

Two reflections from Canon Ivor Moody: on Waiting and Jesus promise to us

I'm not very good at waiting. Impatience often gets the better of me. But it's one of the most important things Christians have to do. We belong to a 'waiting' faith. The Bible begins with God waiting for his creation to form, however you interpret the 'six days' it took. When he sat back on the seventh day to admire what he had done, that has a real air of hard, patient work which had taken time to come to fruition. And the last words of the Bible in the Book of Revelation, from a church established in the world but enduring persecution, is 'Amen! Come Lord Jesus!'

So, we are in a period of waiting- a suspension of time, an 'in between state' which is focussed graphically in this period between Ascension and Pentecost. Jesus has left the earth, but we await his return. It is a microcosm of the huge picture of where we are as Christians; and to a society which finds itself in a position of waiting, continuing to endure social distancing, learning how to re-adjust life and looking anxiously to the future and what will become of itself, it is a spiritual and theological concept which could be a great gift of understanding- and patience- from the church to the world.

This is a picture of my teddy bear. He's called 'Ted' surprisingly enough. He is two months older than me. He's been with me constantly throughout my life. He is sporting a Kings College London scarf where I studied theology, and he has sat in the studies of all the houses and vicarages in which I've lived, always looking rather sternly at me. He is also wearing a cardigan my auntie made him, primarily to cover up his missing fur and the many bald patches which are the result of years of being cuddled, carried around and manhandled. In fact he's looking rather the worse for wear now- a bear which has been loved too much.

Sometimes though, when I feel a bit like he looks- a little tired, dog eared and bashed about- I remember why he looks like that; not because he has been abandoned, but because he has been treasured and loved to the point of distraction.

So he is a bit of an icon for our relationship with God. Often we can feel abandoned by God, a bit lost and alone in our faith and in our lives, but Ted is a reminder that even though we might not feel it or realise it, the very opposite is the case. Ted is a reminder of the truth and the reality of Jesus' promise: 'I am with you always, to the end of the age'.



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News

Thy Kingdom Come: Tomorrow (if you are receiving this newsheet via email) is Ascension Day. In addition to our normal times of prayer which are streamed daily at 7.54 am and 5.15 pm, there will be a celebration of the Eucharist at 12 noon. This will be live streamed on Facebook and available afterwards on both Facebook and YouTube. The order of service will be available on the Cathedral website for you to follow at home. From Ascension Day to Pentecost (21st – 31st May) there will be a short meditation led by a wide range of people at 12 noon each day on our YouTube channel with links from Face Book and the Church at Home page of the website. At **7.30am tomorrow**, there will be a special video featuring the Cathedral choirs and some amazing video footage.

Public Worship: there have been many questions about when churches and cathedrals will be open again for public worship, and the only response is to say that we do not know, but that it is unlikely to be in the near future. That is challenging for all of us, but also an essential part of our care for one another and for the wider community. It is the case now that a single designated priest or designated lay minister is permitted to go into a church to lead a service which can be live streamed. However, the work that has to be done to make this safe and secure – especially in a building like the Cathedral – means that we will only be approaching this step by step and very much guided by the information that is being regularly updated by the Church and the Government.

The **Greening the Church Conference** will now take place online. This will be initially hosted on Facebook- join the Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/727013254703425/> to take part live on Saturday 13th June, starting with live worship at 9.30am. However - resources and information will then be shared on our Website, YouTube Channel and on the Diocesan Website - we will be letting you know more details nearer the time.

On-line giving on the website: you can now donate on-line to support the mission and ministry of the Cathedral. This is particularly important at the moment as the Cathedral works hard to continue ministering through these challenging times and begins to build for the future. If you want to donate now on-line, simply go to the home page of the website and click on the link, or click <https://givealittle.co/campaigns/0c7bf37c-62f7-4011-b9f0-854ead22f93a>

Norman Sharpe's cremation service is at 4pm on 1st June. Whilst we are unable to attend, please remember Pam and the family in your prayers especially at this time.

Being Resourced:

If you would like to receive the Dean's letter emailed to you once a week and you do not already receive it, please email clare.broome@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

Growing in Faith resources in a weekly email. If you would like to receive it, please sign up via the 'Church at Home' page of the website or email imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

Stations of the Resurrection: How do we encounter the Risen Lord in this time of darkness? Join with the Rev'd Canon Imogen and others as they lead us through personal encounters with the Risen Jesus, look at the website, or sign up to the Growing in Faith mailing, details above.

Social Time:

Book Group

This month we are reading **"Where the Crowds Sing"** by **Delia Owens**. We will be meeting via Zoom to discuss the book on Monday June 1st at 7.30. All are welcome to join us – email sallydilley@tiscali.co.uk for more information.



Study with Us:

Bible Notes for Easter 7:

1 Peter 4.12-14; 5.6-11

Ps 68.1-10

John 17.1-11

All these joined in continuous prayer ...

In this time of worldwide fear and uncertainty, we are called to a deepening faith in our Lord, our stronghold and hope. As Christians, we also try to be a beacon of light for our fellow human beings.

In the **First Reading**, Peter gives his community encouragement as they endure challenges and hard times. He assures them of a special blessing if they live the values of Christ.

The **Psalm** exudes trust and confidence in the God of the living; it inspires us to seek the Lord's face and get to know him.

The **Gospel** also takes us back to a special place, the room where the Last Supper took place. Here Jesus prays, making known to his disciples – and to us – the name and teachings of the Father. Eternal life is to know the Father and Christ and their intimate relationship together.

As the Easter Season draws to a close, we might pray together:

'Lord, we believe you are indeed our light, help and stronghold in these dark times. May your Holy Spirit comfort us all; and may our relationship of loving trust with you deepen.'

Daily Gospel Readings for this week, to use in your daily prayer:

Monday: John 16.29 - end

Tuesday: John 17. 1 - 11

Wednesday: John 17.11 - 19

Thursday: John 17. 20 - 26

Friday: John 21. 15 - 19

Saturday: John 21.20 - 25

A Family challenge:

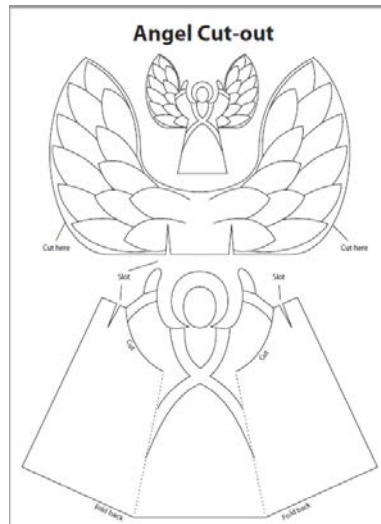
On the **Junior Church** page of the website, there are lots of new ideas to try each week.

This week Tony has created some cut-outs for you to try making at home.

Print out the angel onto thick paper or card or trace it onto card.

Then follow the cuts and folds to create your angel.

We'd love to see your finished work!



Pray with Us:

Pray for all members of the Anglican Communion around the world; for the Archbishop of Canterbury, and all primates and bishops; for members of the Anglican Consultative Council; for the Secretary General, The Most Revd Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon; and for the staff at the Anglican Communion Office in London and the UN offices in Geneva and New York.

Pray for Trinity Methodists.

For those who are unwell: Pray for those who are unwell: Jim, Brenda and Chris Cole, Jean Cooper, Teresa Hipgrave, Rita James, Winnie Towers, Jill Withams and all those in need of our prayers.

Help Identify the next Bishop of Chelmsford

An invitation to everyone!

The appointment of a new Diocesan Bishop is a big moment and it is important that everyone can have their say. The consultation started on Monday (11 May) and finishes on 4 July. Inevitably because of the current situation, everybody is strongly encouraged to make their contribution to the consultation online.

So far a group called the "Vacancy in See" committee has been meeting to map out the process. This is now working particularly through two smaller groups, one of which is handling the consultation process and the other is responsible for writing the "Statement of Needs", which is produced in response to what people have said in the consultation.

The Statement of Needs contains a whole range of information about the diocese and the region as a whole. There are facts and figures; key areas of ministry for the new Bishop; and a real profile of the gifts and skills we are looking for in the next Bishop of Chelmsford.

A wide range of people and organisations are invited to contribute to the consultation and the Cathedral Chapter will be submitting a corporate response on behalf of the Cathedral. But everyone who wants to and feels they have something to say is warmly encouraged to have their say.

You do this by visiting <https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/> (the Diocesan Website). You will see that it says on the front page "Help identify the next Bishop of Chelmsford". Click on the button "Find out more" and that will take you to the whole range of information and resources.

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From 11 May, that is where you will find the consultation and information about how to respond. A series of questions are there to help you think this through and respond – and what you say will have an important role in what finally gets included in the Statement of Needs.

And what happens after that? The process moves on to the national level. 6 representatives from the Diocese are elected by the Vacancy in See committee to join a national body called the Crown Nominations Commission. This is the body that will interview and select the new Bishop. Alongside our representatives from Chelmsford Diocese, the Commission is made up of both Archbishops, and a range of clergy and lay people elected from the national church along with the Archbishop's appointments secretary and the Prime Minister's appointments secretary.

The Commission should be meeting in the late autumn this year and that should mean we know who the new Bishop is to be early in 2021.

This is an important process and do make sure that your voice is heard.

PRAYING FOR THE 11th BISHOP OF CHELMFORD

Please pray for:

- The life of our great and diverse diocese, and for all the communities we seek to serve from Clacton-on-Sea to Canning Town; from Southend to Saffron Walden
- For a deepening of our love for God and of our service in God's world - For our church communities and all the places where God's people gather
- For God's provision and care for all those responsible for calling the 11th Bishop of Chelmsford
- For those God is preparing to respond to that call.

God of provision and care,
discernment and knowledge:
lead us in your love,
empower us by your Spirit,
and equip us with your gifts;
give us hearts full of love for all people,
minds open to the signs of the times,
and wisdom to know how to respond
to the voice of your calling.
We ask this through him whose coming is certain,
whose day draws near,
your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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