

2024-05-12 ... 6.30pm Evensong Sermon ... Mrs Jane Rylands**Isaiah 61; Luke 4: 14-21**

Luke was not a companion of Jesus, probably indeed never met him or heard him speak. He did travel with Paul – and he did, using the knowledge gained as a clearly significant member of the early church, record and share with others the person he learned to love – Jesus. He's quite specific about many names and places to show that Jesus was real, a man who lived in real time, in real and known places.

Luke was an intelligent person – probably a Greek, probably not a Jew but with a cultural knowledge at least of the Hebrew faith – I'm sure if it wasn't part of his upbringing he would have learned much from his time with Paul. Not only does he make sure his story settles in with the happenings of the times but also within the continuing story of God and God's people, even as it moves forward.

He was a doctor – and my mini research suggests that Greek physicians and Greek medicine were highly respected in the Roman world and that there was a knowledge of medicines and surgery that surprised me.

He must also have been of an adventurous spirit, a diarist one would assume and also, it is believed he was an artist – though this is perhaps the stuff of legend.

His books are not about himself in any shape or form, although in some of the travel passages in Acts he says 'we'.

What drew Luke to Jesus? What inspired Luke in Jesus's teachings?

What drew, continues to draw you to Jesus? To God? Perhaps the love, the knowing, the having a place in the world, the peace, the promise of eternal life,

For Luke in part at least, it was the care that Jesus showed for the sick and the poor – more than that - central to Jesus's mission statement – as we heard – is that bringing good news to the poor is his number one reason for being on earth.

Most commentaries seem to suggest that Luke gave up being a doctor to be Paul's associate. But we know Paul paid his way by continuing to work as a tent maker. Why would Luke not be running clinics, perhaps for payment by those who could afford it, perhaps for free for those who could not.

The only out working of Luke's faith which we are actually aware of are the books of the Bible we call the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles.

We too should be leaving a trail of proof that we are a follower of Jesus, a partner in the mission statement which is how this sermon in Nazareth is sometimes described. I am confident we each are – I'm equally sure that we could probably be doing more. May you find encouragement in the words of Christ and from within this community that gathers in His name.