

LiFT Online – 24th March 2020

Welcome to LiFT online. We will be following our usual format with a few tweaks here and there!

As Spring arrives, bringing with it colour and new life in abundance, I am sure that you will have seen banks, grass verges and gardens awash with daffodils, but have you ever thought about the meaning attributed to them?

Traditionally they have both negative and positive connotations, but this evening we will concentrate on the latter. They are considered to be symbols of hope, new beginnings and new life and, because of its appearance during Lent it is also known as the Lent Lily, and so it is often connected with the Resurrection. Tradition also says that it is unlucky to give just one single daffodil as a gift as it will bring unhappiness, so always be sure to give the recipient a bunch!

That said, why concentrate on daffodils? You may remember that several years ago our Messy Church families planted some miniature daffodils in the shape of the cross in the grass facing the road and the garages, to remind all who pass by of the significance of Easter:



Six years later, almost to the day, I wondered how our floral cross had fared:



As you can see, it is still there but the volume of flowers has been considerably reduced and the cross itself just a little bit out of shape, which led me to thinking about the place of the cross in modern society, compared to decades ago. Maybe we could plant more bulbs, bringing new life, they would probably be different and grow at a different rate and the overall appearance would be changed, but fundamentally, the cross is central to it all. The analogy gives us plenty to think and pray about.

Which, perhaps, unsurprisingly leads us to our passage for personal reflection taken from Matthew 6.

Please read through the passage and if a word or phrase speaks to you, stay with it and ask the Holy Spirit what he wants to say to you through it.

Sometimes I find it helpful to read it through a couple of times, turn the Bible over and see which words come to mind.

Read through again and as you do so, thank God for who He is and for all that He has done and continues to do, for you.

Do Not Worry

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Our worship Song is “Lilies of the Field” by John Michael Talbot. Please follow the link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dGcZ1R7FBE&feature=youtu.be>

Lord Jesus, as we have listened to the words of the song, and as we rest in the final notes, please help us in our time of listening and prayer. We invite you now to join us in the power of your Holy Spirit to guide us into remembering those folk that You want us to remember and to intercede as You direct us. Amen

Please now set aside about 10 minutes of listening time. As always, split the time into two, listening firstly for words for the Church and then for each other. Allow the Lord to place a name or an image of someone in our Church family into your thoughts and then pray for them. Perhaps you could follow through by contacting them, just to let them know that you are thinking of them, and, if you have an encouraging verse, word or picture, please pass it onto them.

Intercessions

Please pray as you feel led. Obviously, there is plenty of content around this current pandemic. Pray for our families, local communities and the wider world. May I suggest one particular area to focus on. In our sermon series Reconciliation features prominently, and as I walked through the streets, it occurred to me that there are many families and friendships that have deep rifts embedded in them. This is a time when people need each other, so please pray for healing, forgiveness and reconciliation wherever it is needed.

The following prayer dropped into my inbox from You Version this morning.

A Prayer for Connection

Dear God,

We're grateful that You never leave or forsake us. And, we're grateful for the technology that helps us stay in touch with each other.

Give us the strength to endure this difficult season, and deepen our connection with You and Your people.

Today, help us remember that this time of social distancing and isolation will not last forever.

Empower us with an extra dose of Your love, peace, hope and joy. Remind us of Your promises, and please heal our land.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

YouVersion

May God be with us through these coming days and months

Keep safe

Margaret x