

Facebook Posts – February 2022

1st February – Rev Jacqui Horton



It's February 1st which is a relief. A relief because I have challenged myself to send a letter every day in 2022 (not Sundays) and I have managed it throughout January! I have been telling people in the churches (in the section for which I am responsible), during Covenant service sermons, that I have wanted to do something significant in respect of the Climate Crisis and Climate Change and so this is all the more reason to keep the letters going. I have written to family, friends, shops, large organisations, politicians, local groups. Not many replies yet (I wasn't expecting many!) but two or three interesting ones including a handwritten note from David Attenborough. The main challenge - apart from making the time each day - is to think of enough people to write to. Let me know if you have any suggestions!

2nd February – Sam Parfitt

Enjoying a blustery and solitary walk along Walcott beach recently, I was struck that although there was only me on the beach, I could see lots of footprints where others had been before me. They reminded me of the Footprints poem, in which a man has a dream about walking on a beach with the Lord, leaving two sets of footprints behind them as they walk. At the end of his life the man looks back and notices that at the very lowest and saddest points of his life, there were only one set of footprints. He is saddened by the thought that despite his promises to be with him always, the Lord must have left him. He challenges the Lord about this, who replies that he never left the man and the times when the man could only see one set of footprints was when the Lord was carrying him. All of the footprints on the beach at Walcott were different; some were big boot prints, some were little paw prints and some were footprints of seagulls. I think that when we are carried by the Lord, we are carried in a variety of ways, by all of Creation. Some ways may surprise us and the footprints may not look like the ones we expected to see, but carry us the Lord will always.



3rd February – Rev Cliff Shanganya

The Weakness of Violence



“Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will die by the sword. Matthew 26:52

“London Is Burning.” That was one of the headlines during the violent August 2011 protests in England’s capital city. The uproar began when police shot and killed a twenty-six-year-old man. In response, rioters created mayhem across London and other British cities, killing

at least five people and injuring others. Whether the violence was a result of simple thuggery or social inequalities is a matter of debate. But what most people would not debate is that violence is no way to solve the problem.

Martin Luther King Jr. once elegantly explained why, pointing out that “the ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy . . . adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”

When I was a teenager, I was so frustrated by a family member's drinking problem that I was tempted to make a public spectacle of my anger, taking every last bottle of alcohol in the house and dumping the whole mess into the street. Maybe a heap of broken glass would finally make the point. Years later, after I had moved away from home and given my life to Christ, I realised that all my critical, argumentative comments had only added more darkness to the situation. So I resolved, instead, to do my best to love the person, pray faithfully, and speak the truth, but only when absolutely necessary. A few years passed and then, through an act of tremendous grace, the person I loved stopped drinking. That was more than twenty years ago.

Most of us aren't guilty of taking our anger to the streets. But what happens in our homes when ugly arguments and critical attitudes do violence to the spirit? Let's remember that hate is nothing but a ninety-pound weakling, too weak to win a fight with itself. Just as light is the only thing that can drive out darkness, the only thing strong enough to drive out hatred is God's love.

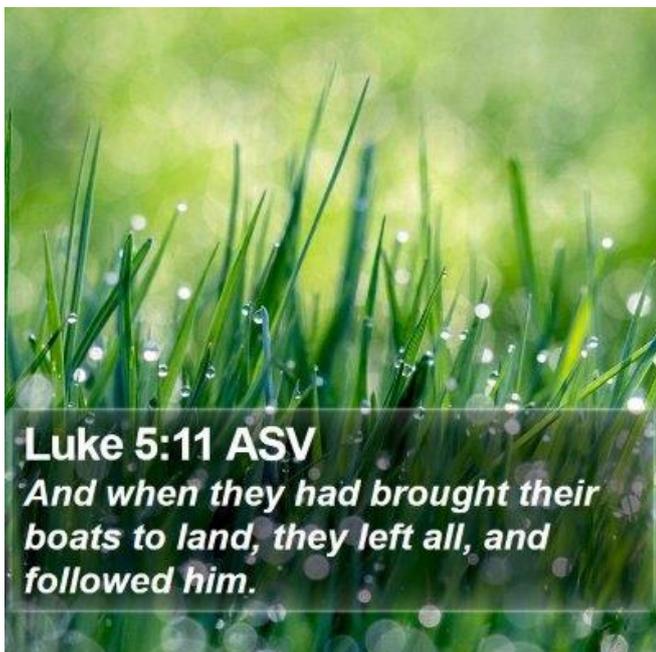
Let us pray 🙏

Lord, you know how easy it is to get hooked into negative attitudes and arguments at home, in Church, at work places, in parliament and in United Nations meetings. Please help us to find better ways of dealing with our difficulties. Amen.

4th February



7th February



8th February – Deacon Jen Woodfin

Recently I have been involved in planning the Sabbatical which I will have later this year (more of that in a later 'Thought for the day'). The process of doing this planning has made me remember the focus I had during my first Sabbatical seven years ago which included reflections on photos. During my next few 'Thoughts' I thought I would share some of those photos and reflections as a link to this year's Sabbatical.

In 2015 I did not have many definite plans for the three months of my Sabbatical. However, I created a pattern of taking photos each day and reflecting on one of them using either a line from the bible or from a hymn. This helped me have a real sense of the three months being a special and holy time.

The first picture I am going to show you now was taken in Guernsey when we were on holiday in the middle of the Sabbatical. In St Peter Port there is a department store with a café on the third floor with an amazing view over the harbour. This seagull walked along the windowsill and blotted out the view. It even hid the sight of a very large cruise liner. My reflection was that my perspective was changed, I couldn't see the full scene. We often get caught up in our own limited perspective and so blot out God's view, His vision. So, the line from a hymn I chose to go with the picture was 'Be thou my vision'.

What would you choose to go with this picture?



9th February – Sam Parfitt



I have always been fascinated and surprised how smell can be connected to our memories. The smell of suncream reminds me of childhood holidays on the beach, the smell of engine oil reminds me of my dad and the smell of freesias reminds me of my wedding day. Another smell is that of a recently extinguished candle, which always reminds me of prayer. I think that this stems from my childhood

experiences in the Anglo-catholic tradition because I can remember lots of big candles and also the smell of the incense that was burnt with its strong, pungent aroma. Someone once told me that when a candle is extinguished watching the smoke is like watching our prayers go to heaven and I rather like the analogy that when something is finished it returns to the love of God. I wonder what smells remind you of something special and where in those memories you encounter something of God?

10th February – Rev Anne Richardson

Treacherous underfoot or beautiful?

What's your view of frost?

Often on cold winter mornings, the car windows have been iced over. Paths have been a bit slippery. Nothing too bad, but enough to remind me it's still winter.

Once the sun comes up and the sky is blue, I love to see the frosty leaves sparkling. Driving by, the fields look so pretty. For people like me, frost and ice is something to admire, even to rejoice in. Part of God's handiwork? But how about for people who work on the land? People who don't have warm homes? On other days, there is a soggy grey sky, where every thing looks lifeless and forlorn. Maybe some folks appreciate these days more than I do.

Everything is a matter of perspective.

Does your faith change your perspective? Can you look back and see how your attitudes and values have developed along with your growth in faith? Like Paul explains in 2 Corinthians 4:16 – inwardly we are being renewed day by day. V18 - so we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what it unseen.



11th February



14th February



15th February – Rev Jacqui Horton

Deacon Jen is beginning to receive photos for our Spring virtual 'Open Gardens'. If your garden looks good in the period February - April, then send Jen a photo or two - we will be beginning an album for them on our Circuit website. This photo is of the Blakeney Community Garden created last year. It is the Pilgrim Church (Blakeney & Walsingham) Church Council today and we will be thinking about the programme for the year in both villages. If you have time, spare us a thought and a prayer!



16th February – Rev Rosemary Wakelin

The Right Way Up?

I've heard people say (and there is even a hymn) that says Jesus came to turn the world up side down. Did he? Or did he come to turn it the right way up again? When God created the world did he really get it all wrong? When he thought up the idea of making a family of human beings did he design them hopelessly flawed! It seems to me the world is brilliantly made, and when allowed to do its own thing, without human destructive interference, it works wonderfully and shouts the story of life, death and resurrection all the time. In fact if we take the trouble to look it is full of theology. So what about us? It depends what we think God was looking for. It would be easy for the All Powerful to make servile slaves, or puppets with no choices. But it seems those options were not on the agenda, rather God appears to be wanting a family, sons and daughters with real choices, to join in the family business of making a community informed by the Love that God is, but with the option of opting out.

Neither does he force his presence on us. We can be in loving relationship with God and one another or not. And that's where Jesus comes in. The plan had been in place from the beginning, and when time had shown that the human desire to be in control and to replace relationship with ritual, Jesus came to get things the right way up again. It's all in the Gospels! Image: ministry127.com



17th February – Rev Cliff Shanganya

Honouring through Listening

Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honouring each other.

Romans 12:10

We are all busy. Often, too busy to listen. And yet, listening is the only way we will ever come to understand our spouse's thoughts and feelings. Listening takes time and requires focus. Many people pride themselves in being able to listen while reading e-mails or watching television, but I question if that's really listening.



One husband said, "My wife insists that I sit down and listen to her. I feel like I'm in a straitjacket, like I'm wasting time."

In Romans 12, Paul tells us to "take delight in honouring each other." One way to honour someone is to listen intently and to give him or her our full attention. It's a question of respect.

When we drop everything, look at someone, and listen, we communicate, "You are the most important person in my life."

On the other hand, when we try to listen while doing other things, we communicate, "You are just one of my many interests." Listening is a powerful expression of love.

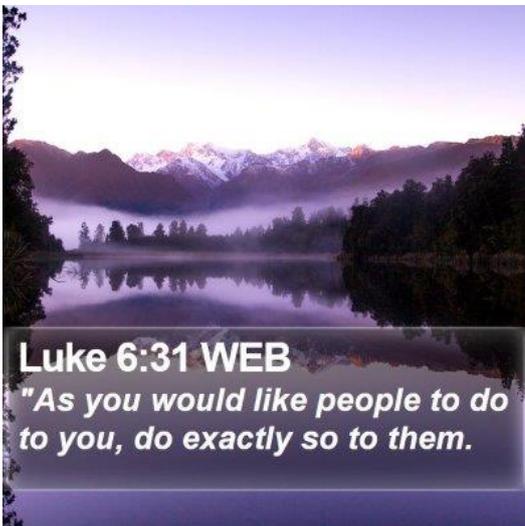
Let us pray 🙏

Father, we want to honour everyone by being good listeners. Help us to be willing to focus our full attention on others so we can really understand the words being said. Amen 🙏.

18th February



21st February

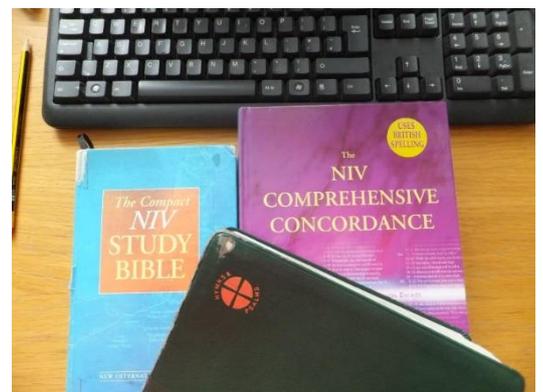


22nd February – Deacon Jen Woodfin

A second Thought for the Day based on my previous Sabbatical reflections (see Feb 8th):

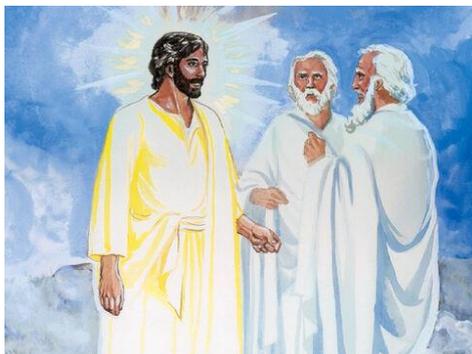
My second photo in this series of photos (taken during my last Sabbatical in 2015) is of some books that were in my study. I had had a strangely busy week where I had begun to feel quite stressed with how busy I was. It should not have been a stressful time, without imposed deadlines etc, but, somehow, we get caught up in becoming busy. It is as though we are thinking it will make a more worthwhile focus to our lives. There are times when busyness comes on us without us being so aware of it and this can be difficult to deal with.

On this occasion I was tempted to skimp on writing a reflection for the day. But I made myself do it and, the more I put into it, and engaged properly, the more at peace I began to feel. I found that the stresses of the day didn't float away but, rather, I could see them in a better proportion. The verse I chose for this photo was from Psalm 46. The beginning of the Psalm tells 'waters roar and foam and the mountains quake'. But then through all the noise of that happening, verse 10 says 'Be still and know that I am God'. I realised that to give time to being with God wasn't an 'optional extra' to be squeezed into a busy day. It is an essential element of the day where we, once again, renew our batteries, re-adjust our perceptions, and follow more in the path that God wants for us. We must be still in our hearts and minds for us to feel closer to God and to know that he is God and in control.



23rd February – Rev Rosemary Wakelin

I love this strange, beautiful story of the Transfiguration. Jesus has been proclaiming his radical Kingdom message for some time, and people have been responding in large numbers. He has a following of ordinary people eager to hear more, but he is well aware that the religious hierarchy are infuriated, as he is challenging their power and control and rigid understanding of the Law. Jesus is aware that things are coming to a head. He has to make a decision. Does he continue with his mission, soften it down a bit or maybe withdraw for a time and let things quieten down? So he does what he's done before, retires to a quiet mountain place to be close to his Heavenly Father. He takes his three closest disciples with him, and this amazing thing happens. They find themselves in the company of Moses and Elijah, the two most iconic



heroes of Israel's history, discussing the pathway that Jesus must take to fulfil his mission and the very voice of God ratifying the decision. What really happens in these amazing moments when people have this sort of experience? Because it's not just Jesus. There are other Biblical characters, and plenty of evidence for them down the years and they continue today. Is it that when in desperate need of guidance, and seeking God's help, for a few wonderful moments we can have a glimpse of another world, or is it that for a blessed few moments we can actually enter that holy space? Perhaps heaven isn't "up there" but alongside all the time, and sometimes when needed we can tip into it.

24th February – Rev Anne Richardson

I was driving back home on Sunday night. The storms had brought trees down and there were branches and debris on the road. Driving on unlit roads felt rather risky! So, naturally, I was driving with full due care and attention! My headlights were on full and I made slow but steady progress. Turning into another road, I could see a vehicle ahead. Wow! This made it so much easier! I knew the road was clear, even if I couldn't actually see it, because the vehicle in front had passed safely. I felt more relaxed and relieved, so that I was following in peace! When I got to the junction, I could see that this vehicle was a Tesco delivery van. The strap-line said – 'delivered fresh to your door' - which I felt I had been!

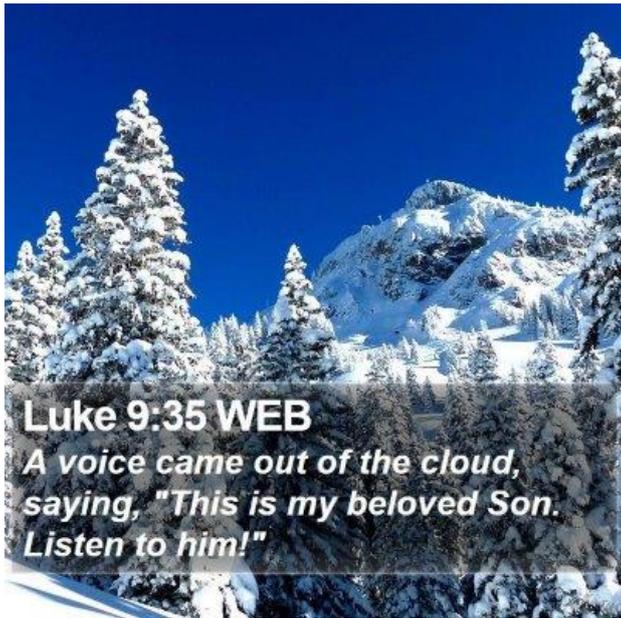


All of this brought these verses to mind: "...Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." Hebrews 1b-2a. Jesus has gone before us! Thanks be to God!

25th February



28th February



Luke 9:35 WEB

*A voice came out of the cloud,
saying, "This is my beloved Son.
Listen to him!"*