

Dear Grayshott,

February 2020

As the year settles down, and we get used to writing 2020 on documents, it is good to reflect on life, and to survey the horizon around us. February will mean different things to each of us. The obvious one all over the shops is Valentine's day! But to others it will have significance in business, in the garden, and so on.

I have been privileged to lead the funerals of a number of quite well known Grayshott people, their services have gathered large numbers, and they have been times of reflection, and celebration, as well as the obvious sadness. It has been wonderful to see good numbers attend these services in support of the family..

All of us are at different stages of life, and in different circumstances. I know that to generalise too much about life is hard, however there are some things that are helpful to observe. One thing is that the pressure of life for many of us is high. Depending on our life stage, and the question of how to keep going is a relevant one. The smart phone, sold as the great aid to modern life, is ramping up the pressure to respond instantly.

In a recent TV programme called the 'Twinstitute', they demonstrated that the comparative performance of two groups, (separating identical twins) doing the same intelligence test, one with a mobile phone sitting unused on their desk, the other with their mobile phones confiscated, the group without the mobile phone performed 5% better than the one with the phone next to them, suggesting that we reserve some of our mental capacity on alert, perhaps wondering what other people are doing.

At Michael Moore's funeral (known as a local gardener) I suggested that his simple rhythm of life, focussed on his garden, made him an antidote to modern life. In self-help literature, and magazines there are often suggestions for how to de-stress, but very rarely is there a mention of the invitation to come to stop and be still in a church, and to pray. The rhythm of monastic life was exactly this, an antidote to life's pressures, and at 6pm on the first Sunday of the month, we hold a monastic night prayer service called Compline, 25 minutes long, usually sung using unaccompanied Gregorian plainsong. Those who come love it, as they are transported by the music, prayers and readings.

This month we have a review of Pete Greig's book on How to Pray, and of course you are all invited to all of our services, including the 11am Communion on Thursdays, if Sundays are difficult for you. Come, stop, put your phone down, and experience the presence of God with us at St Luke's. With Love,

Jeremy and Claire,

Rev. Jeremy Haswell, your vicar.  
Vicar of St Luke's, Grayshott