

Friends

One of my favourite hymns is "The right hand of God is writing in our land". At 715 in the hymnbook, it is one of the ones I looked for when Faith and Worship came out; I'm sure lots of us trawled the index to make sure that our own particular favourites had made the cut! I first heard the hymn the second or third time that I went to worship in a Methodist church, and I found it very moving. "If this is Methodism," I thought, "then this is where I want to be." Written by Patrick Prescod for the inaugural gathering of the Caribbean Conference of Churches in 1973, it signifies God's active presence and power working in the world, and specifically at that time, in the Caribbean.

It draws on biblical imagery of the hand of God signifying power and support. Thus we read in Isaiah 48:13 "My hand laid the foundation of the earth and my right hand spread out the heavens." In Isaiah 41:13 we read, "For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you 'Fear not, I am the one who helps you.'" And in Ezra 7:28 we read, "I felt encouraged because the gracious hand of the Lord my God was on me."

Inspirational and comforting though many have found such verses over the years, still we return to our calling as Methodists to be the right hand of God for others. As Teresa of Avila said all the way back in the 16th century:

Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on the world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body.

Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on the world,
Christ has no body now on earth, but yours.

God bless, Vicci