

Dear friends,

Our “fogging” machine disinfecting the worship area meant that our 8am BCP communion service could re-start last Sunday. I never thought I’d be glad to get up and present a service at 8am, but there you go! And in consultation with our musical director Stephen Tanner we have agreed to re-start our Evensong services in the new year so another step back to normal service!

This modern age

I am aware that the sound quality on my YouTube reflections is poor and to try and rectify that I am expecting a delivery of a modern microphone that will mean that the sound quality (I hope) on my YouTube presentations will be improved immeasurably from now on! And our little team are planning our next filming projects as well, so everything is going very hi-tech. It’s ironic really because I am a bit of a technophobe and no good if I have to follow any instructions online (Just ask Louise who gets quickly exasperated at my incompetence).

Sunday 18th October – St. Luke

We don’t recognise many Saints on our weekly lectionary readings but this Sunday we are celebrating Luke the evangelist so the readings are the ones assigned to the author of the book of Acts and the gospel that bears his name, so contributing about a quarter of the New Testament. This Sunday I shall preside at the **8am and 10am** services at **St. Peter’s** and while Karen is ill, Rev. Margaret Scrivener will preside at the **9.30am at All Saints and 11am at St. Michael’s**.

Isaiah 35: 3-6. If it is true that “without a vision the people perish” (proverbs 29:18) it is essential that God’s messengers make God’s certain salvation the centre of their message. Isaiah writes about a wonderful inspiring vision of salvation, the kind of inspiring vision that Luke emulates centuries later in his gospel.

2 Timothy 4: 5-7. A forlorn Paul sounds beleaguered. The one bright spot – humanly speaking – is that Luke has remained faithful and is with him, giving him support. Loyalty is a devotion or faithfulness to a person or

concept or entity. Luke here is showing loyalty to Paul but both Paul and Luke are together loyal to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

Luke 10: 1-9. Luke writes of Jesus sending out evangelists to preach that “The Kingdom of God has come near”. In Christian theology the content of the kingdom is co-terminus with Jesus Christ himself. Jesus instructs the missionaries to travel light, accept hospitality when it is offered and demonstrate the difference that the healing power of God can have when his reality is introduced to any situation. Some scholars believe that Luke himself was one of the seventy sent out.

Luke the evangelist.

He is mentioned three times in Paul’s letters, Philemon 1:24, in today’s extract from 2 Timothy and in Colossians 4:14 where Paul calls him “the beloved Physician”. Hence, he is habitually associated with medicine. Possibly born in Antioch, he was certainly a travelling companion of St. Paul and he was with him in Rome near the end of Paul’s ministry. Because in the book of Acts Luke talks about Paul in the third person until Paul reaches a place called Troas and then changes to “We” until Paul leaves, it has been deduced that Luke lived in Troas which is near Troy in present day Turkey. According to tradition Luke died at the age of 84 in Boeotia (Greece). By tradition St. Luke was also the first icon painter, a tradition common in Orthodoxy which has support from the St. Thomas Christian church in Kerala India which claims to possess one of his icons of Madonna and child.

The Lighter side!

Adrian Plass, a very funny Christian poet and humourist has “Anglican church announcements” down to a tee. Enjoy. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1K_YTzKefw

Thought for the day

Never has the national picture looked so uncertain and the previous picture of a unified Britain pulling together under a national lockdown back in March seems a long time ago now. People are tired and confused and many are angry. The social, economic and health toll increases daily and there is no end in sight. A glimmer of hope is raised intermittently with the promise of a vaccine and then recedes just as quickly. And all the time our non-Covid-19 health needs are pushed aside for the “greater good” storing up massive death tolls in the near future from missed and undiagnosed diseases.

It is natural to want to identify someone to blame for all this, because none of this was our fault. But even whilst we identify someone (anyone!) we can blame, that just adds embitterment to our already sorry state. So saturated is our national news and media with all the various ramifications of the crisis that for those with belief, Worship is the only area I can think of where the prime focus for about an hour a week is focussed elsewhere – for Christians, on a personal and Transcendent God. Humanly speaking it must do us good to glimpse a far greater story written on a far larger canvas, where all our current problems are given their true perspective. To see ourselves painted on that canvas as one thing in the midst of an infinite number of other things whilst also knowing that even though the vastness of the canvass is immeasurable we are all infinitely, personally loved by God is a profound experience.

In Holy Communion we join ourselves to eternal sacrificial love and beauty. This American catholic production might seem a bit hokey but it actually communicates the concept of the “communion of saints” and the hidden spiritual realities that lie behind our words and feet of clay. In the end All shall be well. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txqFQpqjK18>

The Prayer for Today is simple and joyful by someone called Byrhtnoth from the 10th century

O God, I thank thee for all the joy I have had in life
Amen to that!

Love and peace,
Martin

Please note my new email address is vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk