



JUNE 2021 Newsletter



Can you tell which photo was from 2020 or 2021?

This newsletter is not a ‘spot the difference competition. However, it does include two similar pictures of the same plant at the same time of year. There is a difference between the photos. In one, the Tamarisk is in full bloom, whereas in the other, it is still only in bud.

As a not very good gardener, I must admit that I expect the same plant to do the same thing at the same time every year. However, experience shows us that plants, like all living things, are affected by external conditions.

This year, we had a drier, warmer April than in 2020. However, we then went on to have a colder, wetter May. The Tamarisk needs the warmer temperatures to come properly into flower, so this year, the blossom has been delayed compared to last year. However, the Tamarisk is still doing an effective job at being a Tamarisk!

As people, we can also be shaped by the external conditions; our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health have all been affected by shielding, lockdown, restrictions on seeing family and friends and limitations on physical contact. We may not feel we are doing a very effective job of being a person, let alone of being a good witness to the life Jesus brings.



The Apostle Paul wrote to Christians in Rome, when they were wavering because of persecution. He wrote to encourage them and this is what he said,

“We also boast of our troubles, because we know that trouble produces endurance, ⁴endurance brings God's approval, and his approval creates hope. ⁵This hope does not disappoint us, for God has poured out his love into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to us.” Romans 5:3-5

The troubles we face are different – we do not have people arresting and killing us because of our faith. Yet the troubles we face can be just as harmful to our health.

We are just starting to meet back in the church building again for Sunday worship. We are going slowly, but steadily, as Pete and I, with other techy volunteers, work out how to move from completely pre-recorded services, to a blend of recorded and live and then fully to live streaming of services. As we sort the technology, we will gradually invite more people to attend, although we are limited by Covid social distancing. Although we all want to be back, please persevere in patience and do your best to daily find someone to encourage and be encouraged by! Be a blessing, so that you might be blessed. **Sarah**