



September 13th 2020

**Greetings in the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ.
In this time of uncertainty,
we declare: Jesus is Lord!**

Trauma in the Bible

This week I read a fascinating article in the Church Times, based on an extract from a chapter “Bible and Trauma” by Megan Warner in a newly published book “The Bible and Mental Health: Towards a biblical theology of mental health (edited by Christopher Cook and Isabelle Hamley, and published by SCM). The issue of mental health and how we respond as a church is a vital one, particularly in the light of Covid19 and the increased pressures that many people have faced. We can't yet measure the full impact of the pandemic on mental wellbeing, but charities predict a wave of significant mental health issues as we try to come to terms with the loss and isolation many of us have experienced over these last few months.

The good news – and the crux of the article – is that we have a precious resource to draw on as Christians as we bring our own struggles before God, and as we try to support others around us. If you hadn't guessed, that resource is the Bible! Our scriptures are not just laws and teachings, but stories – stories of people who experience fear, anxiety, loss, failure, and pain, and who are trying to make sense of it all in the light of faith.

Megan Warner writes this:

What difference does it make to recognise that our scriptures are informed by trauma? I suggest four differences. First, that it means that readers can have confidence that the biblical stories are robust. The biblical books are not in any sense trite or fragile. They come out of the experience of individuals and communities who have gone through the most painful and violent experiences that life can throw at individuals. Second, reading the Bible through the lens of trauma lets us know that we are not alone; when we read biblical stories we know that our trials and tribulations are not unique. Third, the Bible offers us a “language and a literature of suffering: the Bible offers language to those who have no words. Finally, the Bible models resilience; storytelling is an important element of building resilience. Specifically, what is important for resilience is preparedness to be flexible in the telling of one's story, allowing it to shift and develop with changing experiences.

We have a God-given gift to enable and support us as we face the challenges of life. In the coming months, may we use it well as we share God's deep love for all with those around us.

With my prayers and love,

Anita

A prayer for mental wellbeing

This is a prayer written by Amy Simpson, in response to a request from a mental health charity. Amy writes: *As someone who struggles with depression, and has witnessed family and friends also wading through the mire of mental illness, it was a task I was eager to undertake. Mental illness carries a heavy weight of stigma and misunderstanding. In reality, it is both subtle and pervasive. It is varied. All of us swing somewhere on its pendulum. This prayer is intended to reveal Christ's presence within the pain and difficulty we all experience. Then, out of that state of sympathy, we can pray more fully for those who struggle with profoundly damaging levels of mental illness. May we pray with passion and with enduring sympathy.*

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. Although sometimes we feel we lack everything. Sometimes we cannot see what you have given us through the lie of what has been taken away. Show us how to see your blessing. Show us how to see your provision when the world teaches us an economy of fear and scarcity.

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. Refresh us, Lord. Let the raging waters be quiet. Let dry pastures be watered. Let us lie down and rest without fear.

He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. We so often turn from your path—believing lies about ourselves, about others, about you; taking on burdens that are not ours to bear; struggling to entrust you with ourselves, our family, our friends, and our circumstances. Guide us along your path of trust and contentment.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, The valley of depression, the valley of medication, the valley of sorrow, the valley of pain and abandonment, the valley of past wrongs done to me, the valley of despair, the valley of derision, the valley of fear, the valley of waiting, the valley of misunderstanding.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; Although we sometimes feel abandoned, you have not left us alone. You have not left us alone with our depression, with our sorrow, our pain, our illness, our despair, our fear, our waiting. You have not left us alone with the past wrongs that have been done to us, with the derision and misunderstanding of others. You have not left us alone. You are with us..

your rod and your staff, they comfort me. With your rod, you protect us from ourselves. With your staff, you protect us from the harm of others. Your truth comforts us, as we find our identity wholly and firmly locked up in you.

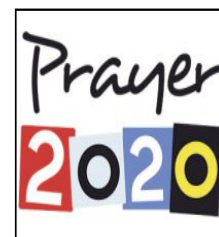
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Although we are surrounded by people who do not understand the weight we bear, the struggles we face, we gather to eat at your table. Although we suffer ignorant comments, laughter, and sometimes shame—we are worthy to eat at your table. We can eat our fill—even feast—because you have not despised us. You have made us welcome.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. You have made us worthy. You have made us chosen. You accept us with all our flaws, with all our illness and frailty, with all our failings. You have anointed us, *us*, to serve with you—our cup overflows with joy.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, Surely goodness and love will follow us. Surely goodness and love will chase us down—despite ourselves, despite others, despite our circumstances—goodness and love, by the power and grace of your Spirit, have found us. And will never let us go. **and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.** Forever. In health, in strength, in love, in mercy. Forever. Amen.

Praying together in 2020

HOPE Together are calling Christians of all denominations to pray on the 20th of each month at 20.20 for 20 minutes, so this Thursday! They say: "Through Prayer 2020 we are asking God to work through all that happens this year – personal witness; church outreach in villages, towns and cities; mission events and evangelism in all its many forms. Already this is catching the imagination of Christians around the world.



Prayer ...

In this very testing time for us all, do not hesitate to ask for prayer for any concern you have. We all face difficulties and challenges, but prayer makes a difference. In an emergency, call **Janet (07828 280455)**, and she will ask those on the prayer chain to pray for you.

Sunday 10.15am: simple service of Holy Communion

Please book in by 12 noon on Friday. If you have internet access, booking is via the Eventbrite website, using this link: <https://stpetersderby.eventbrite.co.uk>. For those without internet access, booking is by calling the Church Office (01332 360790). Please leave a message and we will book you in.

Please tell us if you are coming with others from your household. We need to collect name, address and phone details and keep them for 21 days in case we have to provide a list of attendees for track and trace purposes. The church building is now equipped with automatic hand sanitisers – just hold your hands underneath them!

Zoom details...

On a Computer, Laptop, Smart Phone or Tablet:

The easiest way is to click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/450891605?pwd=czNCTTJuaUJpQ3VIOVlnUm1zS0tKQT09>

Alternatively:

1. Open Zoom and select 'Join' or 'Join a Meeting'
2. Enter the Meeting ID: **450 891 605**
3. Select 'Join'
4. When prompted for the Meeting Password, enter **73837**
5. Select 'Continue' or 'Join Meeting' and you will be connected

By Phone – these are the numbers you must now use:

1. Pick any one of the numbers below (doesn't matter which), if one doesn't work, pick another: 0203 481 5240 ; 0131 460 1196 ; 0203 051 2874 ; 0203 481 5237
2. Dial the number and when prompted for the Meeting ID press: **450 891 605#**
3. You will then be prompted for a Participant ID, just press **#**
4. Finally, you will be prompted for the Meeting Password, press: **73837#**
5. You will be connected and able to hear everything that is happening

If you have any problems with accessing the service on Sunday, please call Anita.

Space to take notes from today's readings, prayers and sermon.

St. Peter's in the City Staff:

Acting Vicar/Associate Priest: Revd. Anita Matthews

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Building Manager: Melvyn Wood

Kitchen Supervisor: Gillian Wood

Church Wardens: Tim Benson, Sung-Hee Lee

We are a community of faith, hope and love in the heart of the city

Follow us on Twitter: @stpetersderby

www.stpetersderby.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Link: Revd. Anita Matthews

IN THE WEEK

**The church and church office are closed until further notice,
but telephone calls to the Office on 01332 360790 and
emails to office@stpetersderby.org.uk will be monitored**