

Clergy Letter - 'The bearer of this passport.....'



Have you plans to travel abroad this year?
Have you checked that your passport is still valid?

When you get your passport out it might be one of two colours. If this picture was in colour, you would see, on the left, the burgundy United Kingdom passport which

has been legal whilst we have been part of the European Union. On the right is the new blue passport which has been introduced as we prepare to leave the European Union.

You will be pleased to know that I do not intend this letter to add to the Brexit conversation, but rather to reflect on citizenship.

Our passports (whatever the colour) are very precious. Without them we cannot travel abroad, and they also ensure that we can ask the British government for help if we find ourselves in difficulty whilst on holiday. If we are born in this country, we are automatically entitled to one. They give us status and are often held with pride. Many people from other lands would be delighted to obtain one as well.

Some of us have more than one passport because we hold dual citizenship, either because of our parents' nationality or perhaps where we were born. Not everyone has this entitlement, however.

But as Christians we all are entitled to 'dual nationality'. Being a Christian does not simply imply that we are members of a local church, or denomination, or even of a world-wide faith. It also means that we are citizens of another kingdom – the Kingdom of God - and we have dual citizenship because of this kingdom. And because of Jesus Christ, we are **all** entitled to citizenship. It gives us special status as adopted sons and daughters of God. However, 'dual nationality' also brings the responsibility to pass on the Good News, that nobody need be outside the Kingdom of God. It is a matter of pride to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God and, best of all, we have the knowledge that God can guide and protect us wherever we 'travel' in life.

So, as we look out our British passports and check their validity before we travel, we can take pleasure in knowing that we have dual nationality and that citizenship entitles us to a 'passport' that is always legitimate.

Happy Holidays!

Your Rector,

Mandy