

Easter 2020

Dear Friends at Christ Church,

'It was the best of times it was the worst of times' (Dickens). 'I trust in you, O LORD; My times are in your hands' (Psalm 31:14-15). I have been reflecting on time these past few weeks as I am largely confined to my flat because of my health history and age! It's been good to begin to tackle some of the tasks - like sorting out my office - that have been pending for far too long! It's also been a joy to have more time to read, do jigsaws and have phone conversations with family and friends.

As we approach Easter, my thoughts go once again to the importance of timing in God's plan for our world. As the apostle Paul puts it, 'When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons (and daughters)'.

A month ago, Edyth Banks and I enjoyed a fascinating 10-day holiday in Egypt. It was surreal to wake up on the first morning at our hotel in Giza to see three huge pyramids almost within touching distance! Were we in Las Vegas or just south of Cairo? Having spent 2 days exploring the Coptic quarter of Cairo, the pyramids, sphinx and the Egyptian Museum, we flew to Luxor to enjoy a 7 day cruise on the Nile from there to Aswan and back. A highlight of that time was our visit to the Valley of the Kings. As I gazed in astonishment at the tomb decorations dating back thousands of years, I realised in a new way all that Moses had sacrificed in 'forsaking the treasures of Egypt' to lead God's people out into the Sinai desert (Hebrews 11: 26). As we waited in the departure lounge at Luxor Airport early on 9th March, we were so grateful to discover that we were leaving for London just an hour before travel restrictions came into place. Truly our times are in God's hands.



The appointment of 3 new staff at St Mark's Church last September (all on 1 year contracts initially for work with the younger members of our congregation) means that I have been able to focus on the older folk. As Marcus and I are the only ordained members of staff, we were still busy caring for our 5 Sunday congregations, including the mission partnership church in Tremorfa, an area in the south of the city with many social problems. Now, during this time of lock down, the staff team are doing wonders in keeping in contact with our growing congregation.

I had provisionally planned to visit Indonesia again in early August to help with 2 Langham Preaching seminars for pastors and other church leaders and to say goodbye to my friends. Now, God willing, I hope to get to Indonesia for a final visit next year.

It has been good to have more phone contact than usual with my siblings during the past few weeks. Last October the 4 of us, plus 3 spouses, met up at David's home near Solihull for lunch. We plan a similar meeting later this autumn when I enter my 9th decade!



Rosemary, Janet, John, David

Easter blessings,

With my love and prayer,

Rosemary