

“To say a great big thank you I mustn’t forget.” Thank you, we have so much in our lives to be thankful for, especially during these troubled times. Now I know at times it may seem hard to be thankful but when we look at the grand scheme of things, we don’t really have much to complain about, do we?

It’s not just society at large that needs to learn the impact of being thankful. Often in the Church, we have neglected the power of such simple words and what a kind expression can do for someone.

We might often thank someone for going out of their way to help us, but how often do we thank people for the little things they do? The turning of the pages on the book of remembrance, changing a light bulb, putting up notices, or opening and closing our churches – all these little jobs are carried out by someone, because they care enough to do them.

One of my favourite sayings is ““If thank you is the only thing that you ever utter, it will be enough.” And why?, because we are God’s people, and because God loves us at all times and in all places, if we can only praise God by saying “thank you,” it will be enough.

In junior church this month, whilst preparing for harvest, we have been talking about giving, receiving and about saying thank you.

For the past six months here in Yalding we have run a foodbank helping those among us who are having a hard time; when you make up 8 bags of food in one day you realise maybe your day isn’t that bad. But to run a foodbank takes more than just making up bags. It starts with people donating food, people sitting at church to receive that food, people stocking the food in the temporary storeroom, making up the bags and delivering them – so to all those people – we owe you a great big thank you.

Receiving a thank you is sometimes hard, I’m one of those people that finds it hard to take a compliment and always feels a little embarrassed when one finds its way to me; but to receive a thank you, when you don’t think you need one, this goes a long way. It’s easy to forget that sometimes the person saying thank you can get as much out of offering their thanks than you do for receiving it. We need to learn to be gracious, and to accept that thank you.

Last week we discussed with the children the work that a missionary does and about those here in our churches, and how we can say thank you to each of them. Those who share the Good News of Jesus with us, and those who plan, play, lead, and sing music with our choirs. Those who print and deliver readings, letters, and magazines, or who contribute to our website each week. They will all say they don’t need to be thanked, and are probably a little embarrassed that I am mentioning it, but they help us draw closer to God, so we offer each of you a great big thank you.

Our NHS, our teachers, our shopkeepers, our bin men, post office men and women, each of these people doing their job, what they are paid to do, but each day they have continued to keep some form of normality in our lives, I wonder how often we thank them? Just because it’s their “job” doesn’t mean they don’t deserve our gratitude.

Last week in a reflexion I wrote, I thanked our youth here in our Benefice of Yalding, Laddingford and Collier Street, and my reason for thanking them, was just for being themselves; I wonder how often we say thank you to someone just for being who they are?

So today, to all of you here at our All Age service whether you are with us physically in church or if you are listening to us online, or reading this from the paper, I want to say a great big thank you, because you are an important part of our community, and an important part of God’s Church.

Amen.