

2 Peter 3:1-7

The Promise of the Lord's Coming

This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you that you should remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour spoken through your apostles. First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts and saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!' They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water, through which the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgement and destruction of the godless.

When will the world end? When will humankind so damage this planet that we can no longer live upon it?

These are more the sorts of questions that may be in the minds of people today rather than the question about when will the Lord return. That question though was on the minds of the Christians Peter was writing to.

In the early Church there was a high expectation that the Lord would return fairly quickly after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. What form that return was to take did not have a one-form answer. In response to the supposed delay in return Peter reflects upon the nature of the world in terms of the original creation, the great flood of Noah's time and a time when the current heavens and earth will be judged by fire.

In answer to questions we may be asking today regarding the planet there again is no one answer. There are some who are very concerned and here are many that are not worried at all, either because they perceive that "nature" will sort out our mess or there is nothing we can do about it so lets keep living the way we live.

At the District Synod last Saturday the issue was raised regarding our care for the environment as the Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District, the District our Circuit belongs to, is the first District to have signed up to register its commitment to work towards achieving the status of an Eco District.

- Should we as a congregation just ignore the problem of climate change and let others do something about it? Government perhaps.



- Should we be more caring about the beautiful world God has given to us as his caretakers?



The District Care of Creation Group is in the early stages and is urging people who care about the environment to help write, live and inspire others to shape a care of creation rule of life (or policy if we so choose to call it) for the District. We are also seeking those voices who are not interested in care of creation so that this group can be diverse and engage in meaningful conversations. If you are interested in being part of the group please contact myself, Michael, and I will put you in contact with the coordinator.

Sunday 20th

Philippians 1: 21-30

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.