

Sunday 17th March 2024

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God is love, let us adore God by sharing God's love.

God is ever present, around us and within us, we worship together in God.

Readings Jeremiah 31:31-34
 John 12:20-30 ([NRSV](#))

Reflection

This week and next week we are going to take some time to reflect on the odyssey that is our faith and life journey, through stories. An odyssey is a long complicated journey, often a quest for a goal, and may be spiritual, psychological or an actual voyage, maybe all three. The biblical story is known as a metanarrative, a collection of different stories which combined build a bigger picture, and we are invited to weave our own story into the metanarrative. Our readings form part of our journey as they inspire us to reflect on the bigger picture from a point within the story.

In Jeremiah we read of the promise of a new covenant, a new relationship with God. A personal relation with the God of mercy. This was a complete change around from the understanding that any relationship with God had to be mediated through a priest or prophet. It was the sort of relationship which Jesus was to reveal through his understanding of God.

In John we have the prologue to the passion, death is foretold but it is then explained that death is not the end. To all intents and purposes a seed appears dead and yet when it is placed in the ground it comes to life and all it holds blossoms into so much more than the seed. Jesus is saying do not hold onto life but be prepared to let go and discover what may come next. Verse 25 is a bit of a conundrum – whoever loves their life will lose it and whoever hates their life will keep it for eternity, but for me this should be read as those who have found contentment are ready to let go, whilst those who are still desperately searching can become stuck and afraid to let go and move on.

Eternal life is about so much more than the here and now, it is about soul, or the very essence of that which makes us. Soul is the divine within us, the bit we forget when we are born to this world and spend our lifetime trying to discover – who am I? It is not about ancestry but rather about origins, and not our earthly origins but cosmic origins. It is about forgetting and remembering, about being lost and being found

I invite you to read two stories and reflect on how they connect to the theme of Lost and Found, what strikes you about the stories, and then think about other stories you know that feature being lost, and found.

[Beegu by Alexis Deacon](#)

[The lost thing by Shaun Tan](#)

Think about any time you have felt lost, and how you came to feel found.

Lost and found, forgetting and remembering. Remembering is an important part of our journey, remembering to look, remembering to notice and remembering who we are. Jesus knows his path and admits it troubles him but he also knows that death is a gateway 'home'. Jesus seems aware that his death has a significance that it will open a doorway for others because his death, and more importantly the subsequent stories of resurrection will seal his message into the minds of people and it will be passed on. It will mark the dawn of the new covenant in the minds of humanity.

Easter reminds us that there is more. This world is shades of grey compared to the overflowing exuberance of what is to come. We glimpse beyond in moments of wonder-

- A rainbow against a dark sky,
- a dandelion against a dark path,
- the ripple of laughter amidst the darkness of sorrow,
- the glory of morning sunlight on dew illuminating a spiders web otherwise lost in the bushes,
- the flight of an eagle soaring on the wind, free to see and be.

All these are a reminder and an invitation to keep looking, to search for more, to go deeper and discover the lost and longed for, our true selves. Many spend a whole lifetime searching without finding the door beyond and they remain fixed in this world. Eternity invites us to look inside ourselves and outside our experience, to search for ourselves, and in the process to begin to move beyond this world and learn how to be one with each other. To learn to love in the Jesus sense and live in the Kingdom sense. To live life seeking the fullness of our humanity which is to know who we are, and to know God rather than knowing about God. That is the new covenant and the message of Jesus.