



ROB'S BLOG

## February 2013 – Covenant

With Easter being early this year, Lent begins in February, not long after we've finished Epiphany - God made manifest to the whole world following the celebration of his birth - and then we move so quickly to the journey towards his death, and celebration of resurrection.

In the brief pause between the two this year, we shall renew our covenant with God. A strong Methodist tradition, but with roots in German Protestantism and deeply Biblical themes, the renewal of a covenant with God is rather like the renewal of marriage vows. It's about recognising the other partner in a relationship - recognising God's love, devotion, and faithfulness to us, and recognising that deep in God's psyche (if that's appropriate language!) he longs to be in relationship - with his creation, this world, and ultimately all people.

Initially, to fall in love is an easy thing, everything in the garden is rosy; to let that love blossom into a formal, public relationship involving promises is to take it a whole step further. Then, to live in that relationship so that it transforms, shapes, moulds, and becomes an integral part of you is to live in a covenant. The word contract is so legal, covenant involves human frailty, the possibility (perhaps the inevitability) of failure, difficulty, frailty, and just plain waking up some mornings not wanting to do it any more. Human frailty involves sliding away from the love without even knowing it sometimes. Yet the other partner, God is always there, never falls away or gives up, and always, always, always welcomes, renews, chooses, and decides to be faithful.

Looking again at sustaining our spirituality in Housegroups this year has reminded me of my initial 'yes' to God at the age of 17. I've changed a lot since then, I've learnt a lot about God that I didn't know then (and about myself too!), I've argued with Him, I've rested in Him, I've loved and served Him with a passion, and I've found myself sneaking back to Him in the darkness hoping He wouldn't notice I've been away.

But each year, in the Covenant service, with its very formal words, its deep traditions, and its setting with Holy Communion, I've found the renewal of His promises to me, and mine to Him, an opportunity to make the conscious decision to renew that 'yes' whatever it may mean. This year, setting just before Lent begins seems a most appropriate time to do that again.

Sunday 10 February at both On-Line and 10:30 – the opportunity to renew our covenant relationship with God.

See you then!

God bless

*Rob*

