

Glastonbury Together in prayer

A news sheet for members of Glastonbury churches during the crisis caused by Covid 19



Strong foundations

Vanuatu? Where is that? Vanuatu is a group of islands close to the international date line in the Pacific Ocean and as such is one of the first nations to pray on the Day of Prayer. The World Day of Prayer is a movement started by women in the USA in the 19th Century which spread to Britain in the early 20th Century and then to the world after the second world war. It is an ecumenical movement with a prayer service written to by different countries each year. In earlier years the day was styled the “Women’s world day of prayer” but in more recent time it has been relabelled without the prefix “Women’s”. Although the services are normally still written and led by women men are welcome as well.

In 2021 the people of Vanuatu were chosen to write the service under the theme “Build on a Strong Foundation”. The Island



nation was “discovered” by the Spanish in the 17th Century and in the 18th century was “rediscovered” by Captain Cook who named the archipelago the New Hebrides. In the early part of the 20th century the islands were jointly managed by the British and French until independence in 1980 when the nation took the name Vanuatu.

The people of the England, together with Wales and Northern Ireland, wrote the material for the women's world day of prayer in 1945 and are due to take on the task again in 2022 under the title “I Know the Plans I Have For You”.

Take care for now

The national picture is of the pandemic easing and infection levels falling across the country. We have now been given a road map out of lockdown by the Government but the local picture is a bit different. At the start of Lent the figures for Somerset are falling but those for Mendip are rising slightly. This rise is more than accounted for by the rise local to Glastonbury. Glastonbury itself has seen a rise in cases but the rise in the areas defined as “Street” and “Glastonbury west and Street south” have risen even more. In the week to the 24th February the Glastonbury cases were up by 75% but were just below the average for England. Street on the other hand was up by 80% with a case rate about twice the average for the country. This suggests that continued care is needed and is likely to be the case for some time to come.

Lent course ongoing - Join if you can

The Lent course has run for two weeks at the time of writing but has three weeks to go. The third week will look at the Age of Man, the Anthropocene era, and will run twice at 13:00 on Monday 8th repeated at 19:00 on Wednesday 10th March. Week four is entitled “Coming out of denial and facing the crisis. It will be held Monday 15th and Wednesday 17th at the same times. The final week follows the fifth Sunday in Lent so takes place on Monday 22nd at 13:00 and Wednesday 24th at 19:00. This week covers Faith, Hope and Love to round out the discussion of the previous weeks. The course is

online using the Zoom platform and can to be accessed as follows:

Mondays: Lent Course Lunch time: Time: 13:00
[https://zoom.us/j/91503915311?](https://zoom.us/j/91503915311?pwd=MjNnaGJTay9Fei9SZy9LU3BSakRzdz09)
[pwd=MjNnaGJTay9Fei9SZy9LU3BSakRzdz09](https://zoom.us/j/91503915311?pwd=MjNnaGJTay9Fei9SZy9LU3BSakRzdz09)
 Meeting ID: 915 0391 5311 Passcode: 725202

Wednesdays: Lent Course Evening: Time 19:00
[https://zoom.us/j/98416288883?](https://zoom.us/j/98416288883?pwd=ZElrQ1F1T0h2UGMwVG5CakU5RGsyZz09)
[pwd=ZElrQ1F1T0h2UGMwVG5CakU5RGsyZz09](https://zoom.us/j/98416288883?pwd=ZElrQ1F1T0h2UGMwVG5CakU5RGsyZz09)
 Meeting ID: 984 1628 8883
 Passcode: 948180

A different emphasis!

How do bible translations affect our thoughts?

The first week of this years Lent course highlighted how different translations of the bible can affect how we think about things. This prompts thought about translation, which translation is best for us? BibleGateway lists over 60 translations which can be literal - word for word - interpretive - thought for thought or in a more common way of speech for the day - paraphrase. Each has its place in helping us understand the message that has been left for us but take care that you do not seek out the easy way that matches your own perceptions. Some of the older translations have given us phrases that have moved into ordinary life but have they also coloured our view of life? The Lent course looks at the creation of Man in God's image in the first chapter of Genesis does the wording of the translation influence our reaction to issues concerned with the environment? The course looks at the "New Revised Standard version" translation which tells us Man was created to have *dominion* over the rest of creation. It has been argued that this has not been good news for the planet. A comparison is made with the translation in "the Message" where man is to be *responsible* for the rest of creation. Other more literal translations talk of ruling over creation. Whilst the translations may properly put the words into English has the meaning of the words changed? Another paraphrased translation, "The Voice" says that we have been made "trustees of My estate so care for My creation." How we personally translate the words into our thoughts is important as it influences our actions.

Word for Word
Thought for Thought
Paraphrase

A difficult art

Translation is a difficult art and has its pitfalls. Concepts do not necessarily pass between times or between cultures and some phrases cannot be literally translated without creating an error. An example given by Natalie Haynes, a classicist and broadcaster, illustrates this. Erasmus in the 16th century mistranslated details about the Greek Pandora. The Greek *pyxis* meaning jar became the Latin *pyxis* which is a cylindrical box giving us Pandora's box which soon found its way into the art of the time. Was/is this fake news?

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Nature and Grace

In this issue we consider an ancient hymn that was popular when written in the 18th century and had a resurgence at the end of the 20th century. Written by Isaac Watts "Nature With Open Volume Stands" relates to the theme of this years lent course in the first verse and then moves on to Lenten themes. For the lent course we are looking at the environment and the relationship to God, as Isaac Watts says nature spreads her makers praise abroad. The second verse starts "*But in the grace that rescued man his brightest form of glory shines;*" and so reflects the Epistle reading for the 4th Sunday in lent where we learn that *it is by grace that you have been saved*. Watts then moves on to the passion saying that the glory of God is drawn in the precious blood. In the third verse he goes on to say that reason cannot prove the power, wisdom or love and as such relates to the Epistle reading for the 3rd Sunday in Lent discussed in the article below. Verse 4 takes us on to the cross a few weeks away from us yet in time but necessary for the resurrection Jesus mentions obliquely in John 2 19 part of the Gospel reading for the 3rd Sunday. Isaac Watts the Author of the hymn was born in in Southampton in the 17th century the son of a schoolmaster. At the turn of the 18th century he became a minister.

A look at the lectionary - 3rd, 4th Sundays in Lent

This is the year when the lectionary focuses on the Gospel of Mark but at this time of year we find readings from John's Gospel. On the third Sunday in lent we hear about Jesus throwing the money changers out of the temple but this is a precursor to what is the real message - that Jesus will rise from the dead. Asked for a sign the Jews are told destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up, a message that confuses the Jews but which the disciples understand after the resurrection. To go with this reading we have a message from 1 Corinthians 1 where Paul is telling the people of Corinth what the Christian brethren should expect. The Jews look for signs but we preach the crucified Christ, as the power and wisdom of God are greater than any of man. Earlier in this chapter we have the message of Christian unity where Paul

rebukes them for forming sects and asks was Christ divided? The message for the 4th Sunday of Lent is that we are saved through Christ. In his letter to the Ephesians Paul says that through the love and mercy of God we who were dead due to our transgressions have been saved. It is through faith and grace that we are saved, not by ourselves but as a gift from God. This is put together with a reading from the middle of the 3rd chapter of John's Gospel. At the start of the chapter Nicodemus has come to Jesus in the night and has been asking Jesus if he has come from God as the works he does testify. Jesus asks how will we believe heavenly things if we cannot believe earthly signs. In the set reading He says that it is because God loved the world that he gave us His Son. Through His Son those who believe will not perish but will have eternal life.