

Letter from the Vicar

Friday 13 November

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For those who hold to folklore superstition today is a day when bad things happens. It's a day when they don't like to leave the house in case something goes wrong. Wikipedia gives some possible reasons why but I won't dent your intelligence by exploring and rehearsing them now. For the superstitious among us it is perhaps a good thing that we are in Lockdown 2.0 as now they are mandated not to venture out unless absolutely necessary, thus reducing the possibility of calamity. For the rest of us, it's just another day... another day of following the guidance so as to protect others, ourselves, and the NHS.

For many this whole year has felt like Friday the thirteenth... like nothing positive has happened. Don't get me wrong, I don't want to go back to the start of the year and experience it all again, but there have been moments when, despite all the pain and chaos and disruption, this year has produced some good moments. The way in which neighbours have rallied together, even becoming friends when previously there was animosity. The way in which strangers have volunteered to care for vulnerable people. The way our young people grew a voice to express their dissatisfaction over their exams, protesting peacefully and changing the Government's decision. The way long-lost friends have taken the time to reconnect. The way technophobes have embraced the new technologies so that we/they can stay in touch. The way our brothers and sisters across The Pond have acted against *Fake News* and those tout lies and cause division. Even in all this pain and gloom there have been good moments.

One such good moment I had this week was belatedly watching my former colleagues at Westminster Abbey marking the 100th anniversary of the burial of the Unknown Warrior. I rejoiced at the dignity with which they conducted and orchestrated the service whilst recalling how I had organised a similar service, around the grave, when we remembered the passing of the last known British service person to have served in the Great War in 2009. Although not possessing the same resources as the Abbey or the BBC who relayed the service to our screens our Act of Remembrance last Sunday, and at the War Memorial on Wednesday with Civic Leaders, was just as poignant and dignified. I am hugely indebted to Keith Beniston, our Director of Music, who is thriving at this unexpected opportunity to learn how to edit recordings together, whilst also mastering the fundamentals of producing a recorded service. To date 100 different devices have tuned-in to watch our Eucharist with Act of Remembrance which is the most so far of all our recordings. I hope those of you who have been joining us virtually are finding them useful vehicles for worship.

I hope you too have had 'good moments' during all of this, and even during the past week. Once again I trust you are all well and keeping safe and, as always, I leave you with my prayers for each of you; keep safe; and remain secure in the knowledge of our God who loves us, cares for us, and enfolds us in his arms.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

The Reverend Michael Macey

Vicar

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