

# Leavening Methodist Church

## **'Do not be afraid' -Thought for Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June (Rev Dr Penny Worth)**

Do you feel fearful at the moment?

You might be afraid of catching covid, or afraid of losing your job, or worrying about making ends meet, or worrying about the health of someone you love.

Today's reading ([Matthew 10.24-39](#)) is one of the "do not be afraid" passages in the bible – Jesus is telling the disciples not to fear persecution because they are valued and loved by God. Our fears are probably different, but can Jesus's words speak to us too?

You might think, "How can I not be afraid when there are so many things to worry about?". It's not as if God stops tragic things happening to those he loves (that is, all of us). Nor does he seem to protect those who are specially good, or those who have faith. So how can Jesus say, "Do not be afraid"?



*'So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.'* Matthew 10 v31

Jesus is reminding us that God loves us like a wonderful human father loves his children, but so much more. The image of God counting all the hairs on our heads is an image of how much he is bothered about us. If we can imagine God counting every hair on every person's head, we can see that we are valued and cared about far beyond any human capacity.

Jesus tells us that whatever happens to us, whatever the future holds, we will not face it alone because God will be walking alongside us. Human parents don't protect their children from everything either – illness for example, but a hand to hold in the dark makes a world of difference to a child. God holds us and keeps us through all the ups and downs of life, his hand is always there to hold. God does not grant us earthly safety, but he does give us ultimate security – he is always there for us; his arms are always round us. The life we find in God is life we can never lose.

*Father God, when we are afraid  
help us to feel your presence with us,  
your love surrounding us,  
your arms holding and keeping us.  
Teach us to trust in you  
and reach for your hand  
when we feel alone.  
Amen*