

From the Chaplain...

The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be brought low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways shall be made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. (Isaiah 40. 3-5)

These words have resonated down the generations among those who, at different times and in different places, have felt themselves struggling in a wilderness of uncertainty. Such was the case for the people in exile for whom Isaiah was written, and, indeed, for those in this Sunday's Gospel who come to the literal wilderness to hear the preaching of John the Baptist (Luke 3. 1-6). They have been drawn from their towns and cities to encounter a prophet who speaks to the turmoil they feel within themselves and all around them. John's call is the same as that of all the prophets before him: 'prepare the way of the Lord'. This is the work given to every generation that finds itself struggling to make sense of God's will in the face of human disorder. Yet as clear and direct these words may sound, they must not be conflated with what follows them. For the work of preparation we are called upon to undertake is not the same as the work that God himself promises to do. And the call to repentance is emphatically not a call to presume too much about our own human capacities. We are asked simply to prepare the way, to clear some space in the wilderness of our lives. If we prove willing, we may find that when God finally reveals his glory, we are part of the space in which he chooses to do it.

This Sunday, we are fortunate to welcome the Bishop of Southwark, the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, as our president and preacher. Please do join us, so that we can offer Bishop Christopher a warm welcome. I know that he looks forward to returning to the Chapel, for which he has a longstanding fondness dating back to his time as the bishop of Woolwich.

Lastly, please note that due to the Trinity Laban winter graduations, the Chapel will be closed to the public on 10 and 11 December. This means that the Wednesday Said Eucharist will not take place. This service will resume in the new term on 7 January 2025 at the usual time of 1.05pm.

Yours faithfully,
Robert

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