

The story about the Good Samaritan.

Read Luke 10:25-37

Right now there is a whole lot of neighbour awareness that is growing across Erdington and across the world.

On Thursdays we stand at the front of our house and we clap: it is supposed to be about the NHS, but to be honest it feels more like an opportunity to connect with our neighbours. This week, we stood together but apart: different faiths, different ethnicities and generations, different outlooks and different circumstances. We stood together but apart. Nobody has mentioned it, but we were all so pleased that one household came and joined the minute of applause for the first time. We all smile and wave and exchange a few words like we never have before. And on Thursday, one set of neighbours wanted to tell us how they were feeling the best they had been for ages as they have been undergoing treatment against cancer – they attributed it to the prayers. God is good and his love crosses all boundaries.

These are *our* neighbours, our immediate neighbours. But we are seeing God doing new things all over the place. We see God's vision for humankind being put into action in so many situations across Erdington, across the world. Reaching out, acknowledging that, in the simple words of the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern in response to the Christchurch Massacre, that "*they are us*". The love of God, demonstrated and described for us by Jesus in stories like the Good Samaritan helps and cares across all boundaries.

They are us and we are them. And God's love unites us all and breaks down every wall.

Prayers

A Prayer of thanks and confession

Loving God

Help us to worship and serve you.

Help us to learn from what Jesus shows us.

Please forgive us when we have crossed over the road to avoid people.

Forgive us when we try to catch people out.

Forgive us when we hide behind rules or even reasons when we could actually do more to help.

You showed us how to live alongside each other. You showed us how to be good neighbours.

Help us to live this out, to live as you want us to live, to walk in the footsteps of the Good Samaritan, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Amen.

A Prayer for others

Who is our neighbour?

Jesus of Nazareth, you are our neighbour.

Help us to see you in all of our neighbours.

Help us to take risks to help those in need.

We pray for all of our neighbours today

- People next to us
- People far away from us
- People who will go to bed hungry
- People who are seeking safety
- People who are different from us and yet the same.

We pray for our neighbours.

Help us to see you in our neighbour.

Amen.