

Today's thoughts are provided by Rev. Judith Holliman.

I suppose being married to a green chemist/engineer means that the environment and its issues are rarely far from my mind. It has been interesting during this indoor time to sit in my lovely breakfast room and hear the birds. Normally they are rather overshadowed by trains passing us here at the sidings but just now they are out in full force, we have seen Jays, Woodpeckers, Nuthatches, I could go on. Our cats are thankfully watching cat TV from afar and not eating what they are seeing.



It has also been astounding to hear from friends that the goats from the Great Orme in Llandudno have been strutting through the town as the cars and the tourists have disappeared.

Nature – Creation seems to be reclaiming its own. I wonder what this means to you? Me? The city? The nation? I note with interest that Milan has already decided to shut off much of its centre to traffic, that York have made wide ranging changes to their traffic flows . . . it seems a really positive impact of a difficult time to see people future scanning and making life changing decisions.

It must be extraordinary to look from your home in the Punjab and see the Himalayas for the first time in 30 years but it is not just far away that is relevant here. What will happen in Wales, in Cardiff to address the huge fall in pollutants that were experienced? – will we simply return to over consumption and traffic queues as the old/new norm? What can we do to learn from this?

Paul describes creation as groaning and it is something that has been more and more apparent in recent years as we learn the impact of our actions, yet Paul also says in Galatians 6 take the opportunity. Well if this last period has not been an opportunity to revisit our lives, our habits, our consumptions, our expectation that we can do what we want, when we want and our totally false understanding that we are in control, I seriously don't know what would be. What an opportunity it is for us, an opportunity that has seen a massive increase in online engagement, an opportunity that has seen more people hearing the call of Jesus to turn back, to come home, to find prayer, to relish our place in his earth, there is nothing good about covid-19 but so much good can come from listening intentionally to what creation is telling us.

Creator God, you who flung stars into space,  
Help us to understand the glory of your gift to us of this earth.  
Enable us to discern a way forward that gives more and takes less.  
Be with us during this lockdown in a way that challenges our 'norm'  
Raise up people to voice the need we have to love our world more,  
Let it start with us.

Creator God, you who made us to be in community  
Help us to remember that we are part of a greater whole  
Enable us as a Synod to discern a new way forward.  
Help us to question the 'norm' and to learn from this quiet time  
Raise up people to share in the ministry of the people of God at every level,  
Let it start with us.

Creator God, you who knit me together in my mother's womb  
Help me to understand that I am beloved.  
Enable me to discern what you are calling me to be in this new world  
Be with me as I navigate my way through this lockdown in its highs and lows.  
Raise up my spirit, help me to learn your voice that it will not be drowned out,  
Let it start within me.

Our Father,  
Who art in Heaven  
Hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come  
Thy will be done  
On earth as it is in Heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us  
And lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory  
For ever and ever,  
Amen.

God bless you this day,  
Judith x