

Dear Friends,

I've just returned from a working trip to Gibraltar. You might be surprised to know that both Gibraltar and Malta are part of our South East District. The reason being that they needed to be connected to a British District, as they are part of UK Methodism not that on the continent, and we are the closest geographically, even if Gibraltar is over a thousand miles away from Surrey and Malta even further!

It means that my colleague, Rev Dan Balsdon (Assistant District Chair for the Southern area), includes Malta in his Circuits that he cares for and I, covering the ADC Western area, have Gibraltar in mine; hence the trip to 'Gib' as it is commonly and locally known.

I don't know if you've ever been there; it is quite an unusual place, not least because of the topography of the land and the huge 'Rock of Gibraltar' that greets you as you land on a runway that, until this summer, bisected the main road route into Gib from the Spanish border.



And, of course the Levanter Clouds that gather around the top of The Rock, like meteorological candy floss making the usually sunny climate rather damper and duller than you'd expect:



But one of the other interesting things, among many, is the no.4 bus that leaves from the main bus station near Casemates Square for 'Both Worlds'!



This happens to be rather nice accommodations block near Sandy Bay on the eastern side of Gib, facing into the Mediterranean Sea but why, 'Both Worlds'?

I tried to look it up but only found a few suggestions: That it might be because you can see both Spain to the north (just seen in the distance in the image above) and Morocco to the south? Maybe because Gib feels very Spanish and also very English at the same time? Possibly because you're on one of the most southerly points of Europe but that the 50,000 tonnes of sand on Sandy Bay had to be shipped in from Western Sahara? Or maybe someone just thought it was a great name and a good way to sell apartments!

But it made me think of how we are people of 'Both Worlds' – the world we are born into and inhabit in the reality of everyday living, and the 'other' world of God's reign and presence.

This 'dual residency' is something that the writer of John's Gospel has Jesus talking about in Chapter 17 – especially verse 11 – "And now I am no longer in the world but they are in the world" and verse 14 – "they do not belong to the world". We're in 'Both Worlds' and called to love well in each and let one inform the other – our part in the 'in-breaking Kingdom of God', shaping our living in the world around us.

Maybe that's something to reflect on the coming days, perhaps even re-read the whole of John Chapter 17, the so-called, 'High Priestly Prayer' of Jesus, to God the Father, on behalf of his followers then and ourselves today too.

What does it mean to YOU to be a resident of 'Both Worlds'?

And what is God calling you to DO and BE in each?

Happy ponderings!

Sam.

Resources/Good News

Finding Nana - An MHA Special Places book

A new book has recently been published, telling the fictional story of Ellie and Jack as they discover what happens when Nana moves into a very special care home. Among other things, the book aims to reassure children in what can be a daunting experience, and explains the unique role of a chaplain within MHA's distinctive Care Homes, supported by the Methodist Church. The book can be purchased via the Methodist Publishing website [Finding Nana \(methodistpublishing.org.uk\)](http://methodistpublishing.org.uk)