

Words of Light and Hope for 29 th December Jane McLarty

Today is an in-between sort of Sunday; Christmas Day is past, New Year's Day is yet to come. We look back over the last year and we might see in the world and in our own lives cause for joy and thankfulness, and also cause for grief and lament. These words from Charles Handy reflect on how the universe somehow continues to produce life out of apparent chaos:

Charles Handy The Empty Raincoat

The first living cell emerged, some four million years ago, from a primordial soup of simple molecules and amino acids. Nobody knows why or how. Ever since then the universe has had an inexorable tendency to run down, to degenerate into disorder and decay. Yet it has also managed to produce from that disorder an incredible array of living creatures, plants and bacteria, as well as stars and planets. New life is forever springing from the decay and disorder of the old.

Today is only the fifth day of the twelve days of Christmas: and in this turning of the year, U.A. Fanthorpe's poem about the turning from BC to AD with the birth of Christ seems appropriate. U.A. Fanthorpe BC:AD This was the moment when Before Turned into After, and the future's Uninvented timekeepers presented arms.

This was the moment when nothing Happened. Only dull peace Sprawled boringly over the earth. This was the moment when even energetic Romans Could find nothing better to do Than counting heads in remote provinces. And this was the moment When a few farm workers and three Members of an obscure Persian sect Walked haphazard by starlight straight Into the kingdom of heaven.



Pew Notes

January 13th: 7:30pm—9pm Bible Study , Acts of the Apostles. Weston Longville, for more information please see our website or Facebook page.

Services for next week: Sunday 5th January 2025

9am Holy Communion(BCP), St Peter & St Paul's, Salle
10:am Café Curch (Service starts 10:30), St Michael's, Reepham
10:30am Holy Communion, All Saint's, Weston Longville
10:30am Holy Communion , St Marys, Elsing
10:30am OASIS, St Mary's, Sparham

The Rev'd. Helen Rengert, 01603 879275 revdhelenrww@gmail.com

The Rev'd. Richard Turk, 07721 035009 revdrichardrww@gmail.com

Email parishofficerww@gmail.com to submit articles or join the mailing list.

FACEBOOK: Reepham & Wensum Valley Events

WEBSITE: www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk

Pew Notes are available to download from the RWV website and the E-newsletter

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact your Parish Safeguarding Officer. Details in the church porch or on the RWV website.

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The Collect

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalms 147 or 147:13-21

1 Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God! how pleasant it is to honor him with praise!
 2 The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel.
 3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.
 4 He counts the number of the stars and calls them all by their names.
 5 Great is our LORD and mighty in power; there is no limit to his wisdom.
 6 The LORD lifts up the lowly, but casts the wicked to the ground.
 7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music to our God upon the harp.
 8 He covers the heavens with clouds and prepares rain for the earth;
 9 He makes grass to grow upon the mountains and green plants to serve mankind.
 10 He provides food for flocks and herds and for the young ravens when they cry.
 11 He is not impressed by the might of a horse; he has no pleasure in the strength of a man.
 12 But the LORD has pleasure in those who fear him, in those who await his gracious favor.
 13 Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion;
 14 For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; he has blessed your children within you.

15 He has established peace on your borders; he satisfies you with the finest wheat.
 16 He sends out his command to the earth, and his word runs very swiftly.
 17 He gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
 18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; who can stand against his cold?
 19 He sends forth his word and melts them; he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.
 20 He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel.
 21 He has not done so to any other nation; to them he has not revealed his judgments.
 Hallelujah!

Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.