

Stay Connected – Sunday 2nd June

First Sunday after Trinity

This Week's Reading

Bible Reading - Mark 2.23 – 3.6

Peter's Blurb

*O Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces.*

Hello everyone,

Well your Blurber-in-chief has serious writer's block this weekend. We have had so many significant events to tell you about in recent weeks – the revision of the rood screen (which appears to be unanimously approved of); the Kidz Takeover; Baptisms on de Beach; Mother's Day; AGM; etc. But this week- Aargh! We just held our normal services which were peaceful and lively respectively but nothing out of the ordinary to blurb about. I am in the doldrums🙄

Now there's an interesting word. Where does it come from and what does it mean? Turning to the Internet:

The "doldrums" is a popular nautical term that refers to the belt around the Earth near the equator where sailing ships sometimes get stuck on windless waters.

Known to sailors around the world as the doldrums, the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone, (ITCZ, pronounced and sometimes referred to as the "itch"), is a belt around the Earth extending approximately five degrees north and south of the equator. Here, the prevailing trade winds of the northern hemisphere blow to the southwest and collide with the southern hemisphere's driving northwest trade winds.

Due to intense solar heating near the equator, the warm, moist air is forced up into the atmosphere like a hot air balloon. As the air rises, it cools, causing persistent bands of showers and storms around the Earth's midsection. The rising air mass finally subsides in what is known as the horse latitudes, where the air moves downward toward Earth's surface.

Because the air circulates in an upward direction, there is often little surface wind in the ITCZ. That is why sailors well know that the area can be calm sailing ships for weeks. And that's why they call it the "doldrums".

All this nautical talk makes me think of the origins of the expressions we use in Bermuda to do with going "up" Somerset or "dahn" St. Georges. Now topographically it is actually not true that West End is higher than the East End but it would be true that to get to Somerset from (say) Flatts you would have to go up more hills than going the other way because the highest parts of the island run from Flatts up through Southampton

According to "The Bermudian" magazine:

"In Bermuda, if you are standing in Somerset you are "up the country", conversely when trying to get your bearings in St. George's just know you are "down the country".

Is that because Somerset is higher than St. George's? Well yes, but only in sailing lexicon. The phrases would have made much more sense to a 17th Century courier with a package, or perhaps some contraband, that they needed to get to the other end of the Island.

For a very long time, centuries even, Bermuda was bereft of decent roads to traverse the land. Most people travelled on small boats, with sailing the preferred mode of powering the boats (who wants to row to Somerset?).

Sailing around Bermuda back then could be, and still is, a lovely experience, except for the fact that our archipelago lines up lengthways with the prevailing South Westerly breeze. Without getting too technical, one need only understand that sailing straight into the wind is beyond the laws of physics. Instead, wind-driven mariners have to sail off in one direction for a while, at an angle to wind, and then turn back the other way, gradually working back and forth and “up wind” to their destination. The more acute the angle to the wind the shorter the trip. Coming the other way the wind is behind that boat and pushes it pretty much straight “down wind” (to St. George’s).”

So, you be the judge. At least, I think I have sailed myself out of the doldrums – for this week anyway. All of the other departments in the newsletter are back to usual with Gav’s talking and writing and with Helen’s story – I missed those the past couple weeks – and forthcoming events.

Please take special note of the **Senior’s Appreciation Lunch on Sunday, 23rd June** – see Invitation at the bottom of the newsletter and **be sure to RSVP for catering**. The last senior’s lunch at Christmas time was a bit unsatisfactory as we were competing with the Bake Sale, as I recall. This time it’s all about the Seniors so please reach out to those of our seniors of whom we see a little less these days and remind them that we are “Not just a church – but a family” and that they are part of the family too. Let’s get all our seniors out for lunch. 😊

Have a great week!
Peter

Fr. Gav’s Talk

Here is the text of Fr. Gav’s talk today.

Should I keep the Sabbath on a Saturday or a Sunday?

The concept of a seven-day week goes back several millennia, and in Judaism, the seventh day of the week was designated as the Sabbath. This was based on the book of Genesis where, over six days, God made the world and all that is in it, but on the seventh day God rested. So, how come most Christians do not keep Saturday as their Sabbath but choose Sunday?

The resurrection of Jesus on a Sunday meant he rose from the dead after the seventh day of rest. This was hugely symbolic, because if the original Genesis creation was represented with seven days, then the eighth day signified the new creation that Jesus came to inaugurate. In other words, Jesus was the firstborn of a new creation that started with his resurrection and we too are part of that new creation. The early Christians wanted to retell the story of Jesus life, death, and resurrection every week, and as Jesus died on Friday and rose on the first day of the week, a Sunday, they aligned themselves with the resurrection, and they began to celebrate and gather on the resurrection day.

Christians have historically had a habit of appropriating the days that honoured other gods, and as the resurrection of Jesus took place on a Sunday, the Roman emperor Constantine, who was a Christian, appropriated the day of the sun god, Sol Invictus, and declared that Sundays should be a public holiday. This firmly secured Sunday as the Christian day of rest or Christian Sabbath.

The fourth Commandment states, ‘Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy’, therefore does this mean Christians are breaking one of God’s commandments by not keeping the seventh day a Sabbath? Not at all.

Jesus himself came to fulfil the law and the prophets, including the Ten Commandments, summed up as ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbour as yourself.’ The Ten Commandments were given to the Jewish people by God at a specific time and for a specific reason. Now, that, of course, does not mean they are irrelevant, however, we do not follow many of the Laws of Moses — both those in the written and oral law. Why? Because we are no longer under the law. Jesus fulfilled it so that we do not have to — not in a salvation sense. In other words — none of us could keep the law perfectly, but Jesus did!

So, for example, the law says that all males should be circumcised but not all Christians do that! The law was there for people to follow to be made holy, however we are now made holy through Jesus Christ. Yes, there are morals found in the law that we keep today — absolutely — they are the eternal morals of love, for example, the sanctity of life, respectfulness, generosity, kindness, and so on. And these are morals that stem from our relationship with Christ, as we allow the Spirit to transform us — from the inside out!

Therefore, the day we keep for a Sabbath is not what we call ‘salvific.’ Our salvation does not depend in it and it is not a life-or-death matter if you choose to keep the Sabbath on a Saturday or a Sunday or any day for that matter. The Jewish law commands that a Sabbath be kept, but as Christians are no longer under the law but under grace, the important thing is not the specific day of the week, but observing a holy day of rest. Keeping a Sabbath is important for our physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing. It is about putting down work and having a complete day of rest — and yet this is something most of us, including Christians, struggle to do.

The wonderful thing about Christianity is its ability to be relevant to any culture or in any circumstance. For me, like those who work in care professions, I work on Sundays and Sunday can never be my Sabbath, therefore I make another day in the week my Sabbath and this day is much more than a day off or a day of rest, for God’s command is that we keep the Sabbath holy. This means that on a Sabbath we engage in those things that draw us closer to God and put down those things that draw us away from God. For each of us, those things we need to shelve for 24-hours will be different. For me, one of the things I lay down is my phone and the constant distraction of social media. The phone goes in a drawer and I spend my Sabbath with my loved ones, out in nature, and enjoying beautiful locations and yummy food — all things that, as I give thanks, draw me closer to God.

Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for humans and not humans for the Sabbath.” In other words, the Sabbath is for our benefit and to work with how we, as human beings, are wired. Keeping a Sabbath is not a legalistic requirement, but designed to bless us, enrich us, and draw us deeper into a relationship with God and God’s creation.

In our fast-paced culture that sometimes puts the demands of work over ourselves, our family, and God, let us strive to keep a Sabbath, a holy day of rest, to stop, recharge, and reconnect with the source of our very being. Amen.

Fr. Gav’s Article

The text of Fr. Gav’s article in last Saturday’s RG can be found here:

<https://www.royalgazette.com/religion/lifestyle/article/20240601/whats-love-got-to-do-with-it/>

From the Distaff Side

Helen’s Talk – Froggie Baby!

In the Rectory garden there lived a group of tree frogs. They spent their daytimes sleeping, but were very active once the sun went down. The people who lived in the house could hear their chorus of voices every evening, even though they had no idea what they were talking about.

One night the youngest tree frogs were gathered around the bottom of the tallest tree in the garden, all arguing about whether they could reach the top of the tree. They decided to have a competition, and see who would reach the top first. They gathered the older tree frogs together as their audience.

The older tree frogs were laughing at them, telling them that there was no way they would be able to get to the top. It was an awfully long way, and the young tree frogs only had short legs that were yet to develop real muscles for climbing.

The young tree frogs waited at the bottom of the tree for the queen tree frog to give the signal, then they were off!

As they made their way up the tree the young frogs could hear the shouts from those at the bottom:

“You’ll never make it!”

“It’s too far!”

“You are too small!”

“Your legs are weak!”

“Wait until you get bigger!”

Only one voice amongst the hundreds of voices was giving any encouragement.

One by one the tiny frogs gave up, turned around and climbed back down the tree. At the halfway point only four of the little frogs continued to climb.

Soon after they had passed halfway the frog who was trailing behind gave up, and climbed back down. This was still a great achievement and the queen tree frog was very impressed and wanted to know how this little frog had been able to achieve such a feat.

The little tree frog explained that she was hearing impaired, so she didn’t hear the shouts from the bottom telling her that she wouldn’t be able to manage the climb. Because she believed in herself, she was able to climb halfway to the top.

Soon after two more gave up climbing at the same time and climbed back down. They told the queen that they had made a pact, and had encouraged each other as far up the tree as they could. When one felt like giving up, the other urged them to keep going. When they were tired, they took turns to spur each other on. Because they believed in each other, they both got closer to the top.

The last little frog was triumphant! He made it all the way to the top, before turning around and climbing back down to where the queen was waiting for him. He told her that he was able to tune out the other voices, by concentrating on his father’s voice in the crowd, the only voice that was giving encouragement belonged to him. Because his dad believed in him and kept telling him he could do it, he got to the top.

If things are difficult for you right now, remember these four frogs. Tune out the negative voices and believe in yourself. Listen to those around you who are encouraging you.

And, most importantly, concentrate on your father in heaven, for he will always love, support and believe in you, and through God all things are possible.

Pastoral Corner

Home Visitations

Please contact Rev Gav or Helen if you would like to be on the list for home visits.

In our prayers

We ask for your prayers for Al Spearing, Myer Tucker, Gill Rossiter, Sam & Marjorie, Phyllis, Gwyneth & Ralph, Jill, Barbara (Dyer), Sonny, Vinette, Marianne, Nancy, Gail, Janet & Gary, and Robert & Kalreeta.

Pentecost Sunday - Recovered



On Pentecost Sunday we were not able to bring you the video of the Talk due to computer issues.

It has now been recovered and you may listen and watch here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nk7Ly_A2op0

This Sunday



This Sunday's Talk may be listened to and watched here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8mjSFHZB3I>

Previous services and other videos are on our YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/StMarksChurchBermuda> and/or our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarksbermuda/>

Next Sunday

Coming Sunday, 9th June, there will be Peaceful Worship at 8.00am. Our Contemporary Worship celebration at 9.30am returns to its normal format. Children will enjoy Junior Church activities in the Hall the we gather to enjoy fellowship and refreshments following the worship.

Coming Events

- **Car Boot Sale** – The next Car Boot Sale will be held on **Saturday, 22nd June** (I think);
- **Senior's Appreciation Luncheon** – the St. Mark's Guild will be holding a lunch for our seniors on **Sunday, 23rd June** following the 9.30 a.m. service. (See Invitation below for details.)

Church Life

Down the Debt – St. Mark's needs your help in reducing the size of our debt which inhibits future investment in our church. If you feel you may be able to help with this please go to <https://stmarks.bm/donate/> where you will find details and an opportunity to donate.

Links:

Just a reminder – if you want to check vot's happnin' or vot's comin' dahn de road – you can find it all at our:

- **Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/stmarksbermuda/>
- **YouTube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/StMarksChurchBermuda>
- **Website:** <https://stmarks.bm/>
- **Holy Trinity Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitychurchbda>

End Stuff:

Here's a thought. It is always a great time for us all to review our pledging. If each of us is able to increase our pledge by 10% that would be a great boost to our cash flow (which as you know is tenuous at best). And, with our in-person collections still inhibited by numbers restrictions, please consider the opportunity to convert to pledging by Direct Deposit (see below). Your support is vital.

As always, another huge thank you to all of you who continue to support our church family with your pledges and donations via online transfer.

Direct deposits can be made to: Butterfield Bank for the account of:

St. Mark's Church Wardens – A/c No. 20-006-060-104125-100.

- **For Pledge Envelope donations** – if you already have a Pledge envelope number just be sure to enter your Name and Env # e.g. "Nash Env 190" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.
- **For Grave Payments** – when paying Grave Maintenance fees be sure to enter Grave Number and Name of Lessee e.g. "Grave 273 Peter Nash" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.
- **For Cash donations** – if you do not have an Envelope # just be sure to also enter your Name and "Donation" e.g. "Nash Donation" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.

Use of the "Beneficiary" space is IMPORTANT – it is the only way we have to identify who is paying and for what.

Come to St. Mark's – not just a Church but a family!



*St. Mark's Church Guild
Invites you to our
Appreciation Lunch for Seniors
on
Sunday June 23rd, 2024
At 12.00 noon in the Parish Hall*



RSVP

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