

Cardiff Methodist Circuit Prayer Month
6th May, 2020

Today's thoughts are provided by Rev. Alexis Mahoney

Dreams:

I don't know about you, but my dreams have become more vivid, more frequent and more memorable while we've been in lockdown. Some of them are almost definitely 'anxiety dreams', and some are so bizarre I wouldn't know where to start describing them!

But apparently, I'm not the only one currently experiencing vivid dreams while we've all been in lockdown. Already there's a research project being undertaken by a group of postgraduate psychoanalysis students in London asking people to fill in an online survey about the dreams they are having at the moment. (If you feel brave enough or adventurous enough to do so yourself you can click on this link and tell them one or more of yours: <http://lockdowndreams.com/>). Essentially, the aim is to collect and analyse a variety of dreams to see how the Covid-19 crisis is being experienced "unconsciously".

I've long been fascinated by dreams and visions in the Bible. Though there's the caveat that much dreaming can be meaningless (Eccles 5.7), there's also passages which suggest that dream interpretations belong to God (Gen 40.8), and that dreams can be of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.17).

As I see it, dreams are one of the ways God engages with us; through our imagination and unconscious states of mind. They can be a way of seeing things anew, as well as providing us with a new 'vision' for how things could and should be.

In light of this, I invite you to pray that our dreams will be from God; or if they seem unintelligible to us that we offer them back to God in prayer; or if they're clearly not from God then to put them down to an interesting experience. Either way, let's keep our dreams in our daily prayers and reflections.

*"Lord Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are so full of mystery and majesty;
your ways are not our ways,
and can be so strange to us sometimes.*

*But your still, small voice,
persistently and gently whispers of your unending love for us all;
of your plans of abundant life for us all.*

*Yet we so often prefer to just listen to our own voices,
or the voices that speak so loudly and confidently, and with such self-proclaimed
'knowledge' around us.*

*Lord, we know from Scripture that one of the ways you speak with us,
is through dreams;
So we ask you that while we're all in lockdown,
and where dreams have curiously come into the foreground of our current experiences,
that you fill our dreams with comfort and hope,
and a vision for the future.*

*We pray that our dreams enable us to see Your way, anew.
We pray that our dreams will give us courage to rise to the challenge of new insights you
have given us.
And we pray that whatever dream is not from you will be easily discerned,
and that whatever dreams you may send us are prayerfully interpreted.*

*Lord, we are thankful for whatever dreams you send us,
but right now we ask that you send us dreams of hope for the future.
We ask for dreams that show us how we can live in our world right now;
and how we can defeat Covid-19.
And we ask for dreams that show us how we can live in a post-Covid world,
how our churches, our Circuits and our Synod can be Christ's true church,
in a brave new world,
that cares more,
loves more,
prays more,
with you at the centre of all we do.*

In Jesus name we pray. Amen".