

18<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## Together

**“There is work together, a Church for all,  
and a job for each, every[one] to [their] work.  
What life have you, if you have not life together?”**

*T S Elliot, The Rock*

Katie Archibald, MBE, is a Scottish-born cyclist who is currently at the top of her sport. Nicknamed “The Blushing Bull”, Katie specialises in endurance events and has won 24 gold medals in Olympic, World, European and Commonwealth championships. At a recent event in London’s Velodrome, we watched with growing excitement as Katie participated in “the elimination” race. This event consists of sixteen riders, with the last rider over the line after every two laps being eliminated. So the field was reduced, till only two cyclists were left, Katie and one other rider. With two laps to go, Katie pulled away. The crowd, all six thousand of us, were on our feet, cheering her home to victory. Even this seventy-two year old was screaming and jumping up and down. The applause was as loud and long, and continued right through the warm-down laps. It was wonderful!

When Katie was interviewed for TV by the legendary fellow-Scot, Sir Chris Hoy, the applause started again. It was remarkable to be there at such a moment of oneness, where the whole world, it seemed – or at least those of us who were in the Velodrome – were *absolutely* together. Thank you, Katie Archibald, MBE. You can blush as much as you like for the pleasure you have given us in events such as this.

“What life have you, if you have not life together?” T S Elliot asked. Isn’t there a remarkable feeling when we are part of something we do together, where there is trust, mutual respect, common purpose and shared pleasure? Church? Family? Friendships? Community? I hope that all of you reading this as Christmas approaches might know that sense of togetherness that lifts you from the ordinary to the special. However it manifests itself, give yourself to that moment when togetherness outdoes all else. And if you are unable to experience that togetherness, go and look for it. Someone, somewhere will be doing something to inspire others to be truly together, as Katie Archibald, MBE, did on that evening in London.

### **A prayer for today**

*Loving God, if I value togetherness so much, how might I help others find it too? Amen*

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