

St James: Thought for the Day – Saturday 25th April 2020

- Taken from Garth Hewitt's e-news (www.garthhewitt.org)

The Day We Postponed Hope!

Concerts for me for this year were about to start in March – I had had one 'Quiet Day for Activists' down in Devon in February, which had been a very encouraging time, but I was looking forward to the new tour – *In the Storms of Life*. This was due to start in Swansea on the 14th of March. But it was exactly around this time that all the concerts began to be postponed. I was very disappointed, but obviously this was the right thing to do.

St James Clapham

After Swansea, the next concert I was due to give was at St James', Clapham, on the 20th March. I had

been asked by the vicar, Rev Kit Gunasekera, to do a concert on the theme of hope. The church was combining with other churches in Clapham Park and community groups in the area, to put on various events including a photo exhibition, all under the banner of 'Hope 2020'.

I found cancelling Kit's concert particularly traumatic – to actually cancel a concert on hope somehow seemed rather shocking! Sort of "no hope now – we have to postpone it until later". I feel this could end up as a song – 'The Day We Postponed Hope'!

But Kit has been busy, and the photo exhibition which they held at the church is now online, and he's included a couple of my songs, *Something for the Soul* and *Let Nothing Disturb You* – so hope hasn't been completely silenced!

The photos, sent in by the community, say something about a vibrant, diverse, spiritual and yes a hopeful community. I look

forward to going back there soon - but meanwhile, **have a look at Hope: An Exhibition** – I hope you enjoy it and feel encouraged.

St George, the Palestinian Patron Saint of England

*St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem,
where Garth is a Canon*

**This newsletter is going out on
the 23rd of April – St. George's
Day**

**That St George was a
Palestinian is often a surprise**

to people. So here is a prayer/meditation to use around this time to remind us of the lessons we learn from St. George.

He is known as 'the healer' – we can be thinking of those involved in healing in our own communities and around the world in these difficult days.

Prayer/Meditation for St George's Day

**God, the distant memory of the martyr
St George**

Can still inspire and challenge us.

This saint from Palestine is still remembered across the Middle East

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As the Healer,

And as "the Green One" who protects the environment –

He brings the faiths together

Because he is respected across the faiths,

So in England where he is our Patron Saint

this encourages us -

Especially in this time when we need healing-

To support one another,

To respect different viewpoints and faiths,

And to look after this wonderful world we have been given.

It reminds us to love humanity and love our world.

God, let the witness of a martyr
Who stands for the values of your community,
Against the powerful empire of domination,
Remind us of the journey we must take -
A journey showing compassion, mercy and justice to all
So that our world might be healed in these difficult times
And brought back from the ways of violence
to the ways of wholeness.
May any ideas of excluding the other be removed
from our minds and lives,
As we realise that in you, giving God,
there is no scarcity of blessing.
We do not have to try and own you or define you –
You have already defined us
By making us in your image
And by showing us the example of your vulnerable love.

Amen