

## PASTOR'S PATCH



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I wonder if you have a bird feeder visible from your window? If so, standing just a short time will probably enable you to see various feathered friends coming and going. The feeder is like a magnet, pulling in all manner of birds (and squirrels!) and it's a joy to just take time out of your day to enjoy the moment and give God thanks for the beauty of creation. Or maybe you have a bush or shrubs nearby where there are berries and seeds that provide a rich source of sustenance for the birds.

Jesus says - *Look at the birds of the air*

His encouragement is to look at these birds. Not just being a “twitcher” or “bird-spotter” but actually to do more than just use your eyes. As he so often does, Jesus draws our attention to the natural world, the world He created and which is all around that we may learn the lessons He gives for us in the everyday. We don't necessarily need to read a good Christian book or listen to an online sermon to learn, for the teaching is all around us and accessible no matter what your age.

Why not “humour Jesus” now? Go to see if you can spot any birds nearby, and spend a few minutes looking at them, and listening to God.

Again, Jesus says - *Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?*  
Matthew ch 5 v.26-27

God feeds these birds and they have food not just because of bird feeders, but with searching and sometimes migration they position themselves in order to receive. So too, we can't just wait for God's provision to fall into our lap (though it often does). We ask for our daily bread, and then we are to follow where the Lord is leading to ensure we are in the right place to receive His blessing.

### **CHALLENGE**

*Watch the birds, then tell someone all about it. But also make sure you're in the right place for where God wants to meet your needs, and the needs of others too.*

## Celebrating 200 Years of Lifesaving: Torbay Hosts RNLI Anniversary Events



The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is set to mark its 200-year journey from 1824 to 2024, with a series of celebratory events in Torbay over the year, starting with two on Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> and Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>.

These two events will kick off a year of activities, organised by Torbay RNLI and led by Coxswain Richard Fowler, to remember the RNLI's remarkable history, celebrate the continuing lifesaving services of today, and look forward to inspiring a new generation of lifesavers and supporters for the future.

### **Sunday, March 3rd: 'Blessing of the Fleet' Spectacle**

On Sunday, an historic 'Blessing of the Fleet' will unfold featuring all RNLI lifeboats from the South Devon coast, from Exmouth to Salcombe. The lifeboats will gather in the Bay before embarking in convoy along the Breakwater to Torbay RNLI's berth where a special blessing ceremony will be conducted at 11.00am by the Fishermen's Mission Area Officer for Devon, Helen Lovell-Smith.

As a tribute from the fishing community, Brixham's trawler fleet and local vessels will accompany the lifeboats' parade with 200 seconds of horn-blasting, symbolizing the 200 years of the RNLI's service. The ceremony will be attended by local dignitaries, including church leaders from across the religious denominations, South Ham's MP Anthony Mangnall, the Mayor of Torbay, regional Yacht Club Commodores, and surviving RNLI coxswains, who will lead this unique occasion.

### **Monday, March 4th: Church Service at All Saints Church, Brixham**

The celebration continues on Monday with a service at Brixham's iconic All Saints church at 6:45pm attended by current and retired RNLI Torbay volunteer crews, support staff, families, the Bishop James Grier of Plymouth and other local dignitaries. Prior to the service, the bells of All Saints will be rung for 200 seconds, commencing at 6.24pm (18.24). Local schools, choirs, and musicians have been invited to participate in the service, contributing musical performances, art displays, and dedicated readings. Following the service, attendees will have the opportunity to meet, question and chat to RNLI coxswains and crew over refreshments.