

Monday 29th June 2020

New Beginnings

New beginnings occur every day and everywhere. Perhaps, in nature some of the new beginnings seem miraculous e.g. how young are born to the different species or how many different plants grow, wither and return the following year in a new cycle.

New beginnings have a wide range of sources amongst people – e.g. Children start a new subject, a new class or a new school. Adults begin new training, a new job or move to a new home or area. New relationships start. We take on new activities. When we take on anything new are we not usually aiming to make our lives better in some way? New beginnings may be challenging; they may be risky. We may wonder why we are going ahead. We might wish we had not come out of our comfort zone and taken that path.

Isaiah 43: 18 -19

'Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wastelands.'

God tells us in the Old Testament that He is doing a new thing. He is making a way for us in the wilderness. He is offering us living water in times when we are in the wastelands.

Are we perhaps in the wastelands right now? Have we been in them without recognising them for some time? Have we been trying to hold on to our church traditions and church buildings because we are fearful of what will happen if we do not do so? Have we been struggling while clinging to the past for we fear losing our old ways?

We shall need to listen to God's Word with open hearts. Our world has been rocked by COVID-19. We have been overwhelmed, shocked and frightened by a deadly virus. During its journey across nations it has given us a greater sense of our own mortality on earth.

In coming out of lockdown, our churches may have to rethink what they will do in the future to 'do church' for it will not be the same as it was before. Many changes will need to be made. We can either stumble half-heartedly over the challenges which face us or embrace them, work through them and even find joy in them. We shall need to be brave and strong. We shall need to work together in our churches and in our communities. We shall need to pray that we take the path that God wishes us to take and come out of the wastelands. We shall need to listen to God's Word with open hearts. This will be a new beginning for us all.

Amen