

Facebook Thoughts for the Day –August 2020

1st August – Deacon Jen Woodfin

2 weeks ago, I tripped over a pavement. I got up quickly and thought “Oh good, I haven’t hurt myself too much”. A few hours later, with the pain increasing, and after a visit to A&E, I realised that my initial assessment had been optimistic! I was told that I had broken a small bone at the base of my right hand and the splint over my wrist was inevitable. The image on the x-ray showed how small a bone is involved but, nevertheless, what a difference it makes to me now.

During last week’s telephone service (now on You Tube) Rev Cliff spoke about the power for good of small actions and thoughts, especially when we all bring them together to God. As I sat listening, nursing my wrist, I thought that small things can also have big effects and can hurt. We must strive to do good, possibly in small ways. But we must also be careful of small things that can hurt. A casual thoughtless comment, a moment’s selfish action, wasting natural resources, can have big consequences. I, personally am going try to learn from this experience and be a little more careful with my words and actions.



3rd August – Rev Jacqui Horton

In August, we won't necessarily have a 'Thought for the Day' every morning - it depends on the supply! However, towards the end of the day, we WILL have a prayer topic that has gone round a 'telephone prayer wheel' during the day. The Central Norfolk Circuit is having a Month of Prayer from today until September 5th, praying for our world, for the continuing fight against covid-19, for our circuit churches as they make decisions about re-opening.

6th August – Rev Rosemary Wakelin

I miss the weekly routine of ministerial life! Prayerfully read the lectionary on Monday, let it mature on Tuesday and Wednesday when you can start choosing the hymns etc. etc. So I felt deprived at not having a service when the Gospel Reading was Matthew’s version of Jesus walking on the water. So I will make a point I might have made for a Thought instead. Jesus’s walking on the water seems to have been a one off. We don’t hear of other Christians making a habit of it even when, as Paul was, in a dangerous situation on the sea. The disciples had set off to cross the lake leaving Jesus to have the time with his Father that had got interrupted by having to feed rather a lot of people. They had run into heavy waters and a contrary wind and had made little progress. Jesus catches up with them, as though to pass them, walking on the water. Not unnaturally they were terrified. We live on an island and are used to the sea, but it seems to 1st century Jews the sea was seen as alien, dangerous, chaotic, and it is dark, around 4 in the morning. I’m not really bothered about the mechanics of what happened, but I love the meaning ! We are living in frightening, chaotic times, it can seem very dark and threatening. In the story Jesus takes the stuff of chaos, fear and dread and makes a path on which he safely walks. Peter has a go, but is overwhelmed by what’s going on and takes his eyes off Jesus and has to be rescued. I think this story is for us now. I’ll leave you to work out why!

7th August – **Sam Parfitt**

Four days after lockdown was lifted, I went for a walk with my daughter, fell over into the road and severely sprained my ankle and sustained a small avulsion fracture, putting me into an orthopaedic 'walking boot' for three weeks. This effectively extended my lockdown period as I have been unable to drive or walk long distances. Wearing the boot also meant that everything has just taken that little bit longer, my morning routine went from 20 minutes to an hour and getting into the bath was a process worthy of an Olympian Gymnast! So, it was a time of enforced slowing down, which at times been very difficult! It gave me cause to reflect on one of my favourite Bible verses from Ecclesiasticus 2:4-5 'in times of humiliation be patient, for gold is tested in the fire'. Although I haven't always felt humiliated during this time, I have found it testing, and it's good to remember that there will be testing times in life, and that something new can emerge from them. It has been a time of doing things differently, one of those being a new routine of having a morning coffee in the garden with the dog, which has been a great time to pause and reflect. It has also been a wonderful opportunity to practice having patience with myself, which is something I often run short of!



8th August – **Rev Jacqui Horton**



Thursday was the 75th anniversary of the dropping of a nuclear bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Tomorrow will be 75 years since a similar bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. To mark this, the group of international figures known as 'The Elders' have asked people to make an origami peace crane and put it on social media. Here is mine which I have shared on Twitter with the hashtag [#PeaceCrane2020](#). To make your own crane and to read the story of how these origami birds came to represent peace out of the tragedy of Hiroshima go to www.theelders.org.

10th August – **Rev Barbara Winner**

This house is the first new house I have ever lived in (not so new now of course!). This meant a garden which was just a patch of lumpy earth! Help! Some of you will remember Anthony Morris a Local Preacher in the three of the Circuits Watton has been part of in recent years. One day Anthony arrived on his cycle with a paper bag of his home grown hollyhock seeds. Every year I have a wonderful display of Anthony's hollyhocks. It is good to remember him and some of his services. In the garden there is also a rose given by Gt Ellingham and a shrub which had a label on it saying Eric. I bought it among other plants from Saham and always thought it was called Eric until Gwyneth pointed out that it was in fact one of the plants from Eric's garden. Eric used to be the Treasurer and very good at teasing me at Church Councils! I also have plants acquired from various people in Watton – Elsie and Barbara among them. And then there is John's Nannas buttercup plant which I take great care of and his Dad's mint in the old enamel bowl! I am not much of a gardener (I can chop things down quite well!) but when I sit in the garden it's good to remember all these people who are linked to those plants which do seem to survive in spite of my lack of green fingers!



12th August 2020 – **Rev Liz Jolly**

'The Old Couple'

The dog and her companion have been together now for several years, they understand each other. They have their own way of communicating, and in that communication they know what the other is thinking. They don't always agree and sometimes one of them has to be firm with the other in order to get the point



across, but through it all, they love each other. The actor Wendy Craig, discovered prayer and the need to talk to God when her old dog died. She realised that on their walks she had been talking to the dog, and now she needed to talk to God. Some people feel the need to communicate with God, and they might call it prayer, just as much as the old dog needs to communicate with her companion. Understanding and love are part of the companionship, and it gives a wholeness to the relationship. It does not switch on or off, it is part of the bond that is a constant part of life. Do you think dogs pray?

14th August 2020 – **Dee Moden**

There are many instances all through the Bible of people called to do things meaning leaving the 'old' and starting the 'new.' Some went reluctantly, some weren't sure, some went willingly and, some were forced by circumstances! Nothing changes! Jesus had three wonderful years with his disciples, he was preparing them for when he would be no longer with them, even though they didn't realise it at the time. After his death he didn't want them to be so distraught, only looking back at what had been, but to move on. Yes, looking back for guidance and reference from Christ's teaching, but also looking forward, delighting in having known Jesus and being part of his plan for the future. We are now starting to 'move on' albeit not in quite the same way as before, but moving forward and learning from this experience, not dwelling on how bad it has been, and it has been for many, but looking at the good things that have come out of this and have been achieved, what we have learned from one another, and what we can put into practise to make a better future. We all have different ways of coping with change but Jesus promised those first disciples and us today, to send his Holy Spirit to guide us, we are not alone!

15th August 2020 – **Deacon Jen Woodfin**

As the Circuit prayer wheels have progressed there has been the opportunity for people across the circuit to chat to the same person for 3 or 4 consecutive days. This means that, on one level, you get to know somebody a little bit. But, of course, you don't know what they look like. So, does that mean you can't really know them? Maybe. Equally there has been much research done stating that we make a judgement about people within 15 seconds purely based on what they look like. It is as though, also on one level, we think we know that person just by their visual appearance.

We know many people in many different ways and yet it is God that knows us completely. He knows our outward appearance, what we show to the world. He also knows the world inside ourselves, even more than we know ourselves. In that knowing He loves us through and through for today, tomorrow and forever. It is not too late to join the prayer wheels, passing on prayer themes and chatting to others across the circuit. Just let me know and I'll slot you in.

17th August 2020 – **Judith Semmons**

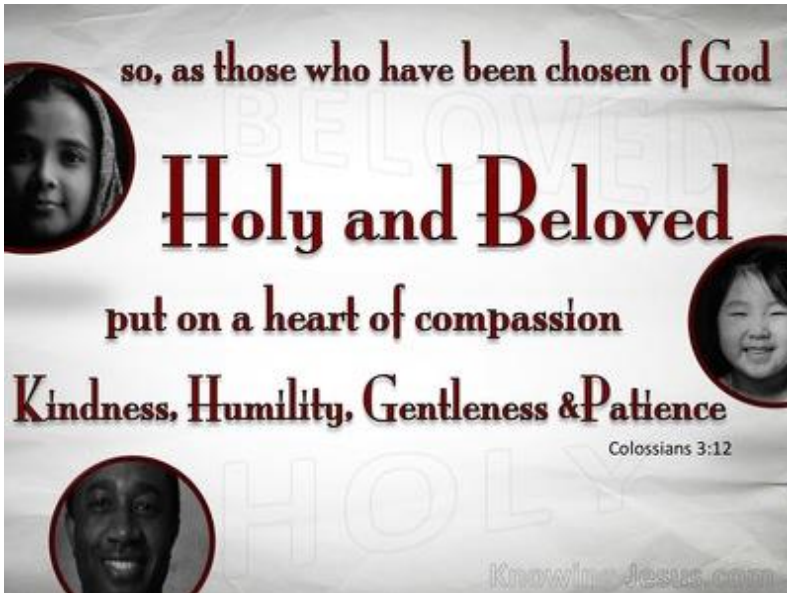
'Different Pathways'

There is a stream running through the centre of Scarning Water Meadows. At one end the children often re-arrange the stones to create different paths to get across the stream and on occasions to create a deeper area by building a dam. On crossing the stream earlier today I had the choice of one path which was a bit tricky, creating a greater challenge. Or I could choose a wider and more straightforward path. Our lives are full of various paths; some more challenging than others and sometimes we might feel as if we are in deep water.

There is the well-known poem – 'Footprints', where the man looks back on his life, observing two sets of footprints on the sand, recognising that God is with him. But when he sees only one set of footprints, (which seems to occur when his life is challenging, he is troubled and cries out to God: 'How could you leave me when things get tough?' And God replied: ***'My precious, precious child, I would never leave you. When you see only one set of footprints, it is then that I carried you.'***



19th August 2020 – **Sam Parfitt**



Being lumbered with an orthopaedic boot for three weeks taught me many things, one of them was how uneven the pavements where I live are! It wasn't until I had to walk them with my foot fixed in position that I appreciated how difficult they must be for some people to navigate on a daily basis, they are uneven and some of them slope at the same time, making walking on them quite challenging and a little unnerving, the fear of falling was never too far from my mind. Thankfully, I can now walk without the boot and tackle pavements with confidence as I did before, but this time I have a newfound empathy for those who climb a mountain just for a pint of milk!

The experience reminds me of Colossians 3:12 'So, as those who have been chosen of God,

holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience' Although I always try and wear this heart every day, I have been reminded that sometimes we don't realise who needs it most until we have spent at least a little time wearing their shoes.

21st August – **Rev Graham Pickhaver**

One day's enough!

Calendars and diaries for 2020 are already in the shops. Perhaps you don't need one as you are digitally geared up! We have to plan for coming weeks and months as it's a sensible thing to do. But things can change; in fact even life itself could be taken from us. So everything is subject to what James says, 'if it is the Lord's will' (James 4:15) or as some Christians write or say.

In part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) Jesus talks about everyday life and how we can so easily worry about even the most simplest of things. He mentions food, what to wear and even how long we shall live! And one antidote to anxiety and worry is for us to think about one day at a time because as Jesus says, 'each day has enough trouble of its own!' This doesn't mean that we are to ignore the future for Jesus speaks a lot about heaven in the Sermon, but for us to just think of today!

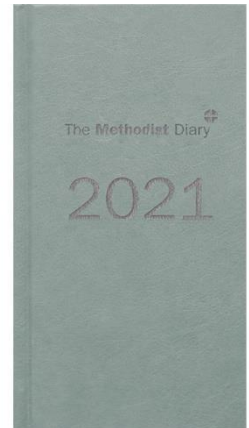
Take a day in your diary or calendar. That's enough for you to cope with today! It's like the daily portion of manna in the desert journey (except for Fridays of course when two portions were to be gathered).

But what about today? You might have a blank space but you will no doubt think of things to do or somewhere to go. It might be very full with various jobs, or visitors and appointments.

But whatever you have Jesus says that is enough for you to think about for one day.

A person trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ has a distinct advantage over the person who does not, though we hope that many will come to find the Saviour. That difference is that our heavenly father knows exactly what we have need of. We needed saving – He sent His son to do that; we have particular needs perhaps of health, uncertainties, and concerns – He always gives sufficient grace for that need.

Do you know why we should take one day at a time? He knows what we can cope with and as we trust Him we will always find each day is enough to cope with because to see us through Jesus gives more than enough just for today!



22nd August – **Deacon Jen Woodfin**

BATMAN, DARTH VADER, DENTIST, GLADIATOR,
NURSE, PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, SPIDER MAN,
SURGEON, THE LONE RANGER AND ZORRO.

What do all these have in common? Well they were part of a puzzle that included a list of 'mask-wearers'. When I found this puzzle in a book I assumed it was an indirect reference to our situation now, where we are all having to become 'mask-wearers'. But no! I assumed too much. The book had been at the back of a drawer and when I checked the publication date I saw that it had printed in the summer of 2019. I had put my own interpretation onto this list because of my own immediate experience and context.

Perhaps we are in danger of doing that when we read the bible. According to one particular day, at one particular time, we will interpret a bible passage in one way which can be quite different from on another day. That can be a good thing, so that we receive assurance, for instance. It cannot be so good when we miss what a passage is really saying to us in the context of the time it was written. The trick is to recognise our own context and explore the original context and then discover what both are saying to us.

24th August – **Rev Rosemary Wakelin**

I remember the time when I stopped telling God what to do. Prayers can so easily become a sort of wish list - please make my friend better, please help me pass this exam, please find me a parking space please, please, please! May be what we want is a fairy god-mother. Way back in the 70s we went through a very dark period. After our time in Africa we had settled in Reedham in general practice, the children were in good schools, I was teaching, life seemed good. However, my husband's health was causing anxiety. He had several mini strokes and the prognosis was not good. My daughter, about to enter the 6th form with excellent O levels, had glandular fever. From this she developed some strange illness that lasted nearly 6 years. We were told to forget we had a daughter, she was going to be little more than a vegetable. At the same time my husband's health deteriorated and it became obvious he would be unable to work. What do you pray for? I wanted our life back, but this wasn't going to happen. So, my prayers changed. They became more conversations. God knew the whole scenario anyway, he knew how frightened I was. There would be no quick answers. At the time I was working fairly regularly for the BBC World Service. I told my producer that I ought to withdraw as I had too much to contend with. Instead he said write it into your broadcasts. I did. Strange thoughtful talks that got reactions from listeners. It helped me to let go the struggle to control and to hold everything in God's love accepting that he knew a great deal better than I did. There were many angels around in family, friends, doctors - my husband died in my arms in 1979. My daughter was at last on the mend and became eventually the dynamic bundle of energy that keeps me going today. So, I still refrain from giving God instructions but hold each situation in his love and ask for strength and courage to keep close.

25th August – **Rev Barbara Winner**

This is one of the Easter eggs which was kept back from sharing because of 'lock down!' The chocolate does have a 'sell by' date. I give thanks that the message and experience of Easter does not – it is eternal! No lock down can limit that!



27th August – **Rev Liz Jolly**

Colours



Have you ever wondered what God was thinking when she made butterflies and birds? Did she sit there with her sketch book and painting set and thought "I'll just put a touch of red on the goldfinch and I'll give a wiggly edge to the wings of the comma". As for the moths in all their magnificence hidden away at night. Did God want to keep their beauty a secret?

Then, did God think to herself, if I put humankind in among these lovely creatures will they mess it up? But I'll remind them to be stewards of my creation. (Genesis 2 ¹⁵)

(This, and all the other photos Liz has used in her 'Thoughts' are taken by Sarah Darnell -www.sarahdarnell.photography).

28th August – **Dee Moden**

Looking Back – Moving On

There are many instances all through the Bible of people called to do things meaning leaving the 'old' and starting the 'new.' Some went reluctantly, some weren't sure, some went willingly and, some were forced by circumstances! Nothing changes!

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31st August – **Judith Semmons**

The other week I returned from a dog walk and advised my husband that there were quite a few blackberries to be picked. Ian loves blackberry picking and even more so, the thought of an apple and blackberry crumble! So a couple of days later we headed off and arrived at the said crop. I looked with delight at the mass of black amongst the green whereas Ian's response was: "Is that it?"

Perceptions can be very different: only a week or so earlier, I had observed the same bushes with our granddaughter who took great delight in picking just a few blackberries that had ripened whereas Ian was picturing a wonderful crop similar to that at Wendling from previous years.

The story goes of a rather dishevelled looking man who turned up at a church and started walking to the front to get a seat. He was hastily advised to sit at the back, almost as if he wasn't welcome there.

The man returned on a couple of subsequent Sundays despite not being made welcome and he was always advised to sit at the back. On his final Sunday there, he listened to their worship and praise, wondering how much meaning there was to it. And he listened with interest as they talked with enthusiasm about meeting their new minister in about a month's time. Suddenly he strode to the front, took off his overcoat and scarf, revealing a preaching gown and collar underneath. 'Thank you for the welcome you've given me over the past few weeks! I am your new minister. I've been coming along to see how you respond to those outside this church; the perceptions that you have of yourselves and others.'



In Matthew 25 v 31-40, Jesus said: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."