



South Wye Team Ministry Newsletter

25th February 2024

2nd Sunday of Lent

Hello Everyone, I hope that you are all keeping safe and well.

I'm conscious that I may have told this story before, but the Gospel reading for this Sunday brings a very vivid picture into my mind. The action takes place in 1977 or thereabouts and the scene is a primary school hall. The children of Kington County Primary School are sitting cross-legged on the wooden floor listening to our head teacher Mr Morgan. He is explaining to us all that if we are ever tempted to do something naughty we should say quietly, in our heads "get thee behind me Satan."

In hindsight, this seems like quite a strong response to the temptation to run in the corridors or bring cod-liver-oil capsules to school (strictly forbidden for some reason!) but whether it worked at the time or not, it clearly stuck in my mind. And I expect it also stuck in Peter's. After all, immediately before this passage, Peter has declared his recognition that Jesus is the Messiah. But as soon as Jesus starts to explain a little about what being the Messiah actually means, Peter is horrified. He wanted a Messiah – but not like *that*. Rejection and death? – that's not what Messiahs look like. And he takes Jesus to task. Jesus responds in kind – "get behind me Satan" is pretty strong stuff – but gives the reason. Peter is setting his mind on human things, not divine ones.

These days I rarely want to run in corridors, but the temptation to set my mind on human things, rather than divine ones, has not diminished. Human things like the busy-ness and distraction that can come between me and my prayers. Human things like the temptation to judge my neighbour's choices (my neighbour in a gospel sense) rather than to help as Jesus told me. Pulling my eyes and my aspirations up from what I want to do or have or be, taking the time to ask what God wants me to do or to have or to be.

And being prepared for God's plans to look nothing like my own. Peter knew who the Messiah was – he just didn't know what that really meant – he had a picture of a Messiah in his head and assumed that Jesus would just fit into that image, but Jesus knew otherwise. When I start to think that I know better than God does what God ought to be doing, or when I imagine that God couldn't do it without me – both of which are real risks for the clergyperson setting their sights on human things rather than the divine – then I need to hold on tight to the picture of that 1970s assembly. Putting those human temptations to limit God firmly behind me will leave room for the amazing, overwhelming and abundant love of God to sweep me along.

On this second Sunday in Lent, a reminder about the dangers of limiting our expectations of God might help us to deal with some of the other human temptations that we face. And to remember to leave our cod-liver-oil capsules at home!

With every blessing, Anne
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Family and Community News

PCC at St. Peter's Church, Bullinghope

25th February

Immediately after the 11.15am service.

Chill'n'Church Service

A service at St Martin's lead by our

Thursday night youth group

4pm Sunday 25th February

Everyone Welcome

Lent Group – Caring for Creation

Every Thursday at 11am in St. Martin's Church

All welcome.

Services at Belmont Community Centre

If you live in or near Belmont and find the journey to St Martin's difficult, or if Sunday mornings are not easy for you, you might like to join us for Friday Communion at Belmont Community Centre.

We celebrate a said service of Holy Communion at 12:30pm on the Second and Fourth Fridays of each month, following FoodShare. Everyone is very welcome to this service. The hall has level access and good ventilation – and if the weather is good we celebrate outside.

The next services at Belmont are: 12.30pm Holy Communion – 8th March, 22nd March

Toastie and Warm at St Martin's

On Tuesday afternoons the Narthex at St Martin's is a busy and welcoming space.

From 1pm there is a Bible Study group, all welcome – at the moment we are looking at Acts

From 2pm there is a coffee afternoon, full of conversations and information, with chocolate biscuits and, usually, home-made cakes.

Everyone is welcome to come along to any – or all – parts of the afternoon.

Catching up with friends – or making new ones!

Young at Heart - First Thursday of each month – Lunch at the Wye Inn or the Black Lion (contact the office so that we can book the table)

Third Thursday of each month at 2pm – Meeting in St. Martin's Church – talks, games, refreshments and friendship – everyone welcome!

BINGO - Thursday 21st March at 6pm in The Hereford Academy

Everyone welcome

Hereford Academy Prom Committee are holding a fundraising Bingo. Our goal is raise money to keep Prom ticket prices as low as possible to ensure that everyone can participate.

For our Prayers

Those who are ill or in need of your prayers, including:

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| James | Margaret | Joan | Paul | Sheila | Ann W | Brenda B | Sue Tom |
| Brooke | Margaret | Christina | Betty | Mandy | Hazel | Gholam | Hugo |

Those who have died and those who mourn their loss:

William.. Christine. Dorothy

Anglican Communion: Anglican Church of Tanzania

Hereford: Pray for the all that enables the care, conservation and creative use of our church buildings, as places of worship and fellowship, and as resources for each local community. Give thanks for all who continue to work to ensure our churches are safe spaces, and attractive and clean.

Porvoo: Finland: Turku, England: York,

South Wye: Pray for all those who volunteer in our churches and churchyards to clean and tidy them

The Wider View: Pray for our continued reflection on the experience of the Kirchentag in June, by those who were able to attend and participate from here and by our partners in Nuremberg. Pray for our reflection on the various conversations that have taken place, including between Bishops Richard and Elisabeth. Pray for the future development of our link with Nuremberg, including ways in which we can work alongside other cultural points of contact, organise visits, and involve young people.

Wednesday is kept as National School Governors Awareness Day. There are probably some 300,000 school governors and trustees supporting education in England alone, all giving time and skills on a voluntary basis. Pray especially for the governing bodies of our church schools.

Rare Disease Day is held this year on Thursday 29th, the rarest day of the year. This is a globally coordinated movement working towards equity in social opportunity, healthcare, and access to diagnosis and therapies for people living with a rare disease. Pray for all who are affected by the many different rare diseases, and for their assessment and treatment.

St David's Day on Friday prompts prayer for the Welsh churches and communities within our diocese, and for our neighbour dioceses within the Church in Wales. The following day commemorates Chad, the first bishop of Lichfield, another of our neighbouring dioceses.

Eating Disorders Awareness Week begins this week. About 1.25 million people in the UK, of all backgrounds, ages and gender, suffer from a range of eating disorders, with bulimia and anorexia nervosa perhaps the best known. Disordered eating behaviour usually has an emotional/mental origin, but can of course also have a very serious physical impact. Pray for all who suffer in this way, and also for their families and friends, as they try to cope and to help.

Self-injury and self-harm can be as difficult to interpret and understand as are eating disorders. Friday is an international awareness day on self-harm, which may affect some 15 million people worldwide, and often has quite complex origins, but is an attempt to reduce the impact of severe emotional distress or pain. Pray for understanding and help for all who self-harm.

The Marie Curie Nurses daffodil appeal also begins this week - pray for a generous response to help fund this important service of care, offered at times of greatest need.

Services on-site, online and on TV and Radio For the week beginning 25th February

South Wye Services Through the Week:

8pm Night Prayer from Common Worship – on St. Martin’s Facebook page (Lenten Compline every Wednesday during Lent)

Sunday

9:30am Holy Communion at St. Martin’s

11.15am Holy Communion at St. Peter’s

Thursday

10am Said Communion in St. Martin’s Lady Chapel

The 9.30am service will be streamed on St. Martin’s Facebook page and will be available on the St. Martin’s and the St. Peter’s Facebook pages and the St. Martin’s YouTube channel later in the day.

Diocese of Hereford

Diocese of Hereford Facebook: Sunday Service 10am.

Church of England

National Weekly Service Facebook at 9am.

TV and Radio on Sunday;

BBC H&W 8am Sunday Worship.

Radio 4 8.10am Sunday Worship- Love of Nation

BBC 1 1.15pm Songs of Praise- Aled’s Faith and Music

Prayer for the day:

The Church of England website has audio and text of the Prayer for the Day.

Prayer for the Nation

The Archbishops continue to invite all to call on God in Prayer. We invite you to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love. Find more details at churchengland.org/resources/prayer-nation

Collect for 2nd Sunday of Lent

Almighty God,

by the prayer and discipline of Lent

may we enter into the mystery of Christ’s sufferings,

and by following in his Way

come to share in his glory;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings for 2nd Sunday of Lent

Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ² And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' ³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴ 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

¹⁵ God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

Psalm 22: 23-end

²³ You who fear the LORD, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

²⁴ For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,
but heard when I cried to him.

²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.
May your hearts live for ever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.

²⁸ For dominion belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹ To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.

³⁰ Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,

³¹ and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

Romans 4: 13-end

¹³ For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶ For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' ²³ Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Mark 8: 31-end

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

Bible Study

Bible notes

The story of Abram-who-becomes-Abraham provides us with the origins of the people of God, the people of whom we, many centuries later, are a part. In Genesis 12, God calls Abram to leave his home, family and country to set out for a land 'that I will show you', with the promise of being made a great nation. Over the ensuing chapters Abram travels and adventures at God's direction, and the promise is clarified: Abram, who is both elderly and currently childless, will have descendants as numerous as the stars. Today's reading from chapter 17 concentrates the promise into a covenant, a formal agreement between God and Abram, with responsibilities on either side. Abram is to follow God – this is his side of the covenant. In response, God will give Abram many descendants. Unlike the covenant made with Noah (see last week), this covenant entails both relationship and choice.

God then expands on this covenant: Abram's descendants will include nations and kings, and they will be given land (v.8). As a sign of this covenant Abram and his household and descendants must be circumcised (vv.9-14) – a common practice, given a new significance. For future generations, performing circumcision at eight days old makes clear that the child has done nothing to earn their place in the covenant, it is all down to God. This is grace.

The changing of names, from Abram ('exalted ancestor') to Abraham ('father of a multitude'), and from Sarai ('quarrelsome') to Sarah ('princess'), is a demonstration of trust. Names, back then, said something about their owners. These name changes are not because of what God has done; they are in anticipation of it. We may not know how God's promises will be kept, but there is a call to choose to believe them nonetheless.

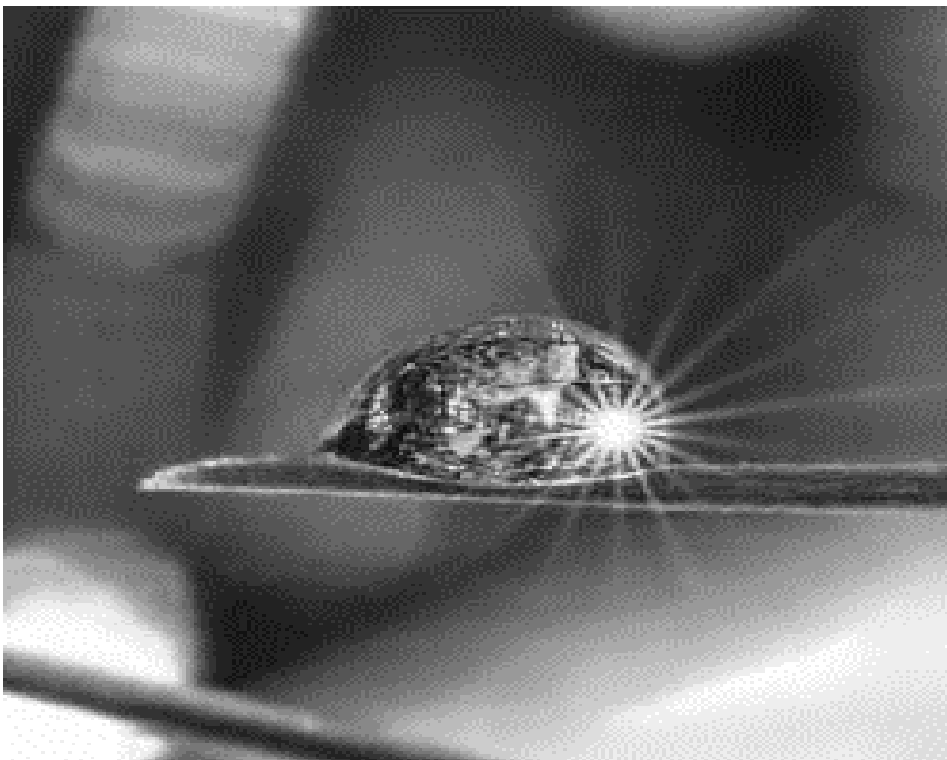
Reflection *Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading.*

In the film *Dead Poet's Society*, the actor and comedian Robin Williams plays the inspirational (and real) English teacher, John Keating, who uses unorthodox teaching methods in a boy's boarding school. He gets the students to stand on their desks to demonstrate a way to look at things differently. He gets them to rip out prescriptive introductions in poetry books to discover their own ways to appreciate. The strict headmaster ends up getting rid of Keating. The creativity of the boys is

repressed. The film ends with the boys defiantly standing on their desks to honour their departing teacher. How does Jesus teach us to look at life differently and from God's perspective? How can we find a different place to stand to see things differently?

Questions for reflection

- What do you think this is?
- How do we respond to seeing things we don't quite understand?
- How can we trust God, when we do not fully understand God's ways?



Sudoku (Easier!)

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Wordsearch based on Romans 4: 13

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PROMISE
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ADHERENTS
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