

Dear all

Our second week back, and many of the teething problems ironed out. In fact, the biggest problem I seemed to have was at the beginning of the service, when I couldn't remember how I fixed the radio mike for best effect!

A big thanks to Chris Halley for providing the wi-fi, which worked a treat. We were able to livestream at last. Thanks also to Erin for recording the child's prayer song. And to Chris Brown with another wonderful organ voluntary – again from memory (how does he do it?!!) This time the finale from Widor's Organ Symphony No. 6. The link to the Facebook broadcast is

<https://www.facebook.com/938962326130409/videos/289047635691513>

The Sunday services will be as the previous 2 throughout August. From September on, we will continue with communion services, but the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays, as per our pre-lockdown service pattern, will be more All-Age style.

I would like to encourage you to support the Deepingathon next Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August from 12.00 – 6.00pm. This is an opportunity to help make up money lost from the Raft Race, and to support local community groups and charities. There are plenty of links, but this one includes a lovely picture of our church:

<https://www.facebook.com/882452501813018/photos/a.882455898479345/3371924882865755/>

Their JustGiving page gives the following information: *The Covid Pandemic has deprived many of our loved local charities of much needed funds – help redress the balance and dig deep for Deeping – raise funds for Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance, Dementia South Lincs, Sue Ryder, St Barnabas and Exotic Pet Refuge.* The JustGiving page is

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/deepingathon?fbclid=IwAR2ApYjmVb2EmPWzbXkncwvBZMTOBgdaYlFE7DVOmgKzIVXhW0qvB-5t0P4>

Nick Fawcett's most recent post has a Creation theme – very appropriate for us as an eco-church. It is based on Psalm 8, which is the opening canticle for Morning Prayer on Wednesday in *Common Worship*. Anyone wishing to use *Common Worship* daily offices for their devotions can find the link at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Many people, sadly, have little time for the Old Testament. They regard it as dull and dry – a closed book to them. They simply do not know what they are missing, for in fact there is so much in the Old Testament's pages to guide, teach, excite and challenge. Take Psalm 8 and the following meditation it, taken from my

book [The Unfolding Story](#) and placed in the mouth of King David. Not only is the message of the Psalm inspirational; it is also, in its implied challenge to live as stewards of creation, surprisingly topical.

### **Read**

O Lord, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory above the heavens.  
out of the mouths of babes and infants  
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,  
to silence the enemy and the avenger.  
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars that you have established;  
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,  
mortals that you care for them?  
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,  
and crowned them with glory and honour.  
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under their feet,  
all sheep and oxen,  
and also the beasts of the field,  
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.  
O Lord, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
*Psalm 8*

### **The meditation of David**

Is it possible?  
Can it really be true that God has time for you and me?  
It seems preposterous,  
stretching credulity to the limit,  
for what place can we have in the grand scheme of things;  
what reason for God to concern himself about our fate?  
I look at the vastness of the heavens  
and the awesome tapestry of creation,  
and we're nothing,  
just the tiniest speck against the great backdrop of history.  
And yet amazingly,  
astonishingly,  
we matter!  
Not just *noticed* by God,  
but *precious* to him,  
special,  
unique,  
holding an unrivalled place in his affections and purpose.  
Can it be true? –  
a little lower than God himself,  
made in his image?  
It sounds fantastic,  
almost blasphemous,  
for who are we –  
weak, sinful, fatally flawed humanity –  
to be likened to the sovereign God,  
creator of the ends of the earth,

enthroned in splendour,  
perfect in his holiness?  
Yet there it is,  
incredible yet true,  
not just part of creation but stewards over it –  
the beasts of the field,  
the birds of the air,  
the fish of the sea –  
their future in our hands;  
this wonderful world,  
so beautiful,  
so fragile,  
placed into our keeping,  
held on trust.  
That's how much he loves us,  
the ultimate proof of his care.  
What a wonderful privilege!  
What an awesome responsibility!

### **Pray**

Lord of all,  
your love for us involves responsibility  
as well as privilege.  
our place in creation carries a duty to nurture  
rather than simply exploit it.  
Forgive us for our part in a society  
that has too often lived for today  
with no thought of tomorrow,  
plundering this world's resources  
with little care as to the consequences.  
Challenge the hearts and minds of people everywhere,  
that they and we may understand more fully  
both the wonder and the fragility  
of this planet you have given us,  
and so honour our calling to be faithful stewards of it all.  
In the name of Christ we pray.  
Amen.

Here is a version of Psalm 8 from Westminster Abbey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62AJaVzgsDU>

Or as an Anthem by Henry Purcell <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKUuqKuv6Kc>

The Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber, Lutheran pastor and author offered this reflection recently.

I do not know when we can gather together again in worship, Lord.

So, for now I just ask that:

When I sing along in my kitchen to each song on Stevie Wonder's Songs in The Key of Life Album, that it be counted as praise. (Happy 70th Birthday, SW!)

And that when I read the news and my heart tightens in my chest, may it be counted as a Kyrie.

And that when my eyes brighten in a smile behind my mask as I thank the cashier may it be counted as passing the peace.

And that when I water my plants and wash my dishes and take a shower may it be counted as remembering my baptism.

And that when the tears come and my shoulders shake and my breathing falters, may it be counted as prayer.  
And that when I stumble upon a Tabitha Brown video and hear her grace and love of you may it be counted as a hearing a homily.

And that as I sit at that table in my apartment, and eat one more homemade meal, slowly, joyfully, with nothing else demanding my time or attention, may it be counted as communion.

Amen.



Stay safe

Blessings and love

Mark