

## RECTOR'S PINT

After my last letter I wrote about 'wilding' a part of our lawn. 'No-mow May' is a grand idea, but as far as garden lawns are concerned, moving into 'no-mow June', and then onto 'no-mow July', was not, perhaps, such a grand idea! I fully appreciated that this wouldn't be an instant wildflower meadow, and that creating such areas are hard, but worthy work. After just over two months, I was mindful of the story of the vicar admiring the old gardener's wonderfully kept garden, his prize-winning Dahlias and his abundant and beautiful vegetable plot. Ever the one to use his encounters with his parishioners as an opportunity, the vicar remarked, 'My, what a sight, we really must thank the Good Lord for all the abundance he provides for us'. The gardener replied, "Ah that be true. Mind you vicar, you should have seen the state of his place when it was left to the keeping of the Good Lord and before I got my hands on it!" As I said in my last letter, our churchyards are wonderful spaces in which we can manage 'wilder' areas. It is clear now that the wild spaces that I have allowed to develop in my garden also now need managing. Stewardship does not imply neglect!

So, my grass had to be cut, and it became a metaphor. The day after I started tidying up, I read Psalm 90. It's not a comfortable read, as it talks about the transience of all life:

"For a thousand years in your sight are as but yesterday, which passes like a watch in the night. You sweep them away like a dream; they fade away suddenly like the grass. In the morning it is green and flourishes: in the evening it is dried up and withered."

I really appreciate the Psalms; there is an honesty in those writings which reflects the full experience of life, and not just the good bits. Whenever I read them, I will now also read an accompanying meditation from the Christian writer, thinker, poet and priest, Malcolm Guite. The rest of this reflection will be his hope-filled meditation on that Psalm.

A cosy comforter, a lucky charm?  
Not with this psalmist, for he praises God  
From everlasting ages, in his psalm.

A God of refuge - yes - and yet a God  
Who knows the death that comes before each birth,  
Who sees each generation die, a God

Before whom all the ages of the earth  
Are like a passing day, like the cut grass  
In Larkin's limpid verse: 'brief is the breath

Mown stalks exhale'. So we and all things pass,  
And God endures beyond us. Yet he cares  
For our brief lives, his loving tenderness

Extends to all his creatures, our swift years  
Are precious in his sight. In Christ he shares  
Our grief and he will wipe away our tears.

(From David's Crown 2021)

Simon