordered journey, marked by seasons that God himself has appointed. Life is not static. God in his wisdom, has woven time into a tapestry of seasons, each with its own purpose. Some seasons bring laughter, others tears. Some call us to build, others to let go. Yet in all of them God remains constant- our unchanging anchor in our ever- changing, fast moving and hurting world.

Perhaps you find yourself in a season of waiting, wondering when the next chapter will unfold. Or maybe you are in a time of abundance, where blessings overflow. Or perhaps it is the opposite for you now, as you try to make ends meet in these difficult times of the cost-of-living crisis.

There are also seasons of letting go – times when God calls us to release something or someone, we hold dear. These moments are painful, yet they are often the soil in which new growth begins. Just as Autumn's falling leaves make way for Spring blossoms, so to do endings prepare the way for new beginnings.

Our calling as followers of Christ is not to rush through the difficult times or cling too tightly to the joyful ones, but to walk faithfully in each moment, trusting that the one who holds time holds us. We are invited to live fully in the present, to seek God's presence in every circumstance, and believe that He makes all things beautiful in his time.

So let us all embrace the season that we are in. Let us lean into God's wisdom, rest in his sovereignty, and trust his perfect timing. Whether we are sowing or reaping, weeping or rejoicing, building or releasing, may we do so with hearts anchored in the unchanging love of Christ.

With love, prayer and the assurance of God's faithfulness,
Margaret

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 ('The voice' translation)

*For everything that happens in life-there is a season,
a right time for everything under the heaven:
a time to be born, a time to die;
a time to plant, a time to collect the harvest;
a time to kill, a time to heal;
a time to tear down, a time to buildup;
a time to cry; a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, a time to dance;
a time to scatter stones, a time to pile them up;
a time for a warm embrace, a time for keeping your distance;
a time to search, a time to give up as lost;
a time to keep, a time to throw out;
a time to tear apart, a time to build together;
a time to be quiet, a time to speak up;
a time to love, a time to hate;
a time to go to war, a time to make peace.*