



Dear all



Excellent news – we have just been awarded the Bronze Eco-Church award. You may recall we mentioned it in services before the lockdown. It is not an award of perfection, but rather a recognition of ‘working towards’. It shows that we are taking environmental issues seriously in a range of contexts (buildings – including the hall and vicarage – grounds, preaching and teaching etc.). You may have attended one of our concerts, or bought a bird box or bee bombs.

A very big thanks to Ted Fisk who has led on this, and to Friday Knights who have done sterling work in the grounds, supporting the long-standing hard work of Chris Halley, John and Linda Sellars; not forgetting the invaluable contribution and commitment of our Churchwardens, Caroline and Nick.

You may not know, but one of the boxes we ticked is that our toilets are twinned with a toilet in Africa. This means that we have sponsored the building of a toilet in a community that did not previously have one – bringing much-needed sanitation to the community.

Toilet twinning is an excellent charity to support, and can be done individually.

There is also a coronavirus offshoot – Tap-twinning. This recognises the fact that it is not so easy to wash your hands when there is no running water, and so allows people to sponsor fresh water in a community that desperately needs it.

Toilet Twinning has produced a children’s activity to be used in lockdown (grown-ups might enjoy it too!):



A world tour – without leaving the sofa!

Can you believe that half term is only a week away? I imagine this half term for parents and grandparents could be quite different to the last one in February. If you’ve got primary-age children, are you looking forward to a week off from being your children’s stand-in teacher?

If you’re looking for ways to entertain your children this half term, and take them on a world tour without having to leave home, then here’s your passport to a Wee World Tour!

<https://www.toilettwinning.org/app/uploads/2020/04/Kids-passport-download.pdf>

Through this fun activity booklet, your children will visit different countries and explore how hard it is to live without clean water and a proper toilet. It contains stinking statistics, fun facts, games and activities.

If you'd like us to send you a copy in the post, please drop us a line here, and tell us how many copies you'd like (and don't forget to tell us your name and address for the parcel).

If your children want to explore the world of toilets further, there are lots more children's resources on our website, including:

- *Toilet quiz*
- *Stories*
- *Poster about the history of the toilet*
- *Films from Zambia and Ivory Coast*

<https://www.toilettwinning.org/resources/groups/schools/#primary-schools>

Following the theme of water, our archdeacon, the Ven Justine Allain Chapman has produced a very thought-provoking reflection on the account of Noah.

Noah's Ark

Still stuck in, for the most part, and for longer than forty days and forty nights, but if I read my bible I discover that Noah, his family and the animals were actually in the ark for ten months (Genesis 8:5). So what can I learn from this famous story where some are protected from death while the waters of destruction kill so many?

Firstly, that Noah was righteous not perfect. Fear of illness and death alongside a survivor's guilt – at least for the time being – is crippling. Noah got through the flood that destroyed the life he once had because he trusted in God and so took the advice to build an ark. He built in preparation for the dangerous time that God said was to come, although it seemed unimaginable. I still need to notice my fears kindly and seek to protect myself and others patiently.

Noah collected animals, pairs so that their line could continue, some which were considered to be clean, seven pairs of them and some unclean, just one pair. So Noah chose what was needed for life to be generative, for there to be a future, a future for all kinds of creatures, diverse and full of possibilities not yet to be realised. Some he chose more of to ensure their survival.

Today it is good enough to seek to trust God and live righteously, to accept today and what it holds without trying to be perfect or control what cannot be controlled. Today I shall consider what in this life now I might deliberately choose and hold to myself so it can have life beyond now in the world after all this. And I will imagine being inside a church building, with a nave reminiscent of the shape of the ark and thank God for safety, floating on God's protection and promise.

A musical offering which appeared on my Facebook today from Don Francisco, called *Always there* fits this theme very well:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2556444364568449>

I know many have appreciated Nick Fawcett's prayers which I have posted in some of my emails. You may be interested in Nick's website, where he posts a variety of resources for reflection and prayer. And quizzes! This may be found at <https://nickfawcett.uk/>

I am currently working my way through my latest acquisition – the Complete Psalms of David Series 2, produced by Priory Records. All 150 Book of Common Prayer psalms are sung by a variety of cathedral choirs, including Exeter, Salisbury, Worcester, Chichester, Wakefield and Peterborough. Our very own Lincoln provides 2 CDs (Psalms 68-77 and 78-88). Here is a link to this evening's psalm, which just happens to be one of the Lincoln ones, Psalm 80.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxc9GhmnUdM>

Finally, if you listen carefully, I intend to ring the church bell as part of our Clap for Carers this evening.

Stay safe

Blessings and love

Mark