

## **Rector's Letter: May 2018**

What difference can I make amid the violence and war? As I sit writing this, I hear reports about the success of the air strikes launched on Syria by the US, the UK and France to destroy manufacturing or storage plants of chemical weapons. Why anyone, or any government, should want to use chemical weapons against another human being, particularly knowing that children will be affected, is deeply disturbing and astonishing. I know it is so wrong; I know it cannot be allowed to continue; I am glad that I am not in a position where I have to make the decisions on what to do about it. Who knows what will happen in the time between my writing this and it being published.

The vast majority of us feel powerless to affect events that happen on the world stage, but there are people who can and do have a positive effect globally. The majority of them are, of course, world leaders - and, as a priest, I pray for them regarding the decisions that they have to take. But other individuals also have an effect on global life, most of them probably thinking they would not have a worldwide influence - although some do.

Think back to Malala Yousafzai, a young girl campaigning for the education of women and children in her native area of north-west Pakistan; she made an impact, changed things, was recognised, and received the Nobel Peace

Prize. Not many will achieve that, but each of us can have an impact upon, and improve, the local community in which we live. Participation in our community is key, so I encourage you to get involved in something.

If you are interested in one part of the church life of your community, then there are a number of things coming up, or ongoing, where your participation would be fantastic. We have the celebration of Ascension, this year it is on Thursday 10 May. We have a time of preparation between Ascension and another celebration, this time Pentecost, which we'll be marking with Nine Days of Prayer, with a short service every day at 5pm. We are also in a time of preservation at both parish churches, as yet more work (and money) is needed to maintain our medieval buildings. The preservation, though, is not to maintain the building as a museum; it is so that the building is still there for the community and to be used by the community.

So I encourage you to use your church; be part of it; grow it - be it! And then we can continue to celebrate, as a community, within its building. Not many of us can have an affect on the world stage, but each of us can have an effect on the local stage. Make your contribution to village life and achieve a positive difference.

Revd David Commander, Rector