

Rector's Letter - Rev'd Jeremy Trew - April 2025



Dear All

This year Easter is late, which means a long spring term for the schools, followed by a slightly-shorter but-still-oh-so-long summer term. Will teachers and children survive these lengthy stretches? The date of Easter varies so much because it is tied to a lunar calendar which functions quite differently from the solar one we are more used to. Sorry if this variable date for Easter causes you problems. Sadly this is not something we can blame on people half way around the world, as the current way of calculating the date of Easter was settled at no less an august place as Whitby, North Yorkshire, in the late seventh century. The arguments thrown about at the time as to when this holiest of festivals should be celebrated had little to do with piety and humble religion, and a great deal to do with politics. Mind you, the very first Easter had more to do with politics than religion. The people who campaigned for the death of Jesus did so, not because they had tested his claims against the teachings of their faith and found him wanting, but because they feared the political fallout if he turned out to be who he claimed to be.

“When people tell me that Christianity is not political, I ask them which version of the Bible they have been reading,” said Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Christianity has been politically active for all its two thousand years; whether that has been as a political movement, campaigning for the abolition of slavery and the relief of the poor; or, as a tool of the power brokers in the campaigns of the crusading popes and kings and in examples such as Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine and Ukraine today. To say that religion and politics do not mix is to say that either politics is not concerned with the fundamental needs of people, or that religion is other worldly, and only that. Jesus demonstrated that God was willing to get into his world and get his hands dirty. He was not afraid to be bloodied in order to make a point and broker a solution concerning the greatest of human problems – our guilt and loneliness.

Christian churches light a new candle each Easter because it reminds us that God's light shone through our darkest act – the murder of an innocent man. The difference that event makes is far from other worldly. And so is Christianity.

Best wishes

Jeremy

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