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## WEEKLY LETTER – 21 AUGUST 2022

### Luke 13.10-17

You have probably noticed in this reading how at the beginning Jesus is made welcome in the Synagogue, for he is allowed to preach to his fellow Jews. (What a treat this must have been!). When he notices a woman suffering, Jesus stops, lays his hands on her, and she is healed. The atmosphere changes rapidly, and a duel between Jesus and the indignant leaders of the Synagogue begins. You can feel them raising their voices and their hands, expressing total disapproval of Jesus' choice.

As always Jesus does not take a step backwards, instead he raises the stakes by calling the leaders duplicit hypocrites. In effect, calling them impostures, fake Jews, and leading the people of God astray. This can't have been easy for these 'leading lights'.

The leaders must have been expressing their concerns that not only does Jesus praise the Torah, but at the same time he burns it. No doubt they sensed that none of their ancient traditions were safe while he was around.

I dare say the disciples must have also felt uncomfortable, because doubtless they believed Jesus needed the rabbi's and the leaders in the synagogues. Instead, they could see that the powerful men in the synagogues were beginning to loiter like vultures, and their knives were out to fillet.

The crowd clearly loved the clash between Jesus and their leaders because they knew better than anyone how the 'decisions makers' tied heavy loads on people's backs, and were unwilling to lift a finger to help those who staggered. They had experience of the bruised being bruised again, and their dreams crushed.

In effect Jesus was saying, "you think you are virtuous and holy, but you neglect the heart of the law, which is justice, mercy and faithfulness. You are no better than a wasp on a grape – you are sucking people dry".

Let us pray that we will continue to be good messengers of peace and love, and implement the faith of Christ in our everyday acts, for peace and love of our neighbour.

**Stephen**

**Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom, at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Dr Robert Pope.  
Bible Reading: Luke 13.10-17**

**Cycle of Prayer in the Swansea Region – we will pray for Christ Well**

**Prayers for Every Household – Manor Road nos. 74-118**

***Us and You*** (Lectionary Readings: Jeremiah 1.4-10: Psalm 71.1-6: Hebrews 12.18-29: Luke 13.10-17)

We place ourselves into your hands:  
make us and remake us  
so that we may reflect your glory.  
Open our hearts that we may listen to your calling,  
that we may travel with you

We take refuge to you:  
when we were rudderless you took us in,  
you brought us into your fold.  
You rescue us from injustice,  
so we place our trust in you.

You light up hope in our hearts  
and bring peace to reign in our lives.  
You are the liberation that we seek,  
and we look to you for a sense of belonging.  
Show us the way to love all those around us.

Creator God, we thank you for your unending love;  
Jesus Christ, we thank you for wholeness;  
Spirit, we acknowledge your power in our lives.  
**Amen.**

Lewis Reay (URC Prayer Handbook 2022)

