

1. *Today's reading* Acts 10.21-48      Waiting and listening.

I'm starting to write this reflection whilst waiting for a phone call to begin. It's a quite common experience these days to be sitting at the desk, waiting for a phone call, or a zoom meeting, or Skype conversation. It's quite a change from going out to meetings and chatting together as we wait for others to arrive or for the meeting time to arrive.

We're living in a strange world, for many of us, a time of waiting and wondering what the new world will be like. Will we ever be in a post Covid 19 world or will we have to find ways of living with this virus as we do with so many others? It's a strange time, this time of watching and waiting and wondering.

Waiting, on the cusp of a new world, is very much the story of Acts 10.

While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision of the sail cloth containing impure animals, the men came for Cornelius. Peter invited them in and then, next day, Peter started out with them to Caesarea.

Peter waited all night. Was he wondering what was going to happen?

At the same time, Cornelius was waiting in Caesarea. Was he too wondering what was going to happen? By the time they all got together it was four days after Cornelius' vision.

"Now," he says (v32) "we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us." Then they hear the story of what God has been up to in Judea – and what a story it is!

We wait, and we listen, then we see what God has been up to and we tell the story.

The approach to church that is characterised by the Fresh Expression movement is very much that – we wait, we listen, we discern what God is up to and we join in! Often the story that we have to tell of what God is 'up to' is consistent with the story of the past but is also significantly different.

At this stage no-one really knows what Church will be like in the future Covid 19 world – but it won't be the same as it was before. It's likely that we will be living with social distancing for some considerable time and that will change things.

For now, we wait, and we listen!

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