From The Rectory - The Love of God

As I prepare this piece the nation is in mourning following the death of our late Queen. This is the end of an era. For many of us, myself included, she has always been there, a trusted constant in an increasingly uncertain world. What now, what happens when our trusted constant is no longer there?

Queen Elizabeth II was much loved and respected. From staunch royalists to ardent republicans and with all flavours in between, this respect and affection crosses just about every boundary. Her life of service, commitment and self-giving, lived out these past 70 years, has earned her our loving affection. This love is for the person she was, not the office she held.

Last Sunday I read these words; *The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. …. Great is your faithfulness* (Lamentations 3:22). This bold statement of faith becomes even bolder when you consider what the author was experiencing. Jerusalem with its temple, had been destroyed. The people in exile were trying to come to terms with what had happened. Lamentations is a book of lament. Yet, in the midst of five chapters of painful soul-searching, lie these words of hope.

*The love of the Lord never ceases* - Never. Life may be painful, we may get things badly wrong, yet God’s love for us never ceases. This is not a promise that life won’t be painful at times; but an assurance that we are not abandoned. God’s love is the energy that feeds us and empowers us to keep going, to love in turn.

In the days following her Majesty’s death, King Charles paid tribute to his mother’s faith. Her faith and trust in God gave her the energy to be that person we know and love, and to sustain that through 70 years. We are not all called to high office, or conspicuous public positions. We are all called to be the people God created us to be.

God loves us, just as he loves our late Queen. Are we prepared to embody his love, and live it?

Rev’d Philip

18 Sept