

# THE POWER OF LIVING WATER

June 2018

Dear Sisters,

I am writing this letter just after the beautiful Royal Wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. I'm sure those of you who watched the ceremony really enjoyed it. I don't think there are many countries as able as Britain at putting on an occasion!

It was obvious that the couple wanted to include things in the ceremony which reflected their backgrounds and interests. The big talking point of the day (apart from the dress) was the sermon given by Bishop Michael Curry of the Episcopal Church of the USA. Not surprisingly, he spoke about the power of love. Nothing new there, wedding sermons are often about love, it is after all why we are all in church celebrating a wedding. Bishop Curry however spoke about the potential transforming power of love in the world. This is or should be at the very heart of our Christian faith. We believe in the power of love.

At my own wedding, we had the famous reading: 1 Corinthians 13 where Paul describes what love is and is not. I read somewhere that a useful thing to do was to read this reading but instead of reading the word love, insert your own name... it is a good if sobering activity!

Yes, love is sometimes hard. It is easy to love those we like, those who are the same as us, those who think the way we think. But we are called to love those we don't like, those whose opinions differ from ours, those who aren't the same as us. Love is the thing which should define us as Christians.

Unfortunately, this is often not the case; unfortunately sometimes in churches where we should see and experience love, what we see is arguments and division.

Twelve months ago, my beloved city of Manchester was subjected to a horrific terrorist attack. In the days afterwards however, the City of Manchester really pulled together with acts of love on display left, right and centre. There was a determination not to allow the hatred of one man and the organisation behind him, to create more hatred and division.

This determination is a choice. When the poet Tony Walsh delivered his poem at the memorial service, he concluded by asking the people of Manchester to "Choose Love."

We need to choose love on a daily basis.

It is the heart of our faith. It is the heart of MWA.

Yours in Christ

Sr Janet Cooper