

Yoxmere Perspectives Vision Evening with Archdeacon Jeanette and Revd Tim Rogers

How is God calling us to be the church, post-covid? In every parish of the Yoxmere benefice amazing people are doing great things!
Come to a friendly evening to listen and share with each other, both what we are doing well and what we would love to do together. All are welcome. Wine and cheese provided!
This Wednesday coming between **7-9pm (17th November 2022)**

Please note: Please inform Revd Tim by Wednesday, November 16th 2022 if you wish to join a group.

As usual, for the four weeks of Advent I would like to put together an advent group, or groups, giving us a chance to meet, talk, pray and reflect in our preparations for Christmas.

This year I propose we use the book 'Walking Backwards to Christmas' by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell. It costs £7.77 as a paperback from Amazon (£3.79 on kindle), and no doubt available from other good bookshops. It is a simple, shortish book, imaginatively exploring the stories and hopes of those characters involved in the Nativity — Mary and Joseph, but also the prophets Anna and Simeon, but also Herod, one of the wise men, and even Isaiah and Moses — walking back in time from fulfilment to Old Testament hopes. I will buy a handful of copies, please tell me if you'd like one and then pay me — or buy yourself a copy at your own leisure...

Please tell me if you'd like to join. Hopefully we'll be able to hold an afternoon and an evening group to cater for different schedules and needs.

If you could host, please tell me, too!

Additionally, another group is going to meet on Tuesday afternoons in Westleton, and my understanding is that they want the freedom of not following a book. If that sounds more your cup of tea, let me know, and I'll pass on your details!

With all blessings,

Tim.

Remembrance Sunday

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13;

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching^[a] you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

¹¹ We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. ¹² Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. ¹³ And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

Luke 21:5-19

Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, ⁶ "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

⁷ "Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?"

⁸ He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. ⁹ When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away."

¹⁰ Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

¹² "But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. ¹³ And so you will bear testimony to me. ¹⁴ But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. ¹⁵ For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ Stand firm, and you will win life.

Advent is approaching. Some years ago it was decided that the last Sunday before Advent would be celebrated as 'Christ the King' — a day to celebrate Jesus's role as the promised king, and to anticipate the fulfilment of that kingship. The two Sundays before that also follow that end-times focus, hence today's readings: Luke 21, and Jesus talking in figurative language about the end times. It is a blessed coincidence that on Remembrance Sunday we should look forward, past the many wars and rumours of wars that this passage foresees, to the peace of Christ's kingly rule — the peace we all want.

Despite 'the war to end all wars' finishing more than a hundred years ago, war continues. But we all long for peace. God longs for peace. Why can we not have peace? Why can we not make the messy historical complexity of war simple again?

Jesus offers no quick fixes, but he does offer a path of peace. His path is a personal, relational, local path — local change leading to global change.

Jesus's path is first of all peace with God. If we read God's word and pray, we may re-align ourselves with God's will. Peace with God is the first step.

But if we pursue peace with God, we should, by being aligned with God's will, also be aligned with others who are seeking God's will. This is the second step. At one level this may sound laughable — Christians across the centuries have had plenty of schisms and fallings out — we are only human. But at another level this is entirely true — Christians across the world do find an understanding and camaraderie more easily when they are united in faith in the same God.

In his letters to the Thessalonians, Paul talks about this alignment in terms of imitation. He, Paul, is set on being as Christlike as possible. He urges others to be like him in that pursuit of Christlikeness. If we are all like Christ, how can we not live in peace and harmony?

Paul's last words in the Thessalonians reading are also pertinent: Never tire of doing good.

When there is great conflict, and we ourselves feel victims, it is so easy to tire of doing good. I know this, as well as you. But Paul urges us — don't tire! Do good!

I think if we work in this way — seeking God's will, seeking harmony with others, never tiring of doing good — we will be peacemakers. You may not feel as if you are changing the course of wars, but you and I will be doing the good we can. And if we pursue peace, this may also be the best way of honouring those who died or suffered great loss in war, but wanted peace, and gave their lives seeking that peace.

Amen.