

## HOPES of HEAVEN?

*'Now we see only a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.'* 1 Cor. 13.12

Remembrance time and ageing alike bring us to wonder what lies ahead of our time on earth? What, how and where is 'heaven'? 'Up there' in the multiple universe may not be very appealing – and 'Down there' in the world of molten lava has even less appeal. So – let's leave our imaginary heaven parked in some sort of 'beyond-our-understanding-kind-of-space'.

A little novel by best-selling journalist and author, Mitch Albom, engages with such 'wondering'. **'The Five People You Meet in Heaven'** and its sequel, **'The Next Person You Meet in Heaven'** are easy to read, insightful stories, which draw on those images that St Paul describes. His 'unsung literary heroes' find themselves in heaven and are surprised at their unexpected encounters.

St Paul also wondered about 'heaven' and how it might offer answers to the tricky questions in this life. In chapter 13 of his letter to Corinth, he suggests that 'heaven' is where everything begins to make sense. Those things which have worried us, the times and events which have puzzled us, the regrets which weigh us down, the misfortunes which have beset us... all the things which make us wonder if our living has been worth it... everything will become clearer in the presence of the God in whom we place our faith, our hopes, and in whose love we reside.

Who might we meet? We may hope to meet up with the ones we have loved; but what about the ones we disliked? How old will I be? Will my dog be there? Will I see myself in a new light? Will I recognise the 'me' I thought I knew?

Amidst our 'wonderings' we can be assured of one thing: that in Christ, God's love is all embracing, forgiving, reconciling and eternal.



**'Faith, Hope and Love abide; and the greatest of these is Love.'**