



The Lord has been preparing and positioning His people across the earth for a new season, ripe with new opportunities to increase His Kingdom. He is detaching us from our old and familiar structures and ways; setting aside the old wineskin; readying us to hear His new call; aligning us to be propelled by the wind of His Holy Spirit and sending us where He wills. We have a strong sense of excited anticipation as we expect the Lord to powerfully move in a new way which will produce great fruitfulness throughout the earth.

TIME TO GATHER

At the beginning of this year we sensed the Lord saying it was time for the Community to gather again. The first day of spring, March 21st, was set for this new beginning. Only the Lord knew that this would mark a new way of gathering, internationally, as we were forced to move our venue to the internet.

Although we would much prefer to gather in person, it has been exciting to be joined by brothers and sisters from different parts of the globe for the three online gatherings we have held this year. **Now, we believe the Lord is leading us to hold a monthly gathering, again online, which will be on the first Sunday evening of each month, commencing 1st November, 7:30 - 9:30pm.**

These will be times of encouragement for members of the Body of Christ during the critical period of the next six months. As we are strengthened in united fellowship and built up in faith, so we will be renewed to bring a message of healing and hope to all.

Details of how to join the gathering, by Zoom or Youtube can be obtained from the Maranatha office.

Do not cling

Do not cling to the structures
Of your life, built up through
Experiences, now past, for they
Will not withstand being shaken.

Do not cling to your patterns
And habits that coddle you like
A blanket, yet lull you into sleep,
For you will not easily awaken.

Do not cling to tomorrow, or what
It might bring, for there is only the
Present and the One who is always
Present, for this is life lived in fullness.

Do not cling to those around you
Who take the place of God as
Your stabilising anchor, for you will
Not sail free when the Wind comes.

Do not cling to (your image of) God
Or who you think Him to be, for He
Reveals Himself as he would be known;
Glorious; Limitless; making all things new.

Do not cling to the earth below, when
You are seated, now, in heaven with Christ;
Ascend, therefore, and behold Him glorified,
And know who you are as you worship I AM.

J.F.-A

Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" John 20:17

ASCEND, ADVANCE

In the same way as Jesus spoke to His apostle John, we believe he is saying to us, *"Come up here..."*

In these days of turbulence and deception the Lord is calling His people to **ASCEND**, to rise above a worldly perspective, setting aside human understanding, to be open to fresh revelation from the Lord's heart. It is a call to embrace more fully our privileged position of being seated with and in Christ, in the heavenly realms (Eph 2:6) and to encourage and actively share with one another what we are sensing from the Lord.

We will do this in a special way when we join, as one people, in the forthcoming monthly gatherings. There will be no agenda other than to respond to the Lord's invitation to meet with Him.

As we wait, listen and pray together *'Maranatha'*, affirming our oneness with the whole Body of Christ, we anticipate His coming among us in a new way.

We are eager to hear His voice and, as He reveals his leading for us, we will **ADVANCE** together in worship and intercession.

MARANATHA
ONE Lord ONE People

WHERE ARE YOU?

God's first question to Adam in the garden is very pertinent for us in these days: *"Where are you?"* Of course, the Lord is not asking us to identify our geographical location, neither is He asking for an account of our thoughts. His questions always point to the orientation of our hearts and minds in relationship to Him.

During the three online gatherings we have held this year the Lord has posed questions to help us: **Where is your focus? What is your level of confidence in God?**

In the midst of an all-consuming preoccupation with the current coronavirus pandemic, we believe the Lord is urging His people to be attentive to, and focussed on **what He is doing** throughout the earth. Jesus calls us to *"seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"*. Do we recognise the doors of opportunity being opened to us right now? Are we living as slaves to the prince of this world, to fears, anxieties and the concerns of our flesh, or are we living as free citizens of the Kingdom of God, hearing and responding to His voice above the clamour of the world?

Do we believe that the Lord Almighty is both sovereign over the whole earth and caring about every detail of our individual lives? Does our security lie in our understanding and control of what is happening around us, or do we trust in the Lord with all our heart? This is a time to draw near to the Lord, to spend time in His presence. He is looking for faith and faithfulness in His people. As scripture says, ***"The righteous shall live by faith"***.

SURRENDER AND REST

Sabbath rest is the fruit of an orientation around the God who is the Lord of time. He has given humankind dominion over all the earth, but not over time. Is it perhaps God's mercy and kindness that has called a halt to our frenetic activity, faster and faster production times, real time transactions and ever increasing expectations of immediate delivery of whatever we desire?

Whether we consider the Lord's command to *"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy"* because He is the Creator of all things (Ex 20.11), or because He is the one who delivers us from enslavement to the world (Deut 5.15), this is a good time to examine Jesus' declaration, *"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath"* (Mk 2.27) and to respond to his invitation *"Come to me...and I will give you rest"* (Mt 11.28).

To live in the rest of communion with Jesus requires us to learn the way of surrender - surrender of the 'many things', in order that our lives are centred on 'the one thing' (Lk. 10.41-42). It is the way of the Cross.

***Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up...
"...However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18.1,8)***

LOVE, ONENESS, GLORY

Our forced distance from one another has heightened our awareness that we are all in need of love expressed in closeness to others. We have a loving God who repeatedly invites His people into a relationship of deep loving intimacy with Himself and He commands us to love one another in the same way as He has shown His love for us in Jesus.

Love is the only means of true oneness with God and with others in the Body of Christ. God's own Spirit is the bond of our unity in LOVE and the confirmation of the TRUTH that we belong to God our Father and to one another as brothers and sisters in His Family.

Despite great advances in the commitment to unity in the Body of Christ, we are seeing deep divisions exposed within and between the churches. How can a divided Church bring a message of reconciling love to a broken world?

There has never been a more important time for the members of this Community to pray and work for UNITY, RENEWAL and HEALING in the Church of Christ, across the generations, and we can only do this in the power of God's Spirit, who is both LOVE and TRUTH.

"I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (Jn 17.22-23)

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

The temptation to ask this question is swiftly met by the reminder of Jesus' words *"You know the way..."* (Jn 14.4). For several years the Lord has spoken about the 'new thing' He is doing and He asks us the question, *"do you not perceive it?"* Our 'YES!' is not based on what we can see, but on the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and this underpins our continued, active, expectant waiting.

The 'way' that we 'know' is a dependency on listening to the Lord together, in order to discern His word for this time. We sense that the time of preparation is nearing its completion and are committed to stepping out in faith, in response to the Lord's call. We do not expect to simply return to what we have known before, but we do expect this next stage of our life and journey, as a Community, to be characterised by the same 'spiritual DNA' as the seed that was placed into the ground nearly three years ago. Let us pray for a deepening of the oneness in love that we share with one another in Christ, as we discern together our next steps, and pray especially for those who serve in our office and various roles of responsibility.

As the Lord re-shapes and purifies His Church, we will continue to play our part, so that His Bride will be ready for Jesus' return. With ever increasing urgency we continue to pray, *'Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!'*