

## May 2022

*Reverend Susan writes:*

It is currently Holy Week and unfortunately I am missing Holy Week in the Benefice as I have COVID. My thanks go to Rev Michael all those who have stepped in to cover the services in our churches.



During Lent we ran the York Courses Caring for Creation course. It may not have been the course we originally intended to run but it certainly provided an opportunity for us to stop and take time to consider our thoughts on being human and being Christians in God's created world.

Now one thing that always stands out for me from the many children's clubs I've been involved with is that children (and the young at heart) love stories about animals from the Bible, particularly the story of Noah's Ark (Genesis chapter 7). There are several points that could be made from this story but children always discern the message that God cares for all of creation; he cares for their budgies, rabbits, cats, dogs etc.

Now if God cares for all of our animals, shouldn't we? There are too many of our animals in danger of extinction. Animals like the Black Rhino or the Sunda Tiger may soon no longer be with us on this planet. Equally, too many animals are being mistreated and abandoned.

Of course, it's not just animals, the rest of creation is being abused too. Pollution levels are high, thousands of acres of forest are being destroyed every hour and Climate change threatens every part of our world.

We are all a part of God's creation, and as Christians we have a role to play; we are responsible for caring for it. There are numerous ways in which we can express our care individually and collectively, and there are many organisations that exist in order to raise awareness and bring relief for all created life.

Essentially, God's love is at the heart of creation, just as God's love is at the heart of Easter. God sent his Son, into the world to die on a cross for the sin of that world; for our sin. Then three days later Christ rose again; he amazed his disciples by reappearing to them in physical form. Yet all too soon (from their point of view) he was to leave them again as he ascended into heaven, leaving them with his promise to send the Holy Spirit to fill them with power as they spread abroad to proclaim his message of salvation.

This month we will be celebrating Christ's ascension, the crowning of his Easter victory over sin and death. In his letter to the Ephesians (chapter 1 verses 17 to 23) Paul describes the meaning of the ascension. He says that God raised Christ above all earthly powers, and made him, not only head of the Church, but Lord of creation.

So, as we contemplate Christ's ascension from earth into heaven we are encouraged to focus our own thoughts not on our own selfish and materialistic desires in this world but on the welfare of all and the promise of eternal life.

God has shown his love for the whole of creation, Jesus is declared our ascended Lord, so let us too remember to demonstrate our love and respect for the world in which we live.

*Rev Susan*

*After the morning service...*

Do you find you want to get to know the other people at church a bit better?

Do you miss having chances to reflect on your faith and experience of life with other church members?

Would you be interested in joining a group which meets regularly for that purpose?

If you answered yes to these questions, you might be interested in a new group which is starting soon. If you would like to meet with others to share company, personal experiences, perspectives and values learnt from life and faith, speak to Tony Hemmings or Jonathan Sargant, or ring *Jonathan on 07823 476261*.