

Dear friends,

I have recorded a reflection on the readings set for this Sunday called “God’s story – our story” on how the high creator God was revealed as close and personal. If you’d like to watch it just click on this link. <https://youtu.be/hPCBRD7MwVE>

Alternatively, if you’d prefer to read it just click on this link to my Blog. <https://revmartinjacques.blogspot.com/2021/02/gods-story-our-story.html>

## Here at last!

At morning prayer at St. Michael’s Otterton this morning Anne asked me to look at a certain section of church which might make me smile. At first, I didn’t twig but then noticed that in my third year after arriving here my name now appears on the wall cast in stone! I expect they wanted to test me out to see if I was a “stayer” before committing themselves to anything permanent!

## Live streaming of the All Saints communion service

This Sunday the Rev. Chris Cant is presiding and the link at 9.30 tomorrow is, <https://app.faith.online/p/events/ti2NpMWf2>

The phone number if you haven’t got internet as always is 01395 891035.

(The phone number is a local (Devon) number (01395) so you will be charged at the local rate if you are dialling from the local area. If you are dialling from a mobile phone the call may be included in your allowance depending on your calling plan.)

## Thought for the day

This has been a hellish time for all sectors of society not least the Church of England. I was given advance warning of a heavily critical piece that will appear in the Spectator magazine this week, not from an opponent but a loyal churchgoing Anglican which is pretty scathing about our hierarchy and direction. Whether you share the misgivings either wholly or partially about our national leadership (ordinary parish priests come in for a lot of praise actually) the C of E nationally is apparently planning for a 20% reduction in congregations post-pandemic with a corresponding reduction in funds that will

doubtless have serious consequences nationwide. The author of the piece predicts the beginning of the end of the parish system as we know it. For myself, I do partially blame the wholesale retreat by so many churches from providing actual live worship and putting too much reliance on on-line resources (encouraged by the C of E nationally) at the expense of live worship as a serious mistake which I believe will come back to haunt us. Virtual worship and resources can and will supplement what we do but can never be a substitute. This was my thinking behind my decision to keep all our churches open as long as we were allowed to do so when everyone around us shut their doors. It is common enough now for me to encounter refugees from other denominations and other closed Anglican churches in each of our three churches on a regular basis nowadays so I hope and pray that this will aid us in our swift recovery from where we are. Christianity either matters or it doesn't and I believe that in keeping open we are demonstrating and proclaiming loud and clear that Christianity matters!

**The prayer for Today** is from a book by the Bishop of Norwich Graham Usher who also describes himself as an "ecologist". I was alerted to it at the induction ceremony of my sister -in-law to a group of parishes in North Norfolk recently. Bishop Graham wrote the book called "The way under our feet" and subtitled "A spirituality of walking". With our current practice of a long daily walk this immediately rang bells and we ordered it straight away. This prayer he quotes in the book is from South Africa.

**Walk tall, walk well, walk safe, walk free  
And my harm never come to thee.  
Walk wise, walk good, walk proud, walk true  
And may the sun always smile on you.  
Walk prayer, walk hope, walk faith, walk light  
And may peace always guide you right.  
Walk joy, walk brave, walk love, walk strong  
And may life always give you song.**

Love and peace,  
Martin

Please note my new email address is [vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk](mailto:vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk)