

Midweek Musings 2nd June 2021

June 2, 2021

Walking Around Clare Common

(By John Sargeant)



A few weeks ago, I was out with our dog Max, for his early morning walk. It was around 06.30 on a beautiful sunny Sunday morning with bright blue sky. As I began to walk up Jacob's Road, I found myself musing about what I should muse about today.

Suddenly I became aware of a loud rapid tapping sound coming from the direction of the nuttery. When it stopped, after a few minutes' similar sounds from different directions answered the call. It was of course woodpeckers, communicating with one another by banging their heads on distant tree trunks - can anyone tell me why woodpeckers don't get a headache, or dementia like footballers who head the ball too often?

As my walk progressed there were different sounds; the two-tone wakeup call of a cuckoo, the twittering of the songbirds in the hedge rows, the warning call of a pheasant disturbed by my (or more probably Max's) presence. The sounds of God's creation which He declared to be good. The sounds of nature only broken & spoilt by the occasional big silver bird roaring its way down the flight path into Stansted Airport and the dull rumble of vehicles on Cavendish & Stoke Roads.

*O Lord, our Lord how majestic is your name in all the earth.
You have set your glory above the heavens.
From the lips of children & infants you have ordained praise (Psalm 8)*

We do that walk almost everyday; spring, summer, autumn, winter, sunshine, wind, rain or snow, every day is different. Max ever hopeful that he will spot a rabbit, hare, muntjac, full-size deer or even a fox to chase across the field.

Some days you may be able to spot a barn owl hunting for its breakfast on the waste ground above the cemetery

Or a buzzard roosting in the tall trees by the old waterworks or hovering almost motionless on a thermal high up in the sky. Or maybe there will be a kestrel above the allotments hoping to spot a rodent for breakfast. Then there's the swallows in & out of the old barns where they have their nests.

Foxes have holes & the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head. (Luke 9: 58)

Each morning, the sun rising in the East paints beautiful pictures in the cloudy sky every shade of yellow, orange, red and even purple, ever changing, never the same:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where his voice is not heard. (Psalm 19: 1-3)

It's a world of constantly changing colour as the fields, flowers, trees & hedges change with the seasons. Walking back across the green common two weeks ago it wasn't green because it had been transformed into a sea of yellow buttercups.

The hymn writer^[1] wrote:

*O, Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the works thy hand hath made;
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed...*

*When through the woods & forest glades I wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur, and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.*

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee, how great Thou art! How great Thou art!

^[1] *How Great Thou Art*, orig. Swedish/Russian trans. Stuart K Hine (1949)

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