

A Letter from the Rectory

And now for something completely different...

Lent 2024 :Reading the Psalms using The Message Translation

The Psalms have, for millennia, formed the bedrock of liturgy. They are full of wisdom for life, inspiration, cries of anguish, joy, and they display an ongoing, real relationship with our loving Creator.

For millennia, monks and nuns, cathedrals and other faithful people have recited the Psalms every day. Cathedrals will still say or sing all 150 Psalms every month. Years ago, some of the monasteries said all 150 each DAY!

An Advent Book which I read this year inspired me to read the Psalms with different translations. During Lent this year I am trying something different.

I have made a reading plan which covers all the Psalms in 40 days (*remember that if you include Sundays in Lent then you have a few days of wriggle room!*). I encourage you to discipline yourself to read the Psalms every day (*about 60 verses a day*). You could choose three different times to read the day's quota (morning, midday and evening), or all at once.

It is key, however, that we try to read them using Eugene Peterson's translation, which is called *The Message*. Buy a copy second-hand from a site like World of Books (www.wob.com). There are many different editions, so do make sure you get one which includes The Psalms – the whole Bible, or the New Testament plus Psalms. Or find an online version on sites such as www.biblegateway.com (*just scroll down until you get The Message translation*). Or ask me and I can give you one of the ones I have purchased. *The Message* is a fresh way of reading traditional words which many of us know well, and I hope it will enable us to reimagine our faith.

Keep a notebook near and jot down any phrases which stand out for you. Then each week, bring those notes or reflections along to one of the Churches in our Benefice at 1200-1.00. Bring something to eat for your lunch and we will hear one or two of the Psalms, and then discuss how we have responded to them.

You will find details of the reading plan and the schedule of meeting places on pages 13-14. Do join us on this stimulating journey!

With love

Rev. Rona