

Pastoral Letter

Revd Roger Hagon shares his thoughts...

Dear Friends

Anglicans are used to singing hymns where the * verses are omitted! Starred verses are often considered superfluous to the meaning of the hymn and are often omitted to 'keep the service moving'.

At the moment, I'm more concerned with starred words. Recently reported in the newspapers was a comment made by the Prime Minister's chief strategist Dominic Cummings who said, in reply to concerns regarding his sacking of Sonia Khan, aide to the Chancellor, "If you don't like how I run things, there's the door. **** **."

Gross, inflammatory, and degraded language seems to be infecting our political discourse at the moment, whether that's in the heart of government, the House of Commons, in our homes, on our streets or on social media. Totally omitting starred words has never been more important, since they only serve to create public disunity, undermine the moral authority of those using them, perpetuate ignorance and social stereotypes, and stoke-up angry and aggressive behaviour.

The Bible is very clear about the importance of the language we all use, and this surely goes for written as well as spoken

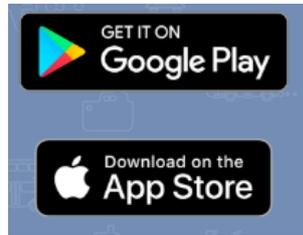
Inside this issue:

<i>Pastoral Letter</i>	7
<i>Choir Notes</i>	8
<i>Staying in Touch</i>	9
<i>Youth Group</i>	11
<i>Bishop of Kingston</i>	12
<i>Mothers' Union</i>	14
<i>Diary</i>	16
<i>Pray As You Go</i>	20
<i>Contact List</i>	25

words. Here are some quotes we might all take to heart:- If I speak in the tongues of people or of angels but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (1 Corinthians 13:1); Put aside anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive speech from your mouth. (Colossians 3:8); Let any word give grace to those who hear. (Ephesians 4:29); Jesus said, "The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit". (John 6:63)



Roger



What is Pray As You Go? Well for me, it simply does what it says on the tin. It's an app you download, which gives you a daily prayer tool to help you pray; one which you use particularly during your journey to and from work, school or college etc.

My daily commute to work each morning from East Croydon to London Bridge is the ideal prayer time for me to make use of this app, as the sessions last between ten to thirteen minutes. The sessions are a combination of music and scripture readings. It's not like a bible study or sermon, but rather a framework for your own prayers.

The style of prayer is based on Ignatian Spirituality (Jesuit order) and it reinforces that God is at work in our daily lives, in our relationships, our workplaces and homes. We encounter him everywhere, not just in religious buildings or acts of worship.

The format for praying is kept the same each day, starting with a piece of music, which ranges from traditional to contemporary. In a typical week you are likely to hear music from Taizé to various choirs and artists, such as Ladysmith Black Mambazo Gospel choir, Luke Parker and The Monks of Keur Moussa, to name but a few.

What I can say is, whatever is played seems to fit, making it a nice and relaxing way to start the session. I particularly enjoy the music session, which has had an extra bonus for me by helping to expand my own scope of spiritual music.

A reading from the scriptures comes after the music. Again, this can be from the old or the new testament, after which you are invited to have a think about the reading - what stood out for you, what captured your imagination, was the reading relevant to what you might be experiencing at the moment? But don't worry, it doesn't matter if nothing comes to mind. The reading is repeated, giving you a bit more time to reflect, before the session ends with your own prayer to express whatever you feel.

This method of praying, for me, has become so part of my morning routine that it feels natural for me to do it, even when I'm not journeying to work. It has helped me become more aware of God's presence in my life, to reflect on God's words and grow and question my relationship with God. It sets me up for the day and at times I find myself thinking about it when I least expect it.

The app also has several other prayer tools, retreats and resources to help supplement your prayer life. The retreats are particularly good during Lent and Advent, although I would recommend you give yourself a bit more time and seclusion for these.

This app may not be everyone's cup of tea, but I highly recommend you give it a try, you might be pleasantly surprised.

Alan Griffiths

Sunday School

This term Sunday School will be producing a nativity video, scripted by and starring the children, and filmed over a few weeks with the help of Sam and Meadow Phillipson. All the children will have the opportunity of being involved, whether in front of the camera or behind the scenes. We are hoping to have a trailer ready for the Christmas Market on Saturday 7 December.



Scouts

The 27th Croydon Scout Group, which meets at St Mildred's, will be camping over the first weekend of half term, 19 and 20 October. Cubs and Scouts will be staying at Coombe Farm campsite near Lloyd Park. The site, owned by Westminster Scouts, has indoor accommodation and a field to practice our camping skills.

Helen Medland