



Dear Friends;

Autumn always seems to be the hardest season as a minister: September sees the start of the new year, with all the busyness that entails: circuit meetings and church councils and the like. Pity the poor probationary minister arriving in their first circuit, or the newly arrived superintendent minister seeking to discover all about his new role and new situation, both being thrown in at the deep end, resurfacing sometime about now, to face the slide into Christmas. It is a hard slog, no wonder October half term is the holiday almost every minister takes. In this, I find, it is very easy to be so focussed on all that needs doing, I forget about everything else that is happening. As I come to the end of that time, I raise my head and see the beauty of the world in the colours of autumn all around me. I also see the world news and see the ugliness of the world in the arguments, fighting, wars and killing in so many places.

There is a tendency in all of us to see the things we want to see, and ignore other stuff. Those of you who have undertaken the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion course (EDI) will have learnt about bias, both conscious and unconscious. Those of you who haven't, but need to do the course, will have an opportunity before Christmas (hopefully). This course seemed to me to be just another hoop to jump through, but it turned out to be a real learning experience. Others, who took the course have said the same. In the Ryedale circuit, we are hardly the most diverse of people, and yet we are all different, with differing backgrounds and differing needs, all of which need to be taken into account in all kinds of ways: in church building reviews, in worship preparation to name but two. EDI is about seeing the gospel of Jesus in action, for Jesus welcomed all who came to him, without reserve, turning no-one away, and seeing the need in each person. If we want to be like Jesus, our attitude must be the same. If a formal course can help us better understand this, why would we not take it?

There was a story set in South Africa in the apartheid era. A lady was sitting outside a church weeping. Jesus came to her and asked why she was crying. "I want to worship you, but they won't let me in" the lady sobbed. Jesus nodded thoughtfully. I know how you feel he said, I've been trying to get in here for years myself.

Blessings to you all. **Revd Graham**

A Prayer for Peace

Creator God

**Today in a fractured world
we pray for peace and
justice,**

**Your peace, not built on
our broken promises and
failing courage,**

**But your deep peace,
through your creative
power and embodied in
the service and sacrifice
of Jesus.**

**May we follow Christ,
seeking your justice,
acting in solidarity and
hope,**

**Even when the way seems
unclear and the powers of
our world don't reflect
your Kingdom,**

**Your Peace, Your Justice,
Your Kingdom, Your world,**

**In Jesus name
Amen.**



Lectionary Reflections... *from Revd Penny Worth*

3 November – Mark 12.28-34

The scribe asks Jesus which is the most important commandment. Jesus' reply is a quote from Deuteronomy 6.4-5, about God being one and the requirement to love him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. The most striking thing about this passage for me, is that the scribe asks for one commandment and Jesus gives him two. He adds a second, "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (a quote from Leviticus 19.18); it's almost as if Jesus can't bear to give the one without the other. Perhaps he is suggesting that any professed love for God is utterly hollow unless it is accompanied by action in the form of caring for others – an idea that appears in numerous places in the bible. But how demanding these commandments are! We are to love God with the whole of our being, and we are to love others as much as we love ourselves. In other words, we are to devote as much concern, time and care to the needs of others as we do to our own needs. It's a good job that God never gives up on us! We need him to be endlessly patient and endlessly forgiving as we work on these two commandments.



10 November – Mark 12.38-44

Although this week's passage is divided into two parts by headings in our bibles, these two short pieces clearly belong together. Jesus is contrasting the hypocrisy of the scribes, who do everything for show, with the genuine devotion of the poor widow, who probably got very little respect from the society she lived in. It's no different today, those of us who can afford to give more can easily feel smug about what we feel are generous donations, but if they don't cost us any hardship, what are they worth?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation;

Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor. (HP 123)

If this woman gives all that she has, then that is stunning generosity – loving others even more than she loves herself (see above). The example Jesus gives us this week is every bit as intimidating as the commandments last week. Once again, we are thrown back on God's love, understanding, forgiveness and patience.



REMEMBRANCE 2024 The Revd Bill Gates (Royal Navy chaplain)



In 2006 and 2008 I was serving with 45 Commando and I was part of two six-month tours of Afghanistan. In the first tour we lost six colleagues; in the second tour we lost nine, as well as countless others who suffered life-changing injuries.

Wherever we went in Afghanistan, poppies seemed to be growing or being harvested. We were out there providing security, making a difference, standing up for those who couldn't stand up for themselves. But at a cost; it's a cost I will never forget. I will never forget the smell of the dust – very different from anything else I've ever smelled. The darkness, the silence at night. The impending thud, the impact of an IED (an improvised explosive device) that had gone off and knowing that somewhere, something or someone had been blown up.

One of the things I like about working with the Royal Marines in Plymouth is that very often there are people of all ranks coming up here, just to sit in the memorial garden, remembering.

We have memorials at different times all through the year – because we don't forget. We remember those who lost their lives and we try to reach out and support the friends and families.

Remembrance is quite hard to put into words. Certainly the key part for me is that moment's silence. The hairs on the back of my neck stand up at the Last Post and the Reveille. At the going down and the rising again, we will remember them.

From the Methodist Church resources for Remembrance Day

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/resources/seasons-and-themes/special-sundays/remembrance-sunday/>

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/resources/posts/hymns-and-war-conflicting-views/>

17 November – Mark 13.1-8

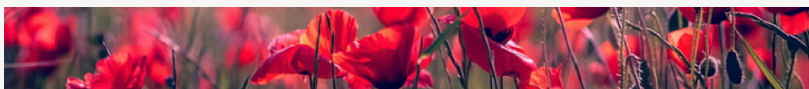
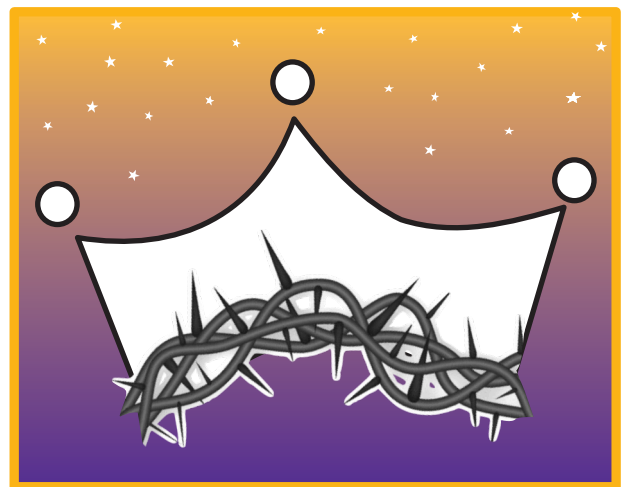
This passage starts with a disciple marvelling at the massive stones of the great temple buildings. This was probably the most solid and permanent looking building he had ever seen, and yet, Jesus says it won't last. This would have been a shocking thing to hear. Jesus goes on to speak of mass destruction and war and says that is just the beginning. He paints a darker and darker picture as the chapter goes on. When we read these verses with horror, we must remember that there are those already living in such darkness. How must it have been for the people of Gaza over the last year? Everything destroyed, including all sources of help; huge bombs raining down. It would seem as if the sun had been darkened and the stars were falling from heaven. Jesus is pointing out the temporary nature of all that we live with and rely on, with the exception of God. "My words will not pass away". Perhaps Jesus is reminding us that however grim things get, God doesn't leave, he is still there with us. Even if the stars fall from the sky, when the dust settles God will still be holding us.



24 November – John 18.33-37

Jesus tells Pilate, "My kingdom is not from this world". Jesus' kingdom is the kingdom of God. Because tradition cautioned against the use of the word "God" it is often called the kingdom of heaven. That, along with Jesus' words can easily make us think the kingdom of God is somewhere else. It is not. It is here. Clearly Jesus' kingdom is not like other earthly kingdoms – it doesn't have a geographical location. We can be in the United Kingdom and in the kingdom of God at one and the same time. The kingdom of God is where God is king, so we can choose to be in God's kingdom by accepting God as king. If we choose to live God's way, following God's rules (as demonstrated by Jesus), then we are in the kingdom. Jesus starts his ministry announcing the arrival of the kingdom; those who make the choice to follow him join the kingdom.

The kingdom of God is a very upside-down kingdom according to our worldly rules; this is best shown by the nature of its king. A king who chooses suffering, serving and self-giving, rather than glory and honour is not like any other king.



November 10 See Preaching plan for Remembrance Services

December 4

11:00 at The Old Grammar School Thornton Dale
Advent Special - Crafting the Crib with Karen Pattison
Followed by a Bring & Share Lunch
Churches Together in Thornton Dale and Surrounding Area

December 8

10:30 Christingle Messy Church at Rievaulx chapel YO62 5LB.
16:30 Christingle at Allerston Village Hall

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A prayer for peacemakers

History can inspire or trap.
Walls can protect or divide.
Words can encourage or inflame.
Power can free or destroy.
Touch can comfort or violate.
Peace can be shared or withheld.
Gracious God, on this day,
when we remember past
and present conflicts,
we pray for the divided peoples of the
world;
that leaders, governments
and each one of us may
use our resources, our opportunities
and our lives,
in the service of reconciliation,
for the sake of future generations and
to the glory of your name.

Amen. Methodist Church Remembrance Day



ryedalemethodists@gmail.com
<https://www.ryedalemetho.org.uk/events.html>
for further information



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