

Greetings everyone and thank you so much to all of you for making my first few months in the Wey Valley Circuit such a happy time.

I write a meditation each week based on the Gospel lesson set for that week and last week I wrote something about Joseph. It struck me anew that in the Bible Joseph doesn't say anything. The ultimate character with no voice, but despite being seemingly in the background, Joseph is pivotal in God's story. There is room for him. I have really enjoyed using the 'There is Room' resources from the Methodist Church this year because they seem to me to point out something REALLY important. There is room for each one of us - WHOEVER we are...in God's continuing story of bringing love to the world.

Here's the mediation on Joseph and I end off with a link to a video - Christmas greetings from the President and Vice President of the Methodist Conference - and Christmas greetings from Janet and myself. Have a wonder-full time.

Matthew 1. 18-25

Part of the Story

I don't know whether you've ever spotted this but I'm completely silent. If you look through the story I say nothing. Nothing at all. Not when an angel visits me. Not when we endure the finger pointing and the whispered comments and gossip in Nazareth. Not when we have to travel to Bethlehem and have to traipse the streets of the town desperate for a safe place. Not when the birth happens and we get the strangest set of visitors you could ever imagine. Not when we become refugees and have to flee for our lives to Egypt. Not when we take him to the temple and ancient worthies break into spontaneous praise. Not when our son goes AWOL at the age of 12 and we travel for days before realising he's gone. I say nothing. The ultimate character without a script. I'm sure if I was in a Hollywood movie I'd be petitioning the director for lines of any sort. Can I not say something? Just a word or two? An exclamation? Something to give me a voice? But - no. And now...now you can get Nativity sets where I'm entirely absent...or you can't tell the difference between me and a shepherd.

Oh and I quickly disappear from the story as well. 'What happened to Joseph?' I hear you say. A very good question. It's like I've disappeared completely.

And yet...and yet I have my own importance. I play my part in the story...in God's story. I have things to do, support to offer, guidance to give, a trade to share, a wife to love, messages to listen to and act on.

You have no idea how vulnerable Jesus was. How at a moment's notice the plan could all have gone horribly wrong. Mary was brilliant and incredibly strong and resourceful and faithful...but I had my part to play as well. My gifts to offer. And without that faithfulness...that willingness to play my part, to be the bit player who doesn't get to speak...Without me being part of the story...who knows how things would have played out? How different things would have been?

So celebrate your part in God's story. Big or small, background artist or centre stage participant. No part of this story of God is insignificant. Nothing you do as part of the story goes to waste. Everything you do - whether it seems as though it is noticed or not - it has power and weight and its own beauty and glory. So search and participate and engage and enjoy because your part is important. More than that - your part is vital in order for everything to work. YOU are a significant other.

Christmas greetings from the Methodist Church -

[https://vimeo.com/778150004/197427f2f2?utm\\_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=13676759\\_The%20Methodist%20News%20-%202015%20December%202022](https://vimeo.com/778150004/197427f2f2?utm_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=13676759_The%20Methodist%20News%20-%202015%20December%202022)