

# Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

## Facebook Posts

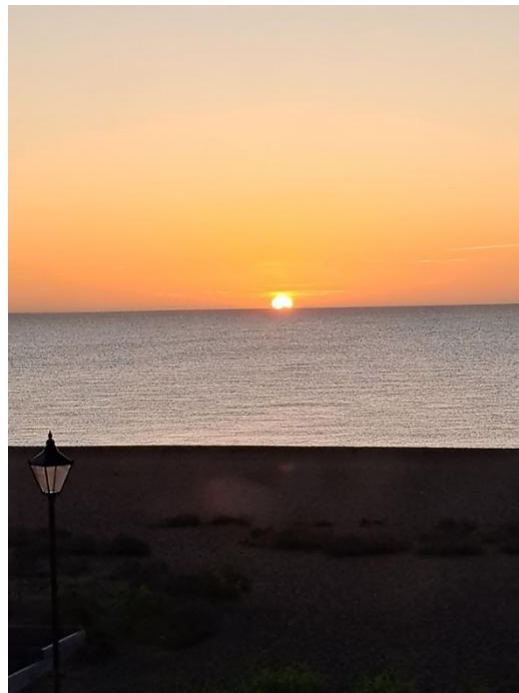
### April 2025

#### A thought from Aileen Fox:

We are daily bombarded with news of awful events all over the world. It is very easy to avoid turning on the TV or radio. If we do there will be horrific pictures, disturbing reports and people saying it's a horrific happening and others saying it's all fake news. The latest comments coming from governments, our own and other countries, make us pause and wonder what will affect us with price rises. Yet away from all this there is so much beauty around and yet we can be guilty of walking around and not seeing it.

The snowdrops were beautiful this year and already primroses can be seen on the banks and soon it will be bluebell season. So much beauty and we forget that God wants us to enjoy this beautiful world. Yes, we need to help and support others and pray for peace and an end to all the horror. That we may all start to live together with people of all faiths and none and give glory to God.

Sometimes it's difficult to get through a day without feeling down or unloved we have those dark days but God is with us even on those days we would rather forget. Every day is different if we only look outward. It might be that we saw a new flower, a baby duck or we met someone and had a chat. I had the opportunity to take a short break in Aldeburgh, Suffolk one of my favourite places. I remembered the sunrises and so I set my alarm and watched them, sometimes from my window (the very early one) and another day wrapped up and headed to the shingle beach. Each day was slightly different depending on the clouds and certainly in the build-up as light blues, yellow and green filled the skyline before the big golden ball rose from the horizon and the orange light filled the sky. Each day the sun rose and each day it was at different times. It was a reminder to me that every day is and can be slightly different. Yes, the sun rises and sets, we go about our routines but there is an element of new beginning every morning. God is with us in our dark days and in our joyful times, he loves us however we are feeling.



## **A thought from Rev Derek: Made in the Image of God**

I apologise to those of you who love a game of football and look forward to sitting watching a match on television, but I lost interest in the beautiful game back in the 1970s; I had a brief encounter with the game during the days when Don Revie's Leeds United squad won the FA Cup and was one of the premier football teams in the country. My interest dwindled after that. My heart sinks today when I see that my Saturday evening television viewing is interrupted because some football match is being televised, because "everybody loves football" sadly I don't.

Consequently, on Saturday 22nd March 2025 I found myself scanning the options to avoid watching the match on the BBC. I somewhat reluctantly watched Britain's Got Talent, a programme that would not necessarily be at the top of my list of favourite viewing options. I played cards on my tablet, only half listening to what was happening. I stopped playing cards when I spotted a large group preparing for their audition. Dressed primarily in daffodil yellow there was a mix of people with a range of mixed abilities alongside several young children dressed in their school uniforms.

The stage was almost filled, and we learned that the act was called Electric Umbrella and the man who had created the group had recognised that music was a language spoken by people regardless of the labels they wear in life. Rather than me explaining what happened during the audition, I recommend that you see for yourself, the audition is available on YouTube if you follow the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srcq-vlzhDY>

I have now watched this several times and I still find it moving. What I find most incredible is that the young children in the group don't label the older members as "disabled" as many adults would, they don't distinguish difference, they simply love all the members of the group as friends and what we witness is something beautiful.

There is a lot of talk these days about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and in a few moments on the stage in Blackpool (I think) during this audition the nation witnessed this at work. The words of the song spoke the language of celebrating difference, and we witnessed this at its very best. The group received a Golden Buzzer which gives them an instant place in the final week of shows to narrow the process down to find the eventual winner. There was hardly a dry eye in the place as the whole group celebrated and neither was there one in our house. I believe that we witnessed something special.

If it hadn't been for a football match, I would have missed this moment, and have been reminded of the importance of the words God made us in his own image and in these diverse people auditioning, I think that I saw something of the Image of God.

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Please pray for the congregation and community in Walsingham



## A thought from Rev Jonny:

As I prepare for Palm Sunday and reflect on Jesus' humble entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, I recall my recent visit to a petting zoo with my sister and niece, where the goats, while sometimes gentle, often displayed quite the opposite behaviour.

The goats, as you can see, were competing for the feed that we were giving them, with the smaller ones being shoved out of the way. My niece was getting quite cross and began to shout at the larger, bullish ones, and my sister and I explained that they don't know better. But her reaction stayed with me. There was something strikingly honest in her sense of justice and compassion for the smaller, more vulnerable ones being pushed aside. In her frustration, I saw a glimpse of the heart of God – one that defends the lowly, uplifts the meek, and challenges the proud.

As we wave our palm branches to welcome the Prince of Peace, I'm reminded that Jesus came for those often overlooked. He calls us to celebrate his coming and live out his values of humility, justice, compassion, and peace.

So perhaps, even at a noisy petting zoo, small parables unfold – moments where God speaks through a child's outrage and a goat's unruly appetite.





### A thought from Dee Moden:

You can see what prompted Wordsworth to write his poem *"I wandered lonely as a cloud"* when you look around at the wonderful swathes of daffodils everywhere. It's like heralding an awakening of the power of nature unfolding and creating joy, as buds appear from the dormant trees and bushes. Every day we see changes and regrowth inspiring and lifting our spirits. It is good to see and feel the sunshine that we have enjoyed in this past couple of weeks, and it gives hope for things to come.

There is a lovely hymn: by the Author, Anglican Priest and Hymn writer John Macleod Campbell Crumb written in 1928. *"Now the green blade rises from the buried grain"* which speaks of the darkness of Good Friday to the glorious Easter morning. Again, this hymn, as in the poem, giving us hope, but more importantly, in this hymn, in the death and resurrection and the love of Jesus encompassing all.

Verse 4: *"When our hearts are wintry, grieving or in pain, then your touch can call us back to life again, fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been: Love is come again like wheat that springs up green."*



**Rev Anne writes** - it seems that inspiration strikes for these Facebook posts when Merlin and I are out for our walks. We thought we'd try another route around the woods, but the path we followed turned a corner, then we were between these two wire fences in the photo. The further we went, the more the path narrowed. Do we turn around or persevere? Continuing on in hope, it came to a dead

end, bordered by fences. But just over the fence there was a field and it looked like we could get through to the part of the wood I wanted! If anyone had seen me, they would have been in hysterics, as I tried to get my legs over the barbed wire! One leg got over fine and I lifted Merlin over, but I had a harder job with the other one!! Eventually I managed it without causing any damage to me or the fence, and we trotted around a ploughed field. Yet another barbed-wire fence was ahead, but this had already been trampled on making it much easier to step over! Someone had obviously been that way before!

We are nearly through Lent, as we head for Holy Week. Have we persevered with our discipline throughout, or have we turned back when it got tough? Does it help knowing that other Christians have been this way too? Let's keep on in hope and faithfulness as we follow Jesus for this last part of his journey.



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Join the President and Vice-President as they travel through Holy Week and share a short video reflection. If you click on the link below you will be able to watch the episodes on YouTube.

[https://youtu.be/YreSYjMJSZU?list=PLoWWaJT3-\\_P4YuBlrCppYz7LTwYFOMD1e](https://youtu.be/YreSYjMJSZU?list=PLoWWaJT3-_P4YuBlrCppYz7LTwYFOMD1e)

## A thought from Rev Derek: Heroes

Those of you who know me well, will know that I am not particularly a football fan. Living in East Anglia I soon learned that there are predominantly two football teams, Norwich City and Ipswich Town, and having worked in Norwich and then in Ipswich at a point when each team has been promoted to the premiership, I have found church folk and neighbours who have been engaged in hero worship. Today is Palm Sunday and it is a day when hero worship is at the fore in the gospel story. In much the same way that people line the streets to welcome their heroes, often on open top buses as they crawl through the streets to the cheers of gathered crowds, Jesus enters Jerusalem to the sound of crowds of people hailing him as their king, the one who was going to save them. It was only when I started thinking about Palm Sunday that I tried to think about who my teenage heroes were.

During the early 1970s Don Revie's Leeds United squad (pictured above) were invincible, this was the one time in my life that I took much of an interest in the beautiful game, and I knew the name of every player in the squad. Whilst I never went to see them live, I followed their success with interest as did most of the lads at school. The team just missed out on winning the FA cup final in 1971, and in 1972 they were back up there, in with a chance for a second year. We didn't have a telly at the time, so my brother and I went to my aunt and uncle's to watch the semi-final, not only did they have a telly, but they also had a colour set! Even fifty years on, I can remember the joy, when they won and were going to Wembley. I remember sitting in my dad's van in the driveway at home, listening to the commentary on a small transistor radio while trying to watch the action on next doors telly. That was the year that they won, and I am suddenly reminded of the lengths people will go to simply to see their heroes.

Football is perhaps a good illustration of how things can change quickly, and one season fans can be celebrating as their team is promoted and yet all too soon, they can find themselves commiserating as fortunes turn. Today we celebrate the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we know how the story unfolds in just a few days, and it is all too easy for today to be tainted by the events of tomorrow, yet I believe that it is important to share in this moment of celebration and it does us no harm to engage in some hero worship. If people overreact and do daft things when a football team brings it home, how much more important it is to worship the saviour of the world.





Please pray for the congregation and community in Watton



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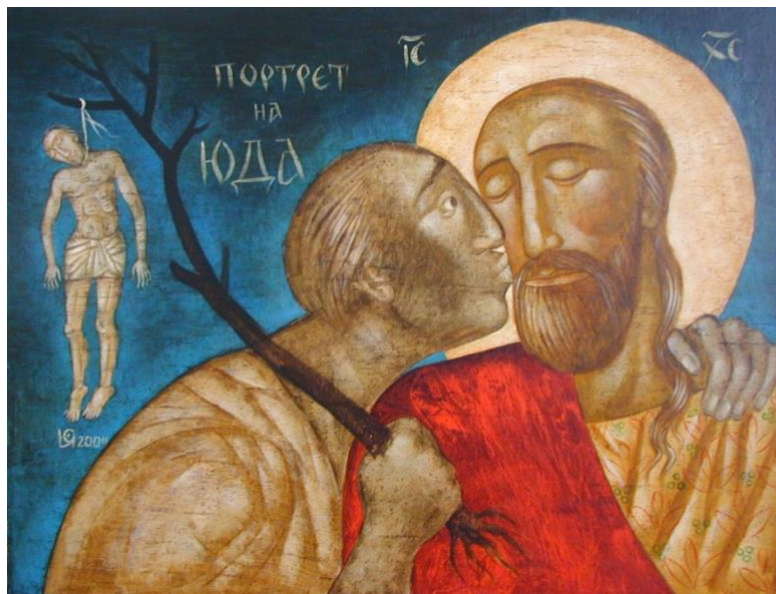
### A thought from Rev Jonny:

Today is Holy Wednesday, we pause in the hush between celebration and sorrow. Palm Sunday's hosannas still echo faintly, but we know that the road ahead leads to the cross.

This day invites us to sit with the tension - of love betrayed, of loyalty questioned, of choices made in silence. In the shadows of this week, Christ still chooses to walk toward suffering, for love's sake.

As we journey through Holy Week, may we open our hearts to the quiet work God is doing in the waiting, the watching, and the wondering.

Image: Julia Stankova, Portrait of Judas (2004)





# Hot Cross Bun Coffee Morning

Easter Raffle

Bric-a-brac

Books



Saham Hills Methodist Church

Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup>

**10 – 12.00**



**METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN**  
FOR WOMEN  FOR JUSTICE

**FOR CHRIST**  
JOIN US FOR EAST ANGLIA DISTRICT  
SPRING DAY at  
**TRINITY MC DEREHAM**  
**NR19 2EP**  
**WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY 2025**



**Speaker LIZZIE ZUKIEWICZ**  
DON'T BOX ME IN- I'M MORE THAN WHERE I'VE BEEN  
Coffee/tea served from 10.15am for 11am Start  
Closing tea 3.30pm

**MWIB  
MERCHANDISE  
BOOKS**

**BRING AND  
BUY STALL**

**ALL ARE  
WELCOME  
TO ATTEND**

 PLEASE BRING  
PACKED LUNCH





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### **A thought from Aileen Fox:**

Good Friday (images from the Pilgrims Cross visit to Walsingham Methodist Church on Easter Sunday 2024)

When looking at the resources for Palm Sunday I read an interesting article headed Crowds, Friends and Critics. It referred to the happenings on the entry into Jerusalem, what we call Palm Sunday and reflected on how the crowd came together through word of mouth, seeing healings and hearing teaching from Jesus. The Friends of course were his Disciples, full of admiration and care and worried about Jesus' insistence on going to Jerusalem. Then the critics, the Pharisees, the scribes and others who totally did not approve.

Today is Good Friday a solemn day of witness as we try to imagine the pain and suffering of our Lord Jesus on that walk to the Cross and crucifixion. Sometimes we go on walks of witness but they are only re-creating that walk, we will not physically suffer the taunting of the crowd, the agony, pain and lingering death. On Easter Sunday we will rejoice and celebrate the good news that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive!

Then what happens? Do we move on and walk to Pentecost? Is the pain forgotten? Those 3 words Crowds, Friends and Critics have stuck in my mind and I will try and use them in my Christian journey. Am I one of the crowd quick to jump on the bandwagon and approve something with enthusiasm but a bit further down the road ignore it. Then Friends, do I see Jesus as my friend? How do I treat other friends, do I help and support them through good and bad times? Do I make the effort to keep in touch? Critics, oh dear this is the tough one, do I criticise others for what they do or don't do? Do I criticise decisions that are made without explaining my views? Can I perhaps agree to differ but still support in prayer at least. Crowds, Friends, Critics words to ponder on now and as I journey on.



## **A thought from Rev Derek: Sunrise Worship**

One of the features throughout my life has been early communion on Easter day. For many years we would go to chapel for the 8am communion service, which was followed by Easter Breakfast. My mum was always in the kitchen and one thing that always tested her was how to boil a dozen or so eggs to perfection, she solved the problem by putting all the eggs in a stocking and lowering them into the water at the same time, the stocking was tied to a wooden spoon, which lay across the pan and she simply lifted the spoon out when the timer said so, the perfect boiled egg for everybody! My mum was delighted that she had cracked the egg problem and years later I am impressed by her ingenuity.

Towards the end of our time in Yorkshire I attended two sunrise services, the first was the perfect expression of what Easter morning ought to look like in my mind, we walked through Undercliffe cemetery and stood around the Joseph Smith Monument, with the city of Bradford down below us and worshipped until the sun rose, there was something quite spine chilling about walking through the place of death in the darkness and walking back in the light of a new day. The following year our sunrise service lacked one fundamental element, sun! We gathered in the graveyard behind Clayton Heights Methodist Chapel, one of the highest chapels in Bradford, located almost halfway between Bradford and Halifax, there was thick fog swirling around us, and it felt more like a funeral scene from a Bronte novel, than celebrating the dawning of a new day, the best we could do was imagine the sun.

I often feel that we launch far too quickly into celebrations on Easter Day, starting our worship with the proclamation "He is risen! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!" I believe that the first Easter Day started with a group of traumatised women heading to the tomb, the day started with mourning, which quickly turned to confusion. It is understandable that when they found the tomb empty, their response wasn't "He is risen, Alleluia!" but rather that somebody had stolen the body and in doing so had taken away from those who were grieving losing a friend a place that they could identify as his final resting place, which is still important to people today.

The dawning of the new day comes when Mary Magdalene looks into the eyes of the man, she assumes is the gardener and the penny drops. That is the moment when the revelation of the risen Christ is recognised, that is the dawning of a new life for Mary. I always find it fascinating that the first resurrection appearance is reserved not for the eleven disciples who Christ has been preparing for this, not to the Church of their day, the great leaders of the Jewish tradition, but to Mary Magdalene, who might well be named as the thirteenth disciple, Mary is important to Christian believers, because she was at the foot of the cross when Jesus died and is the first witness to the resurrection.



## **A Prayer for Easter Day from the Methodist Church of Great Britain:**

When everything was dark and it seemed that the sun would never shine again, your love broke through.

Your love was too strong,

too wide,

too deep for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love

dance and spread

and burst forth

with resurrection light.

Gracious God,

We praise you for the light of new life

made possible through Jesus.

We praise you for the light of new life

that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.

We praise you for the light of new life

that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,

will live in us each day;

and that we will be bearers of that light

into the lives of others.

Amen.

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## **Rev Helen Hollands, Chair of District, Pastoral Letter for Eastertide 2025**

Dear friends,

As I am writing this we are not too far from Holy Week and Good Friday will soon be here.

We will go from the songs of praise of Palm Sunday, to the anger in the temple, a meal with precious friends, and the devastation of Good Friday before we reach the beckoning light of Easter Sunday.

On Good Friday we remember that the cross of Jesus stands as a witness to all the pain and suffering in the world and we can't avoid being aware of the brokenness of the world right now.

In the cross, all our hatred is heaped upon Jesus and in this great moment of giving love, he dies a most humiliating death. In this moment Christ stands alongside all who are broken and despairing, all who are unfairly treated, all who are crushed by the hatred of humanity. Darkness falls and seems to overwhelm the world.

But we know that is not the end of the story.

The women go to the tomb in the early morning of Easter Sunday.

The dawn is emerging with the promise of daylight, a new day, a new beginning. All of the gospels talk of the women who are first at the tomb. In John's gospel account we read that Mary Magdalene runs to the disciples to say, 'I have seen the Lord', she cannot keep silent but they say it must be an idle tale and they don't believe her.

It is only later, when they share in their own experience of the risen Jesus that they realise Mary's truth. Perhaps they were a little ashamed then.

Resurrection might seem like an idle tale to so many in our world today yet our faith inspires us to speak out about hope and new possibilities. We cannot pretend that life is always easy. There are times when we feel pushed to the limit, exhausted or stressed. Family pressures, money worries, exam stress, relationships that crumble, we know these things are currently a reality for many people.





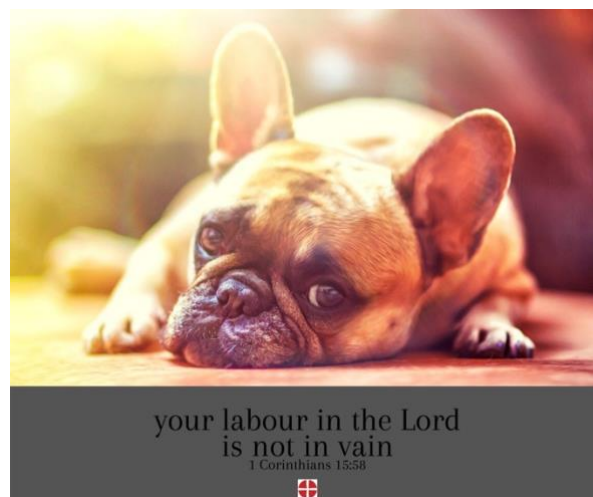
Yet, in the resurrection of Jesus we are encouraged to think differently.  
When we feel we have no hope left, God is there with us.  
If we are blinded by tears God whispers our name and reminds us that we are loved.  
When we feel all is lost we come to realise that we are not alone.  
When we want to give up God lifts us up and says, I am here, you are important to me, we will do this together.

I have planted numerous seeds recently, every year, and when they germinate and grow I am bowled over that such tiny things can produce, mostly, prolific growth, flowers and food. They inspire me with hope.

This is the Easter message: Love will win, death does not have the last word. This is good news and something worth talking about. It is not an idle tale, it is a story to live by.  
Alleluia! Christ is risen... He is risen indeed. Alleluia!  
Sending you and yours, prayers and best wishes for Easter.  
Helen

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Please pray for the congregation and community in Wells



Happy Easter from all at [Swaffham Methodist Church](#)



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The Methodist Church in Britain receives with deep sadness the news of the death of His Holiness Pope Francis, and gives thanks for his life and Christian witness.

As God receives Pope Francis into God's arms of love, we pray that he may rest in peace and rise in glory.



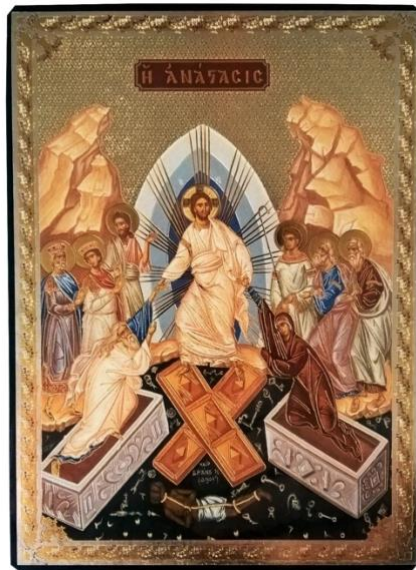
## A thought from Rev Jonny:

Hell stands empty.

This icon represents the Resurrection, indicated by the Greek text "he anastasis." In Orthodox tradition, it depicts Jesus Christ descending into hell, defeating death (symbolised by the figure at the bottom), and freeing all humanity. The figures being lifted are Adam and Eve, illustrating that hell is emptied. John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople (died 407 CE), concludes a famous homily with these words about Jesus Christ:

He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it. By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive. He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh. And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Hell, said he, was embittered, when it encountered Thee in the lower regions. It was embittered, for it was abolished. It was embittered, for it was mocked. It was embittered, for it was slain. It was embittered, for it was overthrown. It was embittered, for it was fettered in chains. It took a body, and met God face to face. It took earth, and encountered Heaven. It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen.

O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown.



**HOLT METHODIST  
CHURCH**

**AFTERNOON TEA**

**FRIDAY 25TH APRIL**

**2 - 4 PM**



**A DELICIOUS SELECTION OF  
HOMEMADE CAKES  
STALLS & TOMBOLA**





**Rev Anne writes:** After a busy Holy Week and Easter Weekend, it's been a joy to relax and have some time off. I enjoy visiting gardens, and love the blossom at this time of year. The blossom is beautiful but would we appreciate it so much if it was here all year? It has a serious job to do, of course, attracting insects to come and pollinate. But then the blossom drops and leaves grow to feed the tree. Fruit will only come later if all this happens now.

We celebrate the beauty and wonder of the resurrection - but what comes from it? Is it just something to enjoy on Easter Sunday or does the same power that raised Christ transform our lives?



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#### **A thought from Rev Derek: Pilgrimage**

The BBC have screened an excellent programme at Easter for the last few years. The premise of the programme is that a group of seven or eight celebrities from a variety of different backgrounds walk in the footsteps of pilgrims in some of the most beautiful scenery in the world. Not only does it make for good television, as the group of strangers with a range of different experiences and opinions about religion venture through some breathtakingly amazing places and meet some of the most devout religious people on their journey, but there is something deeply spiritual as the ordinary people talk about their interpretations and understanding of faith and listening to the views of others, I think that it makes for some decent television.

The issue of pilgrimage has been more prevalent in my life this year than it ever has been before. I feel blessed that we have a chapel in our circuit that dates back 230 years. The village of Walsingham in North Norfolk was one of the most important pilgrimage sites in the world and was even known as "England's Nazareth". Centuries later, Walsingham continues to be a place of pilgrimage and during Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter Day, a group of pilgrims slept overnight in the Dereham Church as they made their way on foot carrying a wooden cross up to Walsingham.

I have always loved the analogy of life being like a journey, unless we have no alternative, we will normally embark on a journey with some kind of final destination in mind, and with the start point and the destination clear in our minds, we would normally think about the landmarks along the way, the places we might stop for a while, places of refreshment and places to sleep. We might think about the people we share our journey with, the casual acquaintances we meet along the way, some will share in most of our journey, others will come and go, but the journey is a special experience, it helps us to get a clearer understanding of life and to grow as people.

Maybe it is good for us all to ask the kind of questions explored by the pilgrims on the BBC programme

- What is our understanding of religion?
- How do we relate to people of other faiths? Or none?
- Do we believe that we are right and everybody else is wrong?
- How important is faith in the modern world?
- Who do we feel comfortable sharing our beliefs with?




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Please pray for the congregation and community in Wendling



#### A thought from Rev Jonny:

On Saturday, Seb and I went to a protest to support trans rights **where about 1,500 people gathered in Norwich**. This has been spurred on by the Supreme Court's decision to understand a particular section in the Equality Act 2010, which is creating tremendous problems for people who are trans, intersex and gender non-conforming. Rights that were previously put into the law are being taken away and this is a deeply concerning trend in the UK and beyond for many vulnerable groups.

Protest and social justice are key parts of what it is to be people called Methodists and in Our Calling (which was made in 1998), it includes challenging injustice as a part of what we are called to be as people who love and serve God. We must challenge injustice and protect vulnerable groups - trans, intersex and gender non-conforming people are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society today (they have higher chances of being homeless, experiencing physical and sexual violence, and much more).

And if you don't agree with those who identify as trans, intersex or gender non-conforming, remember that it was someone who, if born today, would identify as such in Acts 8:26-40 who spread the Gospel to the Ethiopian people. Philip did not question this, baptised the Ethiopian as they were and they are now one of those in the 'communion of saints'.



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**Be strong and  
courageous; do not be  
frightened and do not be  
dismayed, for the Lord  
your God is with you  
wherever you go.**

JOSHUA 1:9

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*by his wounds  
you have been  
healed*

1 Peter 2:24

