

13th August

Sorry it's been a while but work has been hectic and then the parish hall beginning to re-open so risk assessments for there, and cleaning chapel and risk assessments for decorators all takes time. I miss the quiet of lock down.

Lovely spell of warm/hot weather though which is nice, real summer for a change.

So back to it with thoughts,
Water and how can we cross it?

1. By bridge
2. By boat/raft
3. By stepping stones
4. By aeroplane if an ocean.

When I am out walking which a love to do, we often come to streams and rivers, some wide, some deep, some just trickling, some a raging torrent. If we are on the right path the crossing should be there sign posted, but sometimes if a little lost we have to find a way to cross.

This week in Brough we followed the path and there were three bridges to cross, the first one high above a waterfall, it was a little precarious only one handrail and a lot in need of repair, we were a bit unsure but went for it one by one. The second one low to the river, well made, sturdy and with two handrails, we somehow felt lots safer on this one. The third was at a wider part of the river with steps up to it, a wide bridge with treads for grip but again only one handrail. This time one of us was quite scared and required support to get across, worrying about the length of crossing with only one handrail.

All allowed us to cross the river but each very different.

A regular walk of mine is round by Ormside mill, a lovely walk through the lanes and woods down to the river where there are stepping stones and a ford for cars to access the mill now an adventure centre. The stones are fairly small and all different shapes and sizes, they often become slippery if they get wet and a little moss on them. I have sometimes got wet feet as I have walked over the ford rather than slip.

There are also stepping stones crossing the river Eden at Appleby, this is a much wider river and no ford to be found, however the stones are much

bigger and they all appear flat topped so seem safer to cross by. However they disappear under water for most of the winter months. Again both allow you to cross but very different.

I am not good at building rafts, but I remember the Appleby carnival raft race which happened every year, they set sail from town bridge and went down past the swimming pool to Holme farm bridge. Sometimes having to push in places as the river was so low at other times quite fast flowing. These rafts were of all shapes, sizes and abilities, one year there was even an old reliant robin car turned into a raft. Such fun was had by all who took part.

I also remember the only raft race in Warcop (I think) it seemed fun but really should not have taken place as the river Eden was in flood, they sailed from Warcop bridge to Blacksyke bridge at Sandford. They had put a rope across at Sandford end for people to grab to stop and pull to the side. However it very nearly lost the life of Paul, as he came off his raft grabbed the rope but then got trapped under water by the raft he had fallen from. Quick thinking from some adults got him free. (Thankfully) So again ways to cross or travel down a river but can be very risky.

I do like to travel on boats, well cruise ships for me. But little boats to cross a stream well they are tricky, to get into sometimes capsizing and I really struggle to paddle them. I remember been in Redcar visiting friends when the children were little, we all went to the boating lake and went out in three boats, Terry (our friend) rowing one, David rowing another and Katherine (our friend) and myself in the other, two boats went off to explore the lake, Katherine and I going round and round in circles, the boat operator trying to give us instructions of how to row. We finally got the hang of it and the hour was up, getting back to shore was also a battle. Maybe I will just stick to cruising, or getting David to row the boat for me.

Lastly aeroplanes, well I do love flying and visiting far off places, crossing large and smaller seas/oceans. Looking out of plane windows when coming into land on islands is a wonderful sight, but sometimes the sea seems a little too close. Landing in Gibraltar is scary the first time as you come in over sea and the runway is short and the sea is at the other end, you also cross the main road for the island, they put barriers down to stop the traffic for landing and take off.

The Greek island of Kefalonia is also over sea towards sea but the runway is a little longer, however it is over a beach and so when you see all these people getting closer it can be a little worrying. The roar when you are on the beach of the planes going over is very impressive.

A good way to cross large areas of water.

But I was thinking of two stories in the bible of crossing water , firstly Moses crossing the red sea and secondly when Jesus walked on the water. Moses followed the Lords commands leading the Israelites through the desert, they feared they would die but Moses trusted the Lord and at the correct time the sea parted and they were able to cross safely, the Egyptians who followed were all lost as the water flowed back over them. Moses had great faith and he was able to lead people into the faith of our great Lord. Imagine what a sight that must have been a huge wall of water stood still while people passed by!!!

We used to sing at Sunday school “how did Moses cross the red sea”

Exodus Chapter 14

Secondly Jesus walking on water, Matthew ch14, v 22 onwards

I love to paddle when I go to the beach, just getting your feet in the water is a lovely feeling and as children there was nothing better than jumping over the waves as they came in to shore, but walking on water it was not. I have also tried water zorbing with Lisa and John when they were little, this is when you get inside a big ball and they push you out onto a lake or swimming pool and you have to stand up and try and walk or run. Not easy at all, your feet push the water down and the ball wobbles and you fall over. (at least I did) you are attached to ropes so the staff can pull the ball back to shore.

But Jesus he walked out across the lake in windy conditions to join the disciples, they thought it was a ghost, no one could walk on water could they? Jesus said “do not be afraid it is I” Peter said “if it is you let me walk on water” Jesus replied “come” Peter set off but then began to doubt and sink Jesus caught him asking him why he doubted.

What would we have thought? Would we have had faith?

It can be tricky sometimes to share our beliefs and faith as things like this do seem to defy nature and what we are led to think, and most of us (me included) have probably never had that sort of true life experience. Our faith is based on what we read in the bible and have been taught, and the

love of our saviour, trusting in him to bring us safely to eternity with him. Non believers may mock and laugh at us, but we must remain strong and know that he is with us and will protect us. He will give us the courage to speak out about our faith.

770 mission praise, Will your anchor hold in the storms of life.

21st August

Well the weather has changed, wild wet and windy. I noticed when I drove along past Warcop school that the trees now have the start of Autumn tints to them, nights are also closing in and it is dark by 9PM. Seasons come and go and we have to enjoy the different experiences.

We have heard a lot on the news lately of the plight of hundreds if not thousands of refugees/migrants all trying to find a better life for themselves.

We will all have different views and opinions on this.

However we feel about it, it is a very sad state of affairs if you feel so desperate that you will place your child children into a boat/dinghy to make a dangerous crossing to a country you don't know. Leaving them an orphan to fend for themselves. Children need love, nurture and respect and parents who can give them these basic needs. I just can't imagine how these parents must be feeling, I would bend over backwards to protect my children from danger.

I don't know the answer to how to solve this increasingly dangerous situation, but it seems that humanity, care and respect for mankind are called for.

Finding the unscrupulous traffickers, who are making lots of money from very scared and vulnerable people would be a start.

However finding peace in their country of origin has to be the best place to begin, sorting out poverty and war and then re-building confidence. No one deep down wants to feel so scared that they have to leave their homes.

We as a country have a good life, (I know not all do) we have no war to fight, no famine to endure, no majorly corrupt person in power who just want power for themselves over everything else, most have reasonable homes and jobs and we have a system in place to try and protect the most vulnerable in society (possibly the system is abused by some). Yet we are still not always happy with our lot in life.

I pray that we can all be a little bit more tolerant of the needs of others, but also that we keep praying for a solution to bring these war torn countries back to a place they can support their citizens and that people will again feel safe. When god created our world it was beautiful, we are the problem, he created space for everyone, and provided resources for us all, we again are the problem, he showed love and compassion for others, we (some of us) have lost this. Let us get back to been a loving and caring world were everyone is treasured for their own merits and were we can all feel safe. As I said before I don't have an answer, but the lord does. We need to trust in him and pray for his ultimate guidance to keep everyone safe, world wide.

At work last week with my pre-school group we looked at emotions and families, very basic as they are 3-4 year olds, but they all talked about how they are made to feel happy, or sad, or grumpy or excited.

Happy was "getting sweets or ice-cream" "getting a cuddle from mum or dad"

Sad was "Mummy told me off for being naughty" "I hurt me knee when I fell over"

Grumpy was "when someone has a toy I want" "When mummy says I can't have sweets"

Excited was "my birthday" "when I go on holiday in an aeroplane"

All very child like and innocent, oh how I wish all children could have this level of love and people who protect them.

We then had a space to draw, or create their own family pictures, to support this I had printed off lots of peoples portraits and pictures, with different emotions on their faces and also all different nationality's, we talked about the pictures and not once was colour of skin talked about, the picture they didn't like was a "typical white English lady" why you ask? Well her hair was messy!!!! Oh to be a child and see the world like they do and be so accepting.

133 mission praise, father I place into your hands.

456 mission praise, make me a channel of your peace

Isaiah ch 16 v 3-5.

Give us a counsel render a decision, make your shadow like night at high noon. Hide the fugitives, do not betray the refugees. Let the Maobite fugitives stay with you, be their shelter from the destroyer. The oppressor

will come to an end and destruction will cease. The aggressor will vanish from the land, In love a throne will be established, in faith fullness a man will sit upon it.