

Dear Friends,

Recently there have been a lot of utilities works going on which have led to diversions in the immediate area. As I was looking these up on the internet, there were gas works, water, telecommunications and also UK Power Network. In, and of itself, there is nothing unusual in this. We rely heavily on power for many things including preparing food and drink, the internet and we most definitely notice when it isn't there for some reason.

When we think of power networks, do we give it any further thought than the title of a company? The sovereignty of God reminds us that the powerful Creator of our world, also exercised care and nurture so that we can live in the world he created. The sea and mountains give us a visual impression of God's power in the natural world. Jesus showed the power he had through the cross. He overcame death and rose again so that we might experience salvation through him both for the present moment and for eternity. The Holy Spirit is the power who joins us with God and works through each of us, so that we can together discern God's will.

A network joins people together and the Holy Spirit acts as the connector. The Holy Spirit is promised to us as God's Helper and Guide. It is the Holy Spirit who draws us closer to God and more closely connected to him. We are disciples of Jesus and the closer we are to him, the better we can know the power of God in our lives. We all share the same common focus of being followers of Jesus and as we spend time with God, we will recognise the power of the Holy Spirit who reveals more of God's character and nature to us.

We also know that the Holy Spirit gives us all different skills, gifts and talents that we use as we live out our faith. As we come together as Christian communities, we discover more of how God brings us together and the purposes he has for us in each space. As Methodists, we are connected as disciples in each church and together as a Circuit where we work together here to discern God's leading for the city of Colchester. Methodism is made up of a network of the Connexion, Districts, Circuits and local churches. We are all connected to one another and we believe that God is calling us "to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission."¹ God connects us to one another here locally and wherever we are. When we are received into membership, it is as part of the whole Methodist Church and the local church as well. Methodism grew from networks or connections of groups to one another and we should continue to live this out in the way we live today as disciples.

Over the next few weeks what does it mean for us to be connected to God? Where can we see the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our own lives and in the community as we seek to become more like Jesus?

God bless,
Chris

¹ The Methodist Church, "Our Calling" statement is the vision statement of the church.