

Dear Ipswich City church family

Prayer

Today and tomorrow we should pray for our new Mayor and Councillors whoever they may be, and for all those who had hoped to serve but have missed out. Their new role will be made all the more complex by the Corona Virus. This is a hard time to be involved in community leadership.



Daily Reflection

"Jesus began to weep." (John 11:35, NRSV)

"Jesus wept" as the King James version of the Bible has it, is the shortest and most powerful verse of the Bible. Its power lies in the fact that it shows the eternal Son of God and a real human being. Bible scholars argue a little over why Jesus is crying. Some say he is angry at death. Death robs us of our loved ones. It may be only for a while until we are reunited in the world to come, but we are separated and even when the death is "good" or a "merciful release" that is still very hard.

Others argue that Jesus is grieving. He is sad, with Mary and Martha, and for himself at the loss of his friend and their brother. This is something that comes to us all. Today a couple of things reminded me of my mum who died less than two years ago and even now I shed a tear or two of sadness.

Others argue that Jesus cries because he knows what is coming. He is just over a week away from being executed on a Roman cross and all the suffering that that will mean.

I think all these could be true at the same time. Again as I think of my mum I have sometimes been angry and sad. I am also reminded that one day death will come to me. Jesus as a real human being experienced all of this. If he is also God, as I believe, then God has experienced it too.

In the weeks and months to come there will be much grief and anger, sadness and loss. God knows what that is like, not just from heaven, but firsthand. He has stood where we have stood when we weep by the grave of a loved one.

If you read to the end of John 11 and John 20 you learn that Jesus also gives and experiences new life. Death is not the end it does not have the final victory. For Jesus is “the resurrection and the life”. (John 11:25)

As those who trust in the hope of resurrection and who know that God is also in our loss and suffering, we can be a great source of strength for family, friends and neighbours.

Jesus thank you that you have been where we have been and felt what we have felt. Strengthen us in the coming weeks and months and remind us that you also share new life with us too. Amen

Rev. Andrew Gillies