

Words of Light and Hope

Helena Crockford LLM

This weekend marks a (nearly) significant birthday for my mother. She is not in great health, so we celebrated it as if it were, with a rare time of being together as a whole extended family. There were reflections on the trials but also the unexpected blessings of her reaching her great age.

In today's reading Abram's age was no barrier to God's promise and blessing (Genesis 12.1,3-4), 'The Lord said to Abram...I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing....So Abram went as the Lord told him' even though he 'was seventy-five years old.'. He can have had no idea how his assent to God would send blessings down the ages.

Other bible verses bless later life:

Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you." (Isaiah 46:4)

"They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." (Psalm 92:14)

"Gray hair is a crown of splendour, it is attained in the way of righteousness." (Proverbs 16:31)

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)

The poem 'Success' by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803- 1882) captures something on this theme:

To laugh often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty,
To find the best in others,
To leave the world a bit better,
whether by a healthy child,
A garden patch
or a redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier
because you have lived.
This is to have succeeded.



REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY
TEAM CHURCHES

Pew Notes

Service for next week 14th June:

9am: Mattins, St Andrew, Thurning

10:30am: Holy Communion, St Mary's, Reepham

4pm: Evensong, St Mary's, Gt Witchingham

For more information on any events please see our website or Facebook page or contact Joy to be on our weekly newsletter.

'Porch Prayers' Mondays at noon in St Mary's porch Reepham, to pray for God's creation

This started informally some weeks ago and we would now like to encourage others to join us in prayer using the resources provided by Canon Sussanah Gunner.

For more information on any events please see our website or Facebook page or contact Joy to be on our weekly newsletter. If you have any events you would like advertised please contact Joy by email parishofficerwv@gmail.com

Email parishofficerwv@gmail.com to submit articles or join the mailing list.

FACEBOOK: Reepham & Wensum Valley Events

WEBSITE: www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk

To contact the administrator Joy, please either email or call 07770672329..

Pew Notes are available to download from the RWV website and the E-newsletter

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact your Parish Safeguarding Officer. Details in the church porch or on the RWV website:
<https://www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk/>

Collect

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Genesis 12:1-9

12 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ^[a]³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." ^[b]⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. ⁵ He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there. ⁶ Abram travelled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring ^[c] I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. ⁹ Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

Romans 4:13-25

¹³ It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." ^[a] He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not. ¹⁸ Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ^[b]

¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. ²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²² This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." ²³ The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. ¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' ^[a] For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." ¹⁸ While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹ Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples. ²⁰ Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹ She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed." ²² Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed at that moment. ²³ When Jesus entered the synagogue leader's house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes, ²⁴ he said, "Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. ²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. ²⁶ News of this spread through all that region.

Post Communion

Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts: may our communion strengthen us in faith, build us up in hope, and make us grow in love; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.