**The Rector's Ramblings**



Do you ever find yourself listening to the radio, or watching an old show on TV, and when a song comes on that you haven’t heard in years, you start singing along, word perfect, and then wondering how you managed to remember it so well? Or maybe somebody quotes from Shakespeare, or Dickens, and you can finish the quote, or maybe tell them what comes next, because you studied the play or book at school, but you hadn’t realised that you still remembered it? The memory of the song, or the play, may also take you back, in your mind, to your school days, or to what you were doing, or who you were with, when you first heard the song.

On Sunday (31st), as it is a fifth Sunday in the month, we will be using the Book of Common Prayer for our service at East Dean. For a lot of people, the BCP was the service book that was used at every act of worship as they grew up – indeed until 1980 it was the only service book authorised for use in the Church of England – and the repetition of the service for all those years means that when it starts, many people find that they don’t need the order of service, the words come back to them as easily as singing their favourite song from yesteryear.

Of course, the thing about the BCP is that it is written in the language and the form of 1662, with the use of thee and thou, and also the inclusion of some words that we either don’t use very much these days, or which have completely changed their meaning. In the confession we ‘acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness’, meaning we admit and regret our many sins, but to modern ears ‘bewail’ is often to moan about something, and a ‘manifold’ is better known from engineering where it is a pipe with several openings to allow gas or liquid to enter or leave (no, I’m not an engineer, the definition is thanks to the Cambridge Dictionary).

But it’s not just words from 400 years ago that have changed their meaning over time. When texting first started in the 1990’s, the use of LOL meant Lots of Love, but it soon changed to mean Laugh out Loud – and you don’t want to get them mixed up! The advent of social media has given new meaning to old words – profile, swipe, like, even friend can now mean someone you have never even met, and may not actually like if you did!

And then we have what George Bernard Shaw said are ‘two countries separated by a single language’ – in other words the use of language in Britain compared to the United States. There are some obvious examples – trousers or pants, pavement or sidewalk, football or soccer, waistcoat or vest! And then there is the one that caught us out many years ago – some visitor attractions in the US have the sign ‘No Entry’ over their gates – which doesn’t mean, as we thought, that we couldn’t go in, but actually means that entry is free! Maybe they were saving money by not putting ‘No Entry Fee’ on the sign!

There are numerous examples in our everyday life where changing a single word can affect our understanding of what we read or hear, and so it is a blessing that Jesus’ commands, teachings, are straightforward, simple, and easy to understand. Even with the multiple Bible translation that are out there, the basis of our faith can be summed up in a few simple, straightforward, phrases. No confusion, no alternative meaning.

 ~Love your neighbour as yourself.

 ~Treat others as you wish to be treated.

 ~Go the extra mile in helping others.

 ~Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the homeless.

 ~And the greatest commandment of all – Love the lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

Simple, to the point, and no confusion!

*Rev Sarah*

A memorial service for Dot Barkham will take place in Singleton Church on Saturday 6th September at 12pm.

**Worship in the Valley Parish**

# 31st August

**Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer**

## 10am All Saints, East Dean

**Rev Sarah Manouch**

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*Please note that I am part-time. My principal working days are Friday and Saturday as well as Sunday. I am not available on a Thursday.*