

Letter from the Vicar

Saturday 13 March 2021

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This week has not been as I expected. Come to think of it, has any of the last year? For this Sunday marks the anniversary of services being suspended to the public. Last year whilst I was ill (probably with Covid) Ruth led a very simple Mothering Sunday Eucharist at St John's where she and only a server were present. This year, we are gearing-up to resume public worship, have been able to record our service, and have left flowers in porch as a blessing for those who would like to take some. Still not how we would normally celebrate Mothering Sunday but a marked improvement on a year ago.

This week started out with such promise. I wrote last week of both my girls returning to school. They did on Monday and had a lovely day... as did Emma and I. The house was quiet for the first time in months. And then on Monday evening I took two calls that would change my week. Firstly from some parent friends to say their children had tested positive and that since Sophie had been near her she should isolate. Deep joy! Back to home schooling! The second from the Boyce family to let me know that Baby Emily sadly passed away that afternoon. Utter shock and despair. I don't mind admitting that I held my girls close that night as I thought of Katherine, Jonny, and Baby Emily. I then went down to St John's to record Compline for the week and in the peace and darkness found a comfort I was not expecting.

On Thursday I was running an errand in my car when I notice it not behaving as it should. I took it to my garage and then thought it would be very simple to fix and not the worse-case scenario I feared. Indeed it was simple (and cheap) to fix but in the process they discovered I had a broken coil spring which was damaging a tyre – not so cheap! All will be fixed but again, not something I was expecting.

The unexpected often happens... it is to be expected! But as I intimated in my sermon last week, it's what we do with ourselves in these unexpected moments that counts. There is the path of self-destruction and the path of blessing. I don't mind admitting that on Monday night I had a good shout at God as I tried to rationalise things. But then came a calm and a presence that enabled me to continue. I don't mean this to sound trite or to diminish anything anyone is feeling – I offer this just as a reflection on my week, wondering if this similar for others too?

Next Sunday will be our first Sunday back together. I hope you will be able to return to either St John's or St Francis' but I fully appreciate that returning to physical public worship will not be possible for everyone. Our well-rehearsed measures of mask wearing, social distancing, sanitising, and track & trace will all be in operation. For those staying at home, a pre-recorded Service will be available on our website from 8.00am. This will continue for the foreseeable future.

As ever I leave you with my prayers and best wishes. I look forward to seeing you again and being able to worship with you. But for now, keep safe; keep positive; keep warm; and remain steadfast in faith that God loves us, cares for us, and enfolds us in his arms.

In Christ,



The Reverend Michael Macey
Vicar

01442 243258

vicar@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk