

Dear friends,

Getting an email from Wizz air telling me what I need to do if my flight is cancelled or delayed doesn't fill one with confidence especially when the flight has already been delayed once so here's hoping that all goes according to plan.

The varied programme over this past weekend, which included a Friday concert in St Peter's, training in how to deliver intercessions (well delivered by Rev. Colin Randall on Saturday) and our "All Souls service" on Sunday afternoon as well as normal Sunday services keeps me busy and out of trouble.

My trip to Bucharest and London will mean I'll have to prepare for remembrance Sunday this week before I go but I will be back for the morning services and the Royal British Legion service on the afternoon of the 13th November.

Sunday 6th November – 3 before Advent

Note: Chris Cant will preside at All Saints at the changed time of 11am this Sunday followed by a bring and share meal in the church afterwards for their patronal festival so their readings will be for "All Saints Sunday".

Colin Randall will preside at St. Peter's at both the 8am and 10am services and John Archibald will preside at St. Michael's at 11am and their readings are for the 3rd Sunday before Advent. At St. Peter's at the 10am service we also welcome a guest speaker from CMS for their mission Sunday service.

Job 19: 23-27. The start of this reading from the lectionary says "Job said to his companions" but this addition is not in the Bible and rather gives the impression that they are on the same page but Job has been at loggerheads with them the entire time. The Hebrew in this passage is notoriously corrupt so an accurate translation is near impossible, but the main message is that despite all the pain and traumas of his life, Job has faith in a redeemer who will vindicate him in the end.

2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5, 13-17. The Thessalonians have been "shaken in mind" by what we don't know but Paul (or another author) tries to

re-assure them. The idea of the appearance by the “lawless one” is common in apocalyptic writing (like Daniel or revelation) and is to be expected before Christ’s eventual victory. Whether tis lawless one was known to the Thessalonians or is prophesying a future figure is unknown. Like Job, this shaken and nervous church is advised to remain faithful to their original teaching that Christ is the truth and he will vindicate them if they remain true to Him.

Luke 20: 27-38. Words from Jesus that affirms that we cannot conceive what eternal life looks like. Relating it to the physicality of this life and the need for procreation is very wide of the mark as there is no death or any need to procreate in the afterlife. The order of things is so different and beyond our comprehension after physical death, but Jesus does affirm that the survival of individual personality survives death and uses the incident of the burning bush to emphasise that fact that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are all alive in God.

Funfaith

This is what we are calling our new Junior church venture. The name was suggested by Poppy, one of the little girls that will be an attendee and we decided to go with it. We have five people involved in the planning of it and the first one will be in December. Precise days and details are still being decided upon but when I return all those datils will be worked out. In our prayers we can thank God for this initiative and pray that bears much fruit in the lives of the youngsters that will attend.

Thought for the day – The Lectionary

As we approach the Advent season – Advent Sunday is on the 27th of November – we recall that this is the church’s new year! This is the date when the lectionary – the table of readings we use for every day of the year changes to a new schedule – not on January first (That would be too easy). The readings change from year “C” which we are currently following (primarily readings from Luke’s gospel) back to year “A” (which majors primarily on Matthew’s gospel) until Advent next year when we’ll enter year “B” (primarily Mark’s gospel).

As a liturgical church we use the same sets of readings as the catholic church with minor occasional differences and the three readings set for

Sunday services we use in the RMC are themed so they should bear some resemblance to each other, even though occasionally the theme is hard to discern!

You'll note that unlike Matthew(A), Mark(B) and Luke(C), John doesn't have his own year dedicated to readings from his gospel because his words are also used quite extensively throughout all the other years.

What the lectionary does provide us with is a three-year cycle of readings for every day of the year that in the experience of the church as a whole gives a balanced diet from across the whole Bible. It also forces you to confront pieces of scripture that may be difficult and challenging that if they weren't set for that Sunday, you probably would never otherwise choose them.

The lectionary is universal so is used for the overwhelming majority of churches in the world and gives us a common framework so that for example on any given Sunday Otterton church will be hearing the same readings as a church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, New York or Borneo. It is a part of the universality of the church that we are all singing from the same hymn sheet so to speak.

The Prayer for Today courtesy of Rev. Margaret Scrivener is from the New Zealand Anglican prayer book and is the Maori Lord's prayer

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.**

**From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

Love and peace,
Martin