

A real reward



God who cares for the little ones, give us the strength to transmit your Gospel in every way possible, that we too may experience your amazing rewards of the love, joy and excitement of a deepening relationship with you. Amen.

Janice Scott *reflects on* Matthew 10:40-end

Before Jesus sent the disciples out on their first solo mission, he imparted dire warnings of the rejection and suffering they should expect. Now, just before the disciples depart with nothing but the clothes in which they stand, come words of reassurance and hope.

Jesus identifies the disciples with himself and God, and he explains that everyone who receives the disciples receives Jesus himself. In fact, all the rewards seem to be for those who receive the disciples rather than the disciples themselves, and some of those are still tinged with warning. For instance, those who receive a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, yet it is well known that the prophets were rejected and victimised. The righteous and the little ones who are to receive rewards do not have to do very much. They merely have to receive the disciples, or simply offer them a cup of cold water.

So where is the reward for the missionaries themselves? This passage makes clear that any small act of kindness or thoughtfulness brings overwhelming rewards, for God's work rewards both the giver and the recipient. What are those rewards? A deepening relationship with God and God's overwhelming love, support, strength and spiritual gifts.

Luke's Gospel (Luke 10:17-20) tells us that after seventy disciples returned from mission they were full of joy and excitement. What more could anyone need? ☺

The music of Ordinary Time

Part 1 – the choice of hymns

by Heather Smith

All the major festivals of the church year are behind us and Ordinary Time stretches out across the summer. The easy music choices are also behind us. The wealth of Christmas and Easter music, where the task of those who select the music is to choose from a readily-available selection of familiar tunes and words, gives way to a more challenging prospect.

First, a bit of background. The origin of the term "Ordinary" is debated; on one hand it may derive from "ordinal", meaning numbered, or it may relate to the English word "ordinary", with connotations of time and order (from the Latin *ordo*). So our summer and autumn are ordered, perhaps, but never ordinary. Covering many weeks and forming most of the church year, Ordinary Time brings an opportunity to explore our faith as it relates to everyday life and to find a musical voice that inspires us to live it. ☺

“Nothing is yet in its true form.”

C. S. Lewis (1898-1963), writer and theologian

Mere Christianity, by C. S. Lewis

by Jane Williams

Jane Williams continues her series about this great Christian classic.

The Christian understanding of how the world came to be a mixture of good and evil is that God made the world for goodness, but also created beings who were genuinely free. God took the risk that these beings would use their freedom the wrong way, which indeed they did. Rather than give up, God chose one particular people and spent centuries working with them, helping them to

understand what God is like. Out of that people comes one man, Jesus.

Lewis points out that the Gospels say that Jesus came primarily to suffer and to die a human death, wholly surrendering his life to the punishment that human sin deserves. But because Jesus was also God, he was able to do it perfectly, with complete obedience, as no human could. We now have the chance to join in God's resistance movement. We do it by sharing in the new life offered in Christ, which is spread through baptism, belief and Eucharist. ☺