CTN Review Day 210913

Matt 9: 9-13 – The Call of Matthew

You may wonder what the relevance of this passage is to our thinking today. Let’s treat it as a reminder about the work of God. We are sent out in mission – but God is already calling people and calling unexpected people to follow. Churches fall into predictable patterns of membership – the sort of people you would expect. Discipleship is full of surprises – why this person and how are we going to cope with them. And one of the signs of growth in our church is that there are more unexpected people who don’t fit and don’t quite seem to belong. Thank God for them.

Jesus said to him ‘Follow me’ It’s as simple as that. Calling and response.

So as we talk about many things today ….

We talk in the context of vocation – God’s call to each of us as individuals but also as a church. We have become great planners, organisers, strategisers and managers – and we need to be. But the context in which that sits is that of vocation – the ‘follow me’ of Jesus to the disciple.

Many things make us deaf to that call. Much of my ministry has been spent dealing with fear and, as our liturgy reminds us, there is no fear in love. But complacency and lack of aspiration do the same. And so does busyness. And laziness. And self-centredness. And the kind of self-confidence which makes God an optional extra invited in to bless our schemes and plans.

I’m comfortable with where we are at the moment. We’re stressed and stretched. We attempt to do ridiculous amounts with the most skimpy resources. But there is a whiff of vocation around the place – a tinge of the surprising – as surprising as the call of Matthew. And above all a recognition that we find ourselves in the middle of something which we don’t own and can’t altogether control.

Jesus said, ‘Follow me’ And he got up and followed him.