

The Rector's Ramblings: "Gorgeous Green" – August 2021

Just ask anyone who knows me, and they will all agree that I am not a gardener! However, my complete lack of green fingers doesn't mean that I do not appreciate the beauty that is all around us, or the importance of the environment for our very existence, so I was delighted to support the Church of England's commitment to become "Net Carbon Neutral by 2030" and at a local level we will be looking at how we can do more, and to hopefully achieve "Eco Church" status. *(If you would like to know more or to help us in this important task do get in touch or visit <https://www.cofesuffolk.org/exploring-faith/in-our-communities/in-the-environment/>)*

One of the joys of summer is the explosion of green everywhere, even in cities. Dark green pine trees, soft green grass for picnics, tender green leaves that get darker through the summer.

Next time you are out and about as a family, see how many different green things you can count, and maybe even collect a few things to take home and press inside a heavy book. Pressed leaves and flowers can make beautiful pictures. You can even use them to create home-made cards for birthdays and other celebrations.

Summer is a wonderful time for planting too. Try planting seeds or bulbs with your child to see how they can grow when they are fed and watered. Amaryllis bulbs grow fast and have beautiful big flowers, which children will love. If you want to grow something to eat, why not try rocket, which can be harvested as soon as four weeks after planting?

Your local church will probably feature a lot of green fabric over the summer. During this time, Christians just get on with growing in our life with God, like the plants are doing. And like the plants, to grow, we need feeding spiritually. Praying is a great way to feed our growing faith.

Long summer days and nights can be a good time for prayers. People sometimes worry about how to pray and what to say, but my rule is to keep things simple, I don't think that God is that impressed with long words or lofty language just for the sake of it, but is more concerned at what is at the heart of it, so if you are not sure, or you want to help your children to pray, start with something as simple as saying thank you to God for something you're really grateful for, or asking for God's peace at bedtime each night. These are three examples of simple prayers you could try:

Saying Thank You:

God the Father, who made us, we thank you.
God the Son, who saved us, we thank you.
God the Spirit, who holds us in love, we thank you.
God, who is everywhere, thank you for being you.

Bedtime:

God, who is like a mother hen watching over her chicks,
Keep me under your warm wings as I sleep.
Send me good dreams.
And help me wake up ready for another day.

Prayer for God's help:

Father God, sometimes I am scared.
Sometimes I am worried.
Sometimes I need help.
Sometimes people I love have problems.
Please be with me and help me,
Like shepherds caring for sheep.

Mark

The Revd Mark Woodrow