

Pastoral Letter 03.08.22

Dear Friends

Writing, as I am, the day after the historic victory of England's Women over Germany in the final of Euro 2022 I feel it would be very unfair not to acknowledge such a remarkable achievement. It has been so long since an England football team, male or female, won any major trophy.

However, I am conscious of the fact that, although just over 87,000 people packed into the Wembley Stadium and some 17 million watched on TV, there will be some of you reading this letter who have no interest in sport and are thoroughly fed up with so much of it on our TV screens this summer with Euro 2022 and the Commonwealth Games. I ask for your indulgence.

You might not think so when you meet me today but when I was younger I played a lot of sport, especially cricket, football and tennis. Football was my favourite and I was lucky enough to play at right half (wing half) for my School Junior and Senior XIs, winning colours at both levels. I am a lifelong supporter of Manchester City!

Although I'm a City supporter I remember hearing a talk by a former Methodist Secretary of Manchester United. He told us that when Matt Busby was the United manager his advice to his players was always the same: Do the simple thing, do it well and do it now. What good advice for any footballer, female or male, from one of the great football managers of all time. I want to suggest that it is not just good advice for footballers on the playing pitch but excellent advice for each one of us in our daily life.

Do the simple thing. Sometimes we think that if we're going to be good disciples of Jesus we need to do great acts of love or sacrifice or generosity but that is not necessarily so. The small act of kindness, the quiet word of encouragement, the five minutes of time to listen. These are things which we all can do and can do everyday. Do the simple thing.

Do it well. It might be a small thing we can do for our neighbour but we can make sure that we do it to the best of our ability. And in our acts of worship whatever role we undertake we can be the best we can be. Not in any competitive way, setting one against the other, but just the best we can be. Do it well.

Do it now. How often have you, like me, thought about a letter you might write, a card you might send, a telephone call you might make, a visit you might undertake and then you've put it off for another day. What a difference it would make if we acted promptly on those fleeting thoughts instead of procrastinating. Do it now.

Maybe, whilst football and sport is in the air, we could give it a try...Do the simple thing, do it well and do it now.

Blessings
Allan

Rev.J Allan Taylor