

Weekly Reflection – 6th July 2025

Luke 10.1-11.

By Revd Tim Vickers

AC/DC, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Bob Marley, Taylor Swift, Katy Perry and Jimmy Hendrix. Famous names now, but did you know that they all started as support acts for other bands. They were given their opening break by someone else, and they intend do the same for others.

In music, a support act, also known as an opening act, serves to warm up the audience and build anticipation for the main performer, the headliner. They often play for a shorter duration than the headliner and may be less familiar to the audience.

Its not a new idea, because in our gospel today from Luke, we hear of the appointment of Jesus supporting act for his second tour (to continue to use the music imagery). The first tour happened we find a few chapters earlier when Jesus sends out the 12 Apostles as his advance act.

On the second time, Jesus sends out 70 others, and sent them out in pairs to every town and place Jesus intended to go and Jesus gives them instruction as to what they were to do to prepare his way, which, might sounds counter-intuitive to what we might do today.

He first asks them to bring nothing with them – no purse, sandals or bag. They are told to greet no one on the road, no advance warning was to be given of their arrival. They were to offer their peace to a house, and if it was accepted to stay there, cure the sick, and we presume tell them about Jesus and that he was coming soon – that the kingdom of God has come near to you. All good and well.

But strangely they were to do the same regarding places or people that did not welcome them. Yes they were to protest against the lack of welcome, but they were still to say that the kingdom of God has come near.

We hear later on that these 70 returned with joy, and we hope they must have been a good warm up act, to build anticipation for the coming of Jesus, although we do not know if Jesus was received any differently when he did arrive.

Since those days of Jesus sending the 70 out as his support as the number of labourers has grown dramatically. It counts many billions of people, those who are baptised and members of the church, who are called to be the advance party for the coming of Jesus.

We might not think of ourselves like that, but when we gather on a Sunday we are being fed by Jesus – in word and sacrament – so that we can go out into the world. Our task is simple – to those who are opening to what we have to say, we return that hospitality and share the good news of Jesus. To those who are not open to who we are and who we represent, we move on. Knowing that to both, the kingdom of God has come near.

We may not be sent out in the town and all the places of the world, but we are sent to be visible witnesses to the love of the God we believe in and worship – in action as much as Word.

What then are the town and places that you go to every week, where you are the support act to the arrival of Jesus? How is it that you help prepare his way? How is it that you can say that the kingdom of God has come near?

My prayer today, is that as we all leave from here today – now and at the 9,30 service later, we all know that we are being sent out as the supporting act of Jesus, and that as we go out, people might in a small way be prepared for that day when Jesus comes again. Amen.