

We're gonna jump that train



BY BISHOP JONATHAN, BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH

MAY I commend a little track, which you can access on Youtube or via a streaming service, from the Irish rock band U2?

It's the version on the 'Rattle and Hum' album that you need. It's called *When Love Comes To Town*. It's racy.

Written by Bono (pictured below), it's a gospel song, in part a tribute to the legendary blues guitarist BB King (on lead guitar and backing vocals). The lyrics speak of a life-transforming encounter with Jesus Christ and deep human sorrow at actions that wreck and wound.

Here's a flavour: "I was a sailor, I was lost at sea/ I was under the waves before love rescued me.../ Used to make love under a red sunset/I was making promises I was soon to forget/She was pale as the lace of her wedding gown/But I left her standing before love came to town."

Before love came to town: when the Light and Love of God breaks through, arrives at our platform, and we glimpse both God's Christ-like compassion and our deepest need for God and a new beginning in life.



But what brings on this encounter, this arrival at Platform One, as it were? It can be the luminous, faithful compassion of a friend that does it; a sense of personal sin, need, or shame; or perhaps the light-filled action of a person or community fighting for justice that awakens us from spiritual slumber.

Most profoundly, it can come with the dawning realisation and recognition that we already have a part in the story of all stories. The song again: "I was there when they crucified my Lord/I held the scabbard when the soldier drew his sword/I threw the dice when they pierced his side/But I've seen love conquer the great divide."

When Love comes to town, when we sense a tugging in our heart, and a beckoning from beyond us, a response is required.

We can stay firmly on Platform One. Or we can recognise the Love that longs to enfold, gather and remake us.

My friends, dear reader, if you do nothing else this autumn, jump that train. Enjoy the track (and do turn it up loud!).

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AUTUMN 2024

UPFRONT

- 3 Faith in Focus
- 4-9 Latest news

IN DEPTH

- 10-13 Our strategy: plans to Revive, Revitalise, Renew and Rejuvenate
- 14-17 Ghana links: more than 40 years of working with Christians there

PEOPLE

- 18-19 My Faith: the woman whose faith changed as she broke her neck
- 20 The Big Issue: how faith and politics can mix effectively
- 21 Why I love my church: Harbour Church, Portsmouth

AND FINALLY

- 22 Top 10: Church publicity

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