

## **Living faithfully in turbulent times – from the Moderator**

Those with good memories (or who are good researchers) might recall that when I wrote my Advent/Christmas message last year, it was Election Day in the US. We were waiting then to see which way (probably) the most powerful nation on earth would sway. Many of us (perhaps not all) have been disappointed in the outcome of that election.

We had our own vote last year, with campaigns conducted disgracefully (in both the common and purer usage of that word) by BOTH sides, resulting narrowly in a vote to leave the European Union. Sadly, the rhetoric, from BOTH sides hasn't improved since the result was announced. The results of that led, indirectly at least, to a bitterly fought General Election campaign, with the result again a surprise and again bringing us into a new politically-unsettled age.

How then can we live faithfully in these turbulent times? How can we navigate as disciples and as witnesses in these days?

I read an excellent article in Country Way magazine calling for unity after the Brexit vote. You can find and read it yourself <http://germinate.net/resources/cw75-brexit-time-unity/> and I would encourage you to do this. Whichever way (or whether) you voted in the Referendum, the article's author makes a very positive case for saying, "here's where we are, let's use our churches to build bridges" (rather than dig trenches.) His concern, as Chief Executive of the tenant Farmers' Association, is particularly for the future well-being of rural communities, but the message applies equally to those in town, suburban and city contexts.

We have a message of reconciliation. We are called to offer hope and peace to all.

The prophet Isaiah proclaims, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them a light has shined." (Is 9:2 NRSV) Please note the tense: they (we!) HAVE seen a great light!

Let us be ever ready and always engaged in sharing light and hope to all.

My prayer for you is that you know Christ afresh this Advent and Christmas season.

**Steve Faber**

Synod Moderator, West Midlands Synod of the URC