



PASTORAL LETTER 27/1/2021



Today, I'd like to focus on what we can learn from a more humorous take on our lives. At my Trefoil Guild meeting on Friday this was shared as a thought. The only thing that we know about the author is that he is called Howard and he wanted to make everyone smile. I'm going to add my own comments in italics.

THE WOODPECKER MIGHT HAVE TO GO! BY HOWARD



Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark.

Have you ever considered how profound some Bible stories are, and how they resonate with you throughout your life? Pause for a moment if you can and try to recall a story that has had such an effect.

One:

Don't miss the boat. We are great at putting things off that we don't want to, or find boring, or we are scared of. If we do this we can miss moments that will illuminate our lives. How many of us who are currently trying to get to grips with Zoom initially thought about not bothering, and yet the comment that I keep on hearing is 'isn't it lovely to see people's faces?'

Two :

Remember that we are all in the same boat. What is happening right now is a shared experience, it may impact on us in different ways but there is a commonality in what

is happening to us. As such we can support each other because we have more insight into how we each feel.

Three:

Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark. The phrase that's often used is 'expected the unexpected', and yet a year ago we did not fully understand that we were on the brink of a pandemic or what might happen as a result. I don't know about you but I always prepare for bad weather. I've always got enough things in to not need to go out to the shops when it is snowing or icy. I think I took the guide motto 'Be prepared' to heart when I was young and it has stayed with me throughout my life.

Four:

Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big. There are lots of things in the news about the need to keep fit as this help us recover more easily from infection. But fit is not just about the body, it is also about mind and spirit. How are you keeping fit?

Five:

Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done. People are think that they are being helpful but there can too much criticism rather than supportive comment. And remember, if you are the person commenting on someone's work, do it with love, it is harder to support than to destroy.

Six :

Build your future on high ground. This sounds logical, but we often build things on ground that it is not suitable. Think of this in terms of relationships, they need to be built on and developed, they are not static. If a relationship is unstable we need to be able to work on it and sure it up.

Seven :

For safety sake, travel in pairs. It was John Donne who said 'no man is an island'. We are part of a faith community so we should never be on our own if we don't want to be. We need to care for, and look out for one another. It's part of our Methodist DNA.

Eight :

Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs. We often try to do too much because we want to be seen as efficient and yet what then tends to happen is that we end up not doing anything well. We need to find space to be able to achieve and to do it at a pace that works for us. It's OK to say no.

Nine :

When you're stressed, float a while... We all need to tread water occasionally to help us to relax and calm down in times of stress. Prayer is a great way to tread water in this sense. We all need guidance and our conversations with God help us to achieve this.

Ten :

Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals. *Look for guidance, that's fine we can't know everything. Our prayers are always listened to, and we often get surprising answers! We will never be challenged to do something we are not able to, if we look we will be shown the way, and sometimes that involves asking another person.*

Eleven:

No matter the storm, when you believe, there's always a rainbow waiting. *Faith gives us comfort, something to hold on to when everything around us is chaotic. In these days there have been more rainbows than we have witnessed in many a year. I wonder why?*

So there you have it, some reflections on what we can learn from Noah's ark. Just remember that the woodpecker needs to be doing the right job!

Every blessing, and stay safe,

Jacquie