Thoughts and Prayer for Today

Wednesday April 1st 2020

STOP PRESS:

St Giles Bear Hug reaches Archbishop of Canterbury!

*In a Tweet posted at 6.30 am this morning Archbishop Justin said, ‘finding the St Giles bear hug on You Tube has made my day!’*

**Psalm of the Day: Psalm 55**

*Cast your burden upon the Lord and he will sustain you (v. 24)*

Happy April Fools Day! Congratulations if you spotted that the headline above was a friendly pulling of the leg for today! However, it is true that the St Giles Bear Hug has reached as far as New Zealand where our dear friend Kathryn Unsworth has been stranded with friends on a holiday extending longer than they had expected it to! Thankfully, Kathryn and her friends now have flights back to the UK on April 11th. Please do pray that they will be able to get home as expected and for the 14 days they will have to spend in quarantine at Kathryn’s friends’ home following their arrival. Kathryn and friends, if you are reading this, we wish you well and our thoughts, love and prayers are with you!

The origins of April Fools’ Day are uncertain, but one theory suggests that it emerged out of a time of profound disruption and disorientation. This would date it back to 1582 when France switched from the Julian Calendar (where the new year began on April 1st) to the Gregorian Calendar (with new year set to January 1st as we have it now). At a time when communication was slow, you can imagine this must have caused genuine confusion and many, I suspect, thought it was ‘fake news’! In the disruption and disorientation we are all experiencing at present it can feel hard to keep up with communication, we can feel overwhelmed by the amount of information on offer and the task of discerning what is reliable and what is not. Yesterday I heard that all shops were being forced to stop selling Easter Eggs – which, to the relief of many (especially thouse who have ben fasting from chocolate for Lent), seems not to be true after all!

I know I have felt both excited and exhausted by the process of adapting to many technologies and forms of communication which are new to me.

The letter to the Hebrews (12: 3-13) which is one of the daily readings for today gives us this encouragement:

‘Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather healed.’

Many of us will be feeling ‘out of joint’ – it’s good to acknowledge that and to be kind to ourselves and others as we all readjust and ‘set straight paths’, asking for God’s grace and patience as we find the right pace at which to do this.

With much love in Christ, Gail x

**Prayer for today: Prayer for a Pandemic**

**(kindly sent by Stuart Oliver as part of Intercessions for last Sunday)**

Lord we ask you to lead us in our time of isolation.

Help us to believe that you are close by us,

keep us from making mistakes and help us never to disappoint you.

When we face hard decisions or difficult times or when we enjoy ourselves

may we know that you share these times with us. Amen

* Please pray especially for the family of Mary Jephcote who passed away last week and for her funeral on April 15th
* Pray for Shirley Phillips who is in Walsgrave Hospital. Give thanks for the Chaplaincy team there who have been able to be in touch with her and pass on our love and prayers to her.
* Pray for Tracey Harden, recovering from Covid 19 symptoms. Thank God for progress in the right direction and pray for this to continue.