

# WEEKLY SERMON

[communicate@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:communicate@blackburn.anglican.org)



## Unpacking our Fears

I've just got back from my summer holiday in North Wales. The weather has been perfect – too hot to climb a mountain, but just right for walks to pubs along beaches!

But when the holiday is over, back home the unpacking has to be done. I find myself going through unworn clothes and unused stuff promising that I won't take so much next time. But the joy of UK holidays is being able to pack the car full of stuff.

There is room for a picnic rug; a spare coat; a bagful of games; guidebooks; maps; a spare picnic rug; your own pillow (go on, be honest, who else does this?); tea bags and milk. Yes, I know, they DO sell them in Wales, but what if I can't get a brew?

Then I find space for walking boots; trainers (I might have needed them if I'd gone for a run); walking sandals; shoes for rainy days; binoculars (yes, I used them, and saw ospreys and puffins); tea towels (sometimes not provided); kitchen wipes and a spare loo roll – as you never know.

Did you know that we pack for our fears? What you regularly over-pack reveals something about what makes you feel safe and secure.

One member of my family always takes too many coats and jumpers – so that's a fear of being cold.

Another family member crams her spare space full of snacks, crisps, chocolate – fear of being hungry.

My mother will take a holiday medicine chest – fear of illness.

Some people pack too many maps – that's a fear of being lost.

Guidebooks – that's FOMO (fear of missing out)!

Chargers, spare chargers, battery packs, spare phone – that's fear of losing connection.

When you are flying with luggage costing extortionate amounts per kg, you have to travel light, and take risks.

A friend walking on a long pilgrimage just carried a tiny backpack, going with the flow, dealing with the risks as they arose.

Do not be afraid. Fear not. Confront your fears, don't pack for them, and don't carry around fear's excess baggage. What in life do you hold on to, and carry with you, because of your fears?

Jesus said: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you."

Can you take the risk of faith? Leave the baggage of fear behind you enough to trust in Him?

I try, but I'll still pack those tea bags!

**Rev Nancy Goodrich**

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