

**Saturday 11th August**



## **Birthdays**

We all have a birthday each year – and in the words from *Alice in Wonderland*, “364 un-birthdays” (unless it is a Leap year and you were born on 29th February!).

This week would have been my mom's 91st birthday; she only died in June, and was one of the youngest in her home! Increasingly I'm visiting those who have lived for more than 100 years, and some are still looking after themselves! How amazing are we, and when we look back over our lifetimes – whatever our age – there is so much to be thankful for and so much that has happened.

Taking funerals, I hear the stories of people who have lived through the war, remember life before the NHS, have seen space exploration, and even in my lifetime I never, when I was a child, expected to be able to make a phone call and see the other person whilst doing it. For me that was pure science fiction!

Birthdays give us a chance to look back with thanksgiving, and look forward to a new year. They are times when those who love us remember we are here! I am very poor at remembering birthdays; I only remember my sister's because we were born on the same day (three years apart)!

If we remember birthdays, and send a card to remind the person whose birthday it is you are remembering them, then in God's kingdom every day is a birthday, for God can never forget us – our names are written on his hands!

I always thought it was odd that we got presents on our birthday when it was our mom who went through the agony of having us! Yet time moves on, and our birthdays come and go, and we wonder where the years have gone. I was watching a rerun of a sitcom, not that well known but one I find very funny, called *Dharma and Greg*. The mother of Greg had been invited to a special celebration for her 50th Birthday. “That's great,” says Dharma. “No,” says Greg. “My mother has not had a birthday since she was 35, and it was very wrong of these people to accuse her of having one!”

Birthdays remind us that we are mortal, that we grow up, that we mark the passing of the years. For some this is great; others find it a little depressing. What interests me is that when we are little we say, “I'm almost five” when just four. As teenagers we long to be older than we are. But then something happens and we want to reverse the process until we reach a good age, then I hear people saying, “I'm almost 90” or “I'm almost 100” or “I'm going to be 105”!

So if it is your birthday this week, “Happy Birthday”. If it is not – “Happy Un-birthday”. But whichever it is, have a lovely day.

**Thank you loving Father God,  
that each new day is a birthday for us,  
for when we put our trust in you  
and allow your Spirit to cleanse,  
renew and energise us,  
we are given a new birth into a living hope  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
Amen.**

*Prayers for August written by Denise Creed*