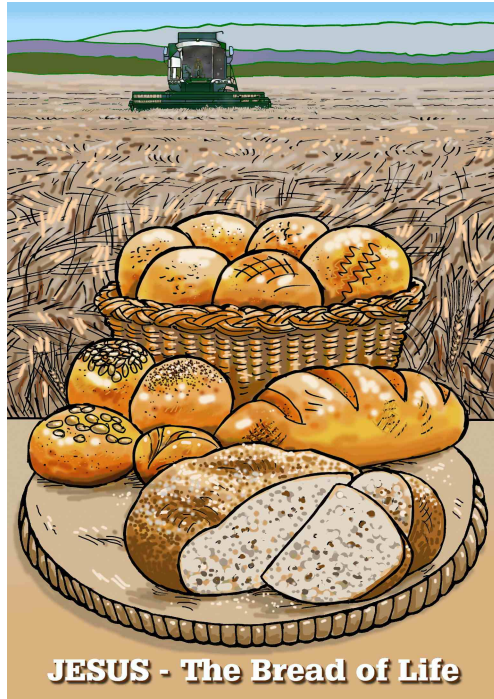


New Leaves

August 2020



**Parish Magazine
of St David with
St Michael and
All Angels,
Exeter**

50p

Parish of St. David with St. Michael Directory (June 2020)

Vicar	Nigel Guthrie	01392 660226
Assistant Curates	Ash Leighton Plom	aescleal@gmail.com / 07855305519
	Alison Whiting	rev.alisonwhiting@gmail.com
	Belinda Speed-Andrews	bspeedandrews@gmail.com
Reader	Bill Pattinson	860 880
	Howard Friend	07733739453
	Charlotte Townsend	01392 660285
Churchwarden	Emma White	07833453067
Churchwarden	Glynis Harflett	01392 214787
PCC Secretary	Helena Walker	pccsecretary@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk
Parish Treasurer	Johnathan Johns	07831486987
		electoralrollofficer@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk
Electoral Roll Officer	Sue Wilson	uk
Safeguarding Rep	Mary Kirkland	07872 626 168

St. David's www.stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk

Treasurer	Barbara Allin	270 162
Asst. Treasurer	Geoff Crockett	468 073
Director of Music	Nigel Walsh	273 237
News Sheet	Helena Walker	notices@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk
Servers	Shaun Smith	01626 3670765
Church Bookings	Mary Quest	07792 062 403
Readers & Time of Prayer	Avril Pattinson	860 880

St Michael's www.stmichaelsmountdinhams.org.uk

Chapel Warden	Stephanie Aplin	stephaniecaplin@yahoo.co.uk
Chapel Warden		
Treasurer	Paula Lewis	lewispf9@gmail.com
Church Bookings	Jane Bellamy	432 172
		jane-bellamy@hotmail.co.uk
Director of Music		
Secretary	Vivien Finnigan	
Organist	Matthew Clark	
Notices	Oliver Nicholson	opn@umn.edu

Magazine

Advertising	Glynis Harflett	214 787
		bissom@icloud.com
Designer	Clive Wilson	437571
		newleaves_mag@btinternet.com
Editorial Team	Richard Barnes	newleavesnews@gmail.com
	Bill Pattinson	



WELCOME



To all Readers of “New Leaves”, the magazine for the Parish of St David’s with St. Michael and All Angels.

The editorial team invites you to submit appropriate articles which reflect Church, Parish or Community interest

Please send as Word documents to: newleavesnews@gmail.com

Please note that all articles will be printed with the author’s name

Enjoy this month’s read.

We will welcome critical comments on the magazine

Editorial Team: Bill Pattinson and Richard Barnes supported by
Stephanie Aplin and Clive Wilson

New Leaves

**August 2020
From the Vicarage**

That was good timing!

You may remember that at the beginning of the year the folding chairs for which we had raised the money at St David's arrived. What a good things they did! Now that our churches are open again for worship they have been invaluable in organizing appropriately distanced seating at the back of church and have enabled us to seat a good number of people behind the pews. So thank you again to all of you who kindly donated to what has turned out to be an unexpectedly timely addition to our church furniture!

Return to Church

Returning to public worship in church after a break of four months has been a strange but joyful experience. We are having to be very careful to keep our physical distance in church and we have sanitizers and masks at the ready as well as one-way systems in place. Please continue to read our weekly e-mail updates for news about future services and events. We are not yet able to offer a full range of services, or to start using our churches again for outside groups, but we hope that these will come sooner rather than later. We are still trying to 'quarantine' our buildings for 72 hours between use otherwise we will need to 'deep clean' the buildings which is, quite honestly, beyond our resources to manage.

But we are very aware of those who are not able to return to worship in church or not comfortable to do so and we are looking at how we can 'live-stream' our services on a permanent basis. During most of August we will be producing separate recorded services as Youtube videos and I would like to pay tribute to Nigel Walsh who has does such a magnificent job in putting these together! But now we are back in church it makes much more sense to stream what we are doing and we will be trying this, using a mobile phone over the summer. But for effective streaming we will need a more advanced camera, a computer and a feed in for the sound as well as

an internet connection at St David's (there is already one at St Michael's for the Peregrine live-stream). So there is quite a lot to organize. But we have already taken some advice and hope to move forward with this in the autumn.

It has also been a great shame to suspend our Thursday soup evening at St David's and we will hope to review that to see if we can run it safely again in the autumn.

Ordination

It was a great pleasure to welcome Ash Leighton Plom as our Licensed Lay Worker at the beginning of July. He will be continuing in this role over the summer and then will be ordained deacon on Sunday 13th September at 3.00pm in Exeter Cathedral. The ordinations have been split into four services but, once distancing arrangements are in place, it will still only be possible for each candidate to have a handful of guests. As Ash's training incumbent I have to be there so will be representing the parishes, but sadly there will be no generally available seating for the public. But I'm sure that the cathedral will be streaming the service. So please do support Ash with your prayers on that day and we sincerely hope that things will be better by the time he will be ordained priest next year!

Bible Study

Our Zoom bible study looking at the Psalms has been successful during July and we will be extending this for the first three weeks of August. This will be running on Tuesdays at 2pm for one hour. Please look out for the link on our weekly mailing and join in if you can.

Michaelmas

This year the Feast of St Michael and All Angels, 29th September, falls on a Tuesday and we will celebrate this with an evening mass at St Michael's at 7.30pm. We don't yet know exactly what the service will be like but we hope at least to have organ music and a cantor. We still don't know when it will be possible to have congregational or choir singing, but thank you to

those who have continued to offer music in both of our churches.

At St Michael's during August an upgrade of the sound system and an induction loop for hearing aids will be installed. We hope that this will enhance the experiences of all worshippers at St Michael's, but especially those with hearing impairment. Thank you to those who have generously supported the costs of this installation.

Administrator

Mary Keaney has now finished as our parish administrator and it was a great pleasure to work with her. She continues as administrator for the central parishes. Mary gave us invaluable help with our Safeguarding administration and helped to keep it in good order working with our safeguarding team.

Deborah Leighton Plom will be taking over the role and will not only be supporting the safeguarding team but also helping to manage the bookings at both of our churches. We look forward very much to working with her.

With every good wish and blessing

Nigel Guthrie



August 2020 From St Michael and All Angels.

In 1959, Lionel Bart wrote a song which Max Bygraves performed. It was called 'Fings ain't wot they used t'be.'

In 1961, the Newley/Bricusse team gave us 'Stop the world, I want to get off!' outlining the short-lived nature of worldly success.

Despite the apparent gloom in the titles, both song and musical had fairly up-beat moments with undoubted examples of the times -and 'fings'- which could be identified as mainly different from the contemporary norm. The writers were not vilified for identifying the oddities and departures; the lens of the time allowed some irony, even cynicism, about events and people. Lampooning was part of the culture and it was recognised as a way of pointing out error. Later, the puppets of 'Spitting Image' made us laugh and realise that no-one, not even the Royal Family, was immune.

What will the 'woke' generation make of such moments in our history of recording events? The noisy minority of 'wokes' have a violence in their condemnation of anything they do not regard as 'truth.' Those who adopted the cause of feminism were amazed to find Germaine Greer 'no-platformed'; J.K.Rowling finds her hand bitten by those whose lives she changed by their roles in the Harry Potter films because they have not seriously considered her statements. This is 'cancel culture', which is silencing free speech and shutting down any areas for discussion. I suggest that one day there will be a back-lash, the like of which will shock us all. Did we ever think that we would live in the Orwellian scenarios which we find today? And that it would happen so quickly? We could spend some time explaining how and why, but simplistic answers are in the style of 'wokeness': people had time on their hands and the social media platforms were easily available. Educated, well-founded arguments, clearly expressed with evidence of good research, are missing in a 40 - character tweet.

At St Michael's, 'fings' are slowly returning to a kind of normal, despite not having our choir singing, no Asperges, despite social

distancing, hand sanitising, a one-way system, Eucharist in one kind only and so on. We can ring the bell, we can have a Cantor and an organist, we can receive the Host from the priest, and we can welcome people back to the service that brings us close to Christ. July 19th saw our first Sunday Mass after lockdown; we had been nearly four months without our spiritual sustenance. What a joy it was to find the church breathing again: candles, the bell to remind everyone that we are called to God's service, the bunting outside to make it all look cheerful, smiles of all attending - a little unsure of what the procedure would be, but carefully guided by Fr Nigel, confident in the celebration,- the Angelus and despite no refreshments, lots of friendly chat afterwards, so unlike the last time we met for Sunday Mass on a cold but sunny day in March, when we left almost in fear about what was coming, not knowing when and if we would see our church family entire again.

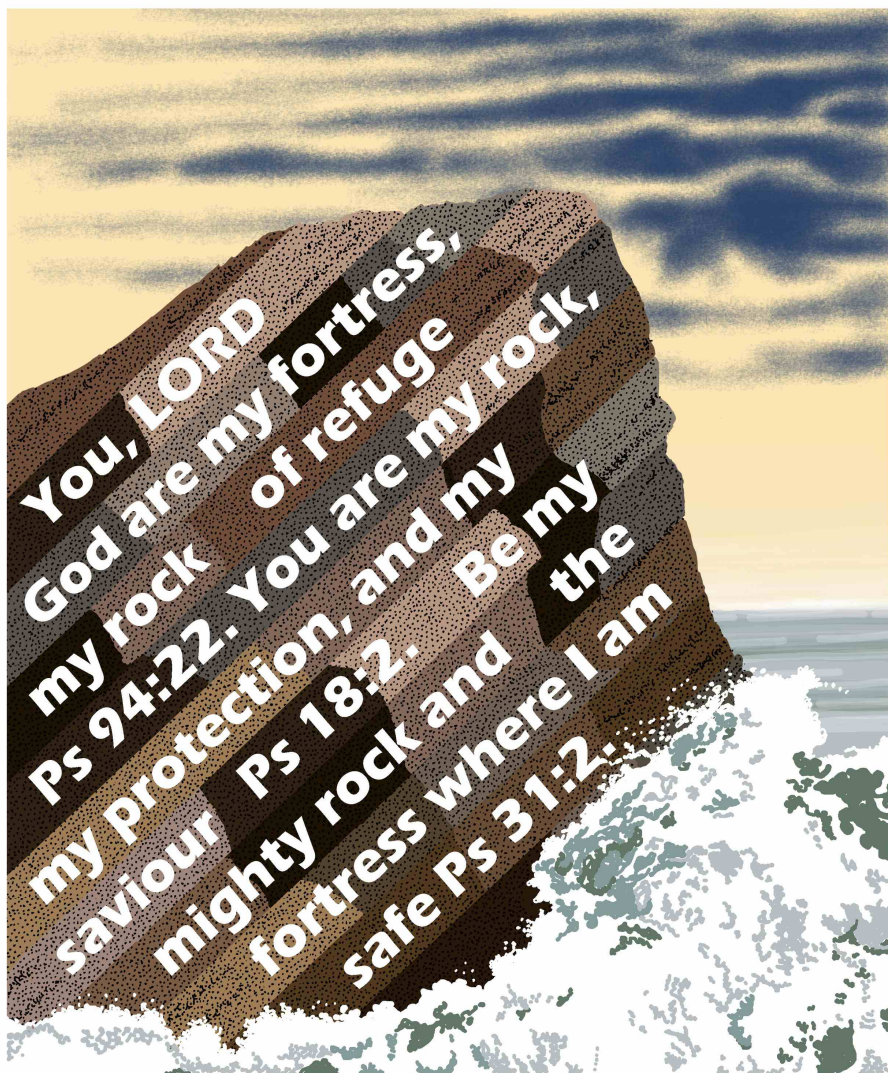
Returning to worship will not be the case yet for Christians in Nantes, where the cathedral has been the victim of an arson attack, nor in Istanbul, where Hagia Sophia is to become a mosque again, causing sadness around the world. Great religious buildings carry so much more than structure and materials. They are beacons of a long-lasting faith, silent witnesses to the presence of God in daily life.

But there is no need to stop the world; no need to rue the past. We can live in the 'new normal', because now is the time to rebuild, we are told, so that we have strength and immunity to fight a possible return of the virus later in the year. Vaccine research and presentation is essential; we must be strong and healthy. Journalists and the media are giving advice about exercise, diet, wearing masks and socialising carefully. Noticeably, we are recommended to build up spiritually to have the psychological strength for the changed, post-Covid world. Religious communities are being held up as examples of beneficial experiences, strengthening people for the future.

We could have told them that!



Stephanie Aplin.



You, LORD
God are my fortress,
my rock of refuge,
Ps 94:22. You are my rock,
my protection, and my
saviour Ps 18:2. Be my
mighty rock and the
fortress where I am
safe Ps 31:2.

AD CLERUM Update 17 9th July 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Sunday marked another stage in the journey out of lockdown with the re-opening of many of our buildings for worship. Weddings have been celebrated, not yet with the sound of church bells and singing, though from this weekend we anticipate that appropriately socially distanced ringing of bells will be permitted. For further details, please see the website of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers. Where it has been possible, the people of God have gathered to hear the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist. For all these things, we give thanks to God.

In the custom of the Church of England, and as required by Canon Law, Morning and Evening Prayer and a celebration of Holy Communion should normally be held in at least one church in each benefice on all Sundays and on certain holy days. Although it will not be appropriate for all to hold these regular services immediately, particularly in some of our multi-parish rural benefices, I hope that the vast majority of benefices across the Diocese will soon be able to open at least one of their churches each week for worship. That said, incumbents and churchwardens should not feel under pressure to open a church for worship if it would, in the light of Government guidance, be unsafe to do so. Going forward, where it is not possible to meet the requirement to hold services in at least one church in your benefice, you will need to be in touch with your Archdeacon and I will then issue a temporary dispensation.

We are all feeling our way in this and discovering how to be Church post lockdown. I have no idea what the new normal will be any more than retailers know what the new normal will be for our High Streets. In Exeter, the House of Fraser, Café Rouge, Kath Kidston and Carluccio's have all gone under. Debenhams has been reprieved but the sword of Damocles is hanging over John Lewis. Meanwhile the Agricultural Bill is wending its way through Parliament which, following our departure from the European Union, will have a massive impact on farming in our county. So much is changing: so much is unknown. We walk by faith, one step at a time.

Covid-19 and its legacy

Two features of the social landscape have come under the spotlight in recent weeks: class and race. Glaring disparities in how the burden of Covid-19 has affected different sections of the British population have emerged. Black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities (BAME) in the UK have suffered disproportionately in the pandemic with more infections, worse outcomes and more deaths.



Meanwhile graphic scenes of the murder of George Floyd in the United States have intensified the voice and visibility of the Black Lives Matter movement. In combination, this has opened up every institution and community to scrutiny, including the Church of England. When it comes to discussing racism, events have revealed the impossibility of so doing without discussing colonialism and the legacy of slavery.

Slavery and its legacy

The anger felt by some is understandably directed towards what they see as the glorification of those who were involved in or profited from the transatlantic slave trade. The violent removal of the statue of the slave trader Edward Colston in Bristol last month shattered the complacency with which this subject has often been regarded.

For centuries slavery was a part of life for many British people, including here in Devon. I am referring not just to those who managed plantations in the Caribbean or who were absentee landlords or 'owners' of enslaved people, but also to those involved in the economic web of which slavery was a part, either making items for export, building or manning slave ships, or benefiting from the local purchasing power of the riches produced on the plantations.

Given the many vested interests tied up in slave trade, it is amazing that Olaudah Equiano, William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson (who are jointly commemorated in the Anglican Calendar on 30th July) should have succeeded in their campaign to abolish slavery, at least here in Britain. To

achieve political agreement in favour of abolition, the British Government had to provide £20 million (equivalent to almost £2 billion today) in compensation, to be shared out among British slave-owners. In good Civil Service tradition, copious records were kept of those who applied for compensation, whether successful or not. To compound injustice, the enslaved themselves received no compensation for their stolen labour and suffering.

The Government did not have the £20 million required to fund the compensation package and had to borrow £15 million from bankers. This loan was only finally paid off in 2015. British taxpayers, including (to our shame) members of the Windrush Generation, who were descendants of the enslaved and whose degrading treatment we are only now beginning to acknowledge, have been paying interest on that loan all these years.



Auditing our monuments

The present crisis is seeing several intertwined strands of long-standing pain, anger and fear interact and merge in ways that may change British society in unexpected ways. Historical monuments, including those in our churches and cathedrals, are likely to provide a focus of interest and/or anger. Damaging, removing without permission or applying graffiti to church monuments is illegal and wrong, and paradoxically may not in the long run help people in general to recognise and challenge racism. However, the stories behind the monuments can offer opportunities to educate ourselves and the many tourists and schoolchildren who visit our churches.

Many parishes have printed guides describing the architecture of their

church and the significance of its various monuments, perhaps drawing attention to an important individual buried in the churchyard. 'The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones,' says Shakespeare in Julius Caesar. Could a member of the congregation, perhaps working in partnership with a local historian, research your monuments and inscriptions, and where there is racism or a cultural legacy to be confronted, use it as an educational tool to understand better our nation's story?

Tackling slavery and racism today



For many people, slavery is in the past or something that happens elsewhere. Sadly, slavery is a present reality. Nationally, the Clewer Initiative (<https://www.theclewerinitiative.org/>) works to help support victims of modern slavery. Closer to home, Chris Forster and Transforming Plymouth Together have put together resources to help identify the signs of exploitation whether overseas agricultural workers, women trafficked for sex, or those working at a local car wash. Modern slavery is driven by the demand of consumers for cheap, personalised goods and services. The focus is on the benefit to the purchaser, with little attention paid to the plight of the providers. The Fairtrade Movement aims to correct this focus. In a culture of indifference the criminal exploitation of vulnerable people flourishes.

St Paul tells us that, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3.28). Do we believe this to be true or is it merely an aspiration? In response to the systemic discrimination faced by members of BAME communities in Britain, the Archbishops have set up a Racism Action Commission, tasked with identifying and dismantling institutional barriers to racial injustice, equality and inclusion in the Church. It is vital that we address issues around equality, fairness and exploitation honestly and transparently. In the Diocese, we are looking at ways we can improve diversity across our

churches and play our part in making British society more equal. Tanya Hockley-Still, Priest-in- Charge of St Mark's, Exeter and our Diocesan BAME Adviser works in partnership with the Vocations Team not only to help grow vocations to the ordained ministry, but to raise the profile of people in the Diocese from every background and encourage their involvement in all aspects of church life and governance.

Racial stereotyping is part of the problem in England and from the autumn unconscious bias training will be mandatory for every licensed clergyperson and reader in the Diocese. Mindful of how important lay representatives are in appointment processes and how female candidates can also be easily disadvantaged, we are giving strong encouragement to parish reps to undertake such training too.

The goal of life is to draw all humanity into the life of God. So as we journey on together in faith and love, let us entrust the past to God's mercy, the present to his grace and the future to his providence.

With my thanks for our partnership in the Gospel

+Robert Exon



**International Day for the Remembrance of the
Slave Trade and its Abolition is 23 August 2020**

see <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/slavetraderemembranceday>

**Please find below the chosen readings for August. Please take this opportunity to read them on the Sundays.
With Blessings**

Chosen Readings for August 2020 @St David's

Sunday 2nd August 8th Sunday after Trinity

1st Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5
2nd Reading: Romans 9:1-5
Gospel Reading: Matthew 14:13+21

Sunday 9th August 9th Sunday after Trinity

1st Reading: 1 Kings 19:9-18
2nd Reading: Romans 10:5-15
Gospel Reading: Matthew 14:22-23

Sunday 16th August 10th Sunday after Trinity

1st Reading: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8
2nd Reading: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Gospel Reading: Matthew 15:10-28

Sunday 23rd August 11th Sunday after Trinity

1st Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6
2nd Reading: Romans 12:1-8
Gospel Reading: Matthew 16:13-20

Sunday 30th August 12th Sunday after Trinity

1st Reading: Jeremiah 15:15-21
2nd Reading: Romans 12:9-end
Gospel Reading: Matthew 16:21-end

Sunday 6th September 13th Sunday after Trinity

1st Reading: Ezekiel 33:7-11
2nd Reading: Romans 13:8-end
Gospel Reading: Matthew 18:15-20



Zoom, YouTube, Facebook, Video Recording, Live Streaming....and all that Jazz

Who would have thought at the beginning of 2020 the Church would be embracing online worship and virtual meetings so fully and wholeheartedly as it does today? BC (before Covid) few Parishes had equipped themselves to offer worship so comprehensively online and the thought of a Zoom PCC meeting was the furthest thought from many minds. The Coronavirus pandemic has changed behaviour and Church leaders have become constant companions on people's phones, tablets and laptops, which have become the conduits for communication and conversations.

Nigel Guthrie, our incumbent, has become most adept in live streaming Morning Prayer. His comfortable, relaxed manner is wonderfully reassuring - he's become quite the media celebrity. Video recording is not as straightforward as live streaming. There is a natural desire to "get it right" so many initial attempts may be deleted. There is then the background to consider. So it was great to see Nigel, when churches first became open to ministers, record in the Lady Chapel at St David's during the YouTube presentations on Sunday mornings. These became very professional and special thanks need to be given to our musical director, Nigel Walsh, for his excellent editing. The virtual choir especially demonstrated Nigel's skills and who will ever forget his "teddy bear."

Virtual coffee and Bible Reading classes have been available on Zoom at Nigel Guthrie's invitation. The 10.30 Sunday morning Zoom coffee often attracted between 15 and 20 people and we were carefully allocated smaller Zoom meeting rooms - always exciting to see who turned up in whose. The Zoom bible studies, based on the Psalms, took place on Tuesday afternoons between 2 and 3. They have been excellent and if you are interested it is hoped we will continue during August when our new curate, Ash Leighton Plom, will offer the invitation.

So, I ask you, is "all this jazz" here to stay? Or is it simply a phase, which became prominent during the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic? I have to admit

to having mixed feelings in answer to these two questions. There is a great excitement to seeing how many people viewed, liked, loved our recording or streaming and an understandable belief that we are reaching a new audience - this is genuine evangelism. The Kingdom of God comes to you on your settee or even in bed with coffee and croissant. No need to worry about what to wear, where to park the car or even to rush so as to be on time. We can relax and innovate in what we have to offer concerning liturgy, hymns and even the preachers might consider their individual camera presentation styles. "Why go back to church buildings?" one of my Reader (not from this Parish) friends remarked, "this is surely the future."



Yet what joy, what excitement in returning to St David's Church and its beautiful building, in receiving the body of our Lord and in seeing once again, in reality, precious brothers and sisters in Christ. These were indeed my feelings when I first went to church on Thursday 16 July, when Nigel celebrated his first Eucharist there for four months. Grounded in its history and memories, in the angels and saints we adore, I felt closer to my God there than I had been for the last four months. I mean there's no room on

my settee or in my bed for all my Church friends let alone the whole company of Heaven. And I have to admit I love church tradition, the beautiful liturgy, the well known hymns (we won't be singing those for a little while yet), the comforting comment, "Well, we always do it like that." Mum and dad did it like that and so did their mums and dads before them.

Now don't get me wrong. Change in the Church of England is vital if it is to stay alive and thriving. Variety is still the spice of life. Like the seed that fell on stony ground, online worship has grown rapidly. Has it no roots and will it die just as quickly, as in Jesus' parable? No! There is, I believe, a great future for online worship and communication. Yet we all know it's not everybody's "cup of tea." We are only at the early stages and we have a great deal to learn. This is dissertation material for future followers of Christ. I'd love to be around and see how it all works out...and all that jazz!

Bill Pattinson

23.07.2020



keeping in touch

Returning to Church: 'First' Communion

- how was it for you?

Of course, in a virtual sense we've not been away from Church, as members of the Body of Christ, but we've not been able to gather physically, and some not remotely either.

For me the online provision by Fr Nigel and all those able to contribute worked well on the whole; both Morning Prayer & Cathedral Compline and the Sunday Services so excellently compiled by Nigel Walsh.

But this is about going back to St Michael's Church, as a Building which very much gathers an otherwise rather disparate group of people.

I was involved in the Zoom PCC Meeting which discussed and agreed the practicalities of our first tentative return to church buildings, and the Risk Assessment at St Mike's.

So when St Swithun's Day arrived, Wednesday 15th July, I thought I knew what to expect. The one-way system, going out and coming in by different doors, 2-metre diagonally spaced seating, the obligatory hand sanity, sanitation, sanitiser (that's the word), and that Communion in one kind would be delivered to each person in their pew by the priest.

But how would I feel after 4 months long away from the sacramental presence of Christ?

I'm not spiritually very emotional – too many years being composed in choir stalls. But I am sentimentally emotional – would I cry?

There was surprise at a dozen people present, more than twice a normal Wednesday Low Mass, joy at seeing familiar faces, strangeness at sitting still without a screen in front of me, familiarity with the words and actions, pleasure that it happened to be a Feast Day when Fr Nigel could wear a gold chasuble, and, yes, an unexpected sweetness on my tongue as I received the Host, but no tears.

A small step for the Church, but such a long path of patience and no doubt frustration still to follow.

Our Sunday Mass for Trinity VI also established some possible 'new normals'. Extra seats at the back with 30 or so present, empty choir stalls save for Cantor & Organist, Thurifer responsible for all the sensing, sadness at still not singing, getting confused in the Creed but not using a Booklet because I'm a bit in denial about my eyesight.

I'm also realising how far away the High Altar is for the congregation, but how 'levelling' it is for all to receive Communion in the pews, not just a

'second sitting' for those unable to manage the Chancel steps.
If you are able to return to Church, I hope it is also an enriching experience.
And if you can't get to Church, we, like many others, will hope to continue
to offer streaming of Services too, whenever practicable.



Richard Barnes – 26/07/20.



...Rodney, I've been meaning to have a word
with you about your carbon footprint!

O Lord, make us good stewards of the Earth

I wrote in the May edition of New Leaves that it was possible to cross Topsham Road at rush hour without having to wait for the traffic lights. That's no longer the case as traffic levels have increased significantly since then, even if not back to pre-Covid levels just yet.

During the last few months, many people in the media have commented on the environmental benefits of the lockdown, particularly from the reduction in road and air traffic, and expressed hope that these benefits would continue beyond the Covid crisis. On present evidence, this looks like a forlorn hope: as people have gradually gone back to work and other activities, they have picked up their old habits. This will be even more noticeable once more office workers return to their offices and schools reopen fully.

There is scant evidence of our being 'good stewards of the Earth', as we sometimes pray. I feel it is easier prayed than done. Most of us are not involved in making government policy on transport or the environment so our stewardship of the Earth is made up of small, daily decisions about what to buy or how to travel. For example, do we drive the kids to school or do we remember that children have legs and can walk? It may depend on the weather: walking to school is fine in summer but it is unpleasant in the rain and hardly sets a child up for a good day's education if they arrive soaked and have to sit in wet clothes and shoes all day. It isn't practical or desirable to stop using cars completely – though hopefully they will become less polluting in the near future. I once took the environmentally friendly decision to walk a mile-and-a-half to a job interview. I left the house looking very smart in a suit and tie, polished shoes gleaming. On my way the skies opened and I arrived soaked to the skin. My appearance resembled the proverbial drowned rat and first impressions counted as I was offered a towel but, alas, not a job. Should have taken the car.

While we probably do need to do things like drive sometimes, other things really shouldn't happen at all. I'm thinking of the industrial quantities of litter left by tourists on Bournemouth beach last month. This is a particularly egregious and unnecessary example of poor stewardship of the Earth. I can't help wondering how many of those who left the litter also supported the Extinction Rebellion demonstrations last year or the recent crusade against single-use plastic. Similarly, I'm sure many of us have seen disposable gloves and masks discarded as litter around Exeter. In Nottingham, there were enough for an artist to create a glove collage!

Many of us, myself included, are quite good at the easy aspects of green living but don't manage the harder ones, often convincing ourselves that they are not reasonable or practical in our case. What is hard or not will be different for different people but I suggest three categories:

Easy – e.g. green bin recycling, energy efficient light bulbs, reusing carrier bags.

Medium – e.g. walking or cycling instead of driving short distances, commuting less, eating less of certain sorts of meat.

Hard – e.g. serious reduction in car usage and air travel, truly eliminating single-use plastic.

Wherever we are on the scale, and even if we would swap some of the examples between the categories or add different ones, we can aspire and strive to get to the next stage. One step at a time, becoming good, or at least better, stewards of the Earth.



Philip Walker



Music & Events for St Michael's August 2020

We are pleased that limited Public Worship has returned to our church buildings with Sunday Mass at St Michael's at 11am (lasting about 50 minutes) and on most Wednesday mornings at 10am (35 mins).

Government and Church Guidance seems to change from week to week, so please allow stewards in church to advise you. All are welcome, but please do not come if you feel unwell or are particularly vulnerable.

A variety of recorded and streamed Services will continue online through August; our hope is to stream Mass regularly from St Michael's as we move forward.

Services in August are usually simpler anyway with no Choir Practices (remember those?), and any Motet chosen on the day for the resources available. Sadly this year, no choir or congregation singing at all, other than a single Cantor, is currently allowed.

We are delighted to welcome back Frs Nigel Mason and Dominic Cyrus to celebrate Mass with us this month.

The Services we will have, and the Music we would have had, are listed below.

Sun 2 Aug, Trinity VIII. 11am Mass, with Fr Nigel Mason and Cantor. [Hymns 408: 296: 339 on Pewsheets. Merbecke each week.]

[6pm Evensong & Benediction. Reading Responses. Psalm 108. Hymn 244. Canticles: Stanford in B flat. Anthem: Evening Hymn, by Balfour Gardiner. Plainsong, O Salutaris, Tantum ergo, Ps 117. Reminds us just what we have been and still are missing.]

Wed 5 Aug, Church Closed, for installing new Hearing Loop and Sound System. Matins on Facebook only.

Sun 9 Aug, Feast of the Transfiguration (transf from 6 Aug). 11am Mass, with Fr Nigel Mason and Cantor. [Hymns 433: 345: 146.]

Wed 12 Aug, 9.30 Matins, but No Mass.

Sun 16 Aug, Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (transf from 15 Aug). 11am Mass, with Fr Nigel Mason and Cantor. [Hymns 185: 302: 480.]

Wed 19 Aug, 9.30 Matins, 10am Low Mass.

Sun 23 Aug, Trinity XI, 11am Mass, with Fr Dominic Cyrus and Cantor. [Hymns 333: 311: 271.]

Wed 26 Aug, 9.30 Matins, 10am Low Mass,

Sun 30 Aug, Trinity XII 11am Mass, with Cantor. [Hymns 205: 307: 471.]

So, in the midst of a quiet month of Trinity Green, Ordinary Time, we have two Glorious Feasts to celebrate. The Transfiguration of Christ on Mt Tabor, meeting with Moses & Elijah, of the Law & the Prophets, is firmly biblical, a foresight of Jesus in Majesty before he journeys to Jerusalem and his Passion & death. The three Apostle, Peter, James & John knew 'Tis good Lord to be here' but needed time to understand more.

Anglicans may not know the Old Testament very well these days, but those who love choral music will know the description of Elijah going into Heaven in Mendelssohn's Oratorio: And when the Lord would take him away to heaven, lo! There came a fiery, fiery chariot with fiery, fiery horses, and he went by a whirlwind to heaven.

So, apparently, going straight to Heaven without passing Death is not entirely unprecedented, as also Enoch.

The Assumption or Dormition of Mary, Mother of God, has no evidence in scripture (although a few verses in Psalms & Revelation can be made to fit) but it has a long and varied history in Christian tradition & liturgy both in the Catholic West and the Orthodox East. Surprisingly, the Roman Catholic Dogma was not promulgated until 1950 by Pope Pius XII, and left it unclear whether Mary had died or not before her body was carried into Heaven by angels.

We look forward to some interesting Sermons.

We plan to celebrate Michaelmas at 7.30pm on Tuesday 29th September, but most likely without a Party or Choir.



Richard Barnes – 26/07/20.



New hearing loop & upgraded sound system at St Michael's

This has been a long process, with quotations, committees, communications and applications, but at last, installation will take place in the first week of August.

St Michael's had no hearing loop and a struggling sound system. Two large speakers at the front of the nave cannot reach the back without increased volume, leading to distortion. Small speakers throughout the church will now offer better distribution of sound and reduction of feedback, along with improved microphones. The induction loop, surrounding the entire church, will deliver sound (as a magnetic, wireless signal) directly to compatible hearing aids.

This means that everyone, with or without hearing loss, will be able to hear better in church than ever before. The choir will be able to hear the readings! People at the back will hear the sermon!

The Diocesan Advisory Guidance Note confirms that:

"...all churches need to make some provision for those who have a hearing loss. There are two distinct, but interconnected systems. First, a loudspeaker system to improve intelligibility. This does not mean just increasing volume, rather directing sound at the listener. Secondly, there is a loop system..."

Churches and community halls have been required since 2004 by the Disability Discrimination Act to make provision for the hard of hearing, so our application to the Archdeacon was well received and approved.

Did you know that approximately 75% of people over 70 have some degree of hearing loss, and at least 1 in 6 people of any age are hearing impaired? Many of us are in that number! Please check that your hearing aid has a t-coil and that the programme for the loop is enabled (this programme is installed in nearly all newish digital hearing aids, but not always enabled by the audiologist unless you ask).

About half the cost of this installation is covered by generous donations from members of St Michael's congregation. In particular, the hearing loop

itself is entirely funded by a bequest from the estate of Tony James-Gough, who died in October 2018. His wife Barbara said that his wish was to fund a sound system or something for the disabled, and this has now been fulfilled.

If anyone is interested in contributing towards this endeavour, please contact our treasurer, Paula Lewis.



Vivien Finnigan



"Looks like no one was available to fill in for the vicar's annual holiday again."

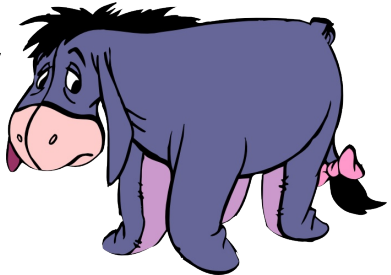
Via Social Media

Looking back through July

The important news first. The Result of the Twitter World Cup of Evensong Anthems. As only Tenors would have predicted, it was a tie! 1318 votes each for Harris 'Faith is the Heaven' and Bainton 'And I saw a new Heaven'. A fair result from the many dozens of glorious choral pieces from across 6 centuries which were entered for this light-hearted lockdown online knock-out competition.

Sadly a new spate of Choroclasm (the deliberate destruction of choirs) has started, with the pressures of the pandemic and the prejudice of some clergy.

I'm hoping to be less 'Eeyore' this month and, if not exactly 'Tigger', more 'Pooh' by looking less at the gloomy global scene and more at the beauty and care shown by small groups, families and individuals.



A tweet from Fr Chris Durrant (still @CurateDurrant) alerted me to the 300th Birthday of clergyman & naturalist Gilbert White and the delightful virtual Festival in his honour, exploring the relevance of his writings today.

Delight again as Sonita Alleyne, Master of Jesus College Cambridge, concluded her virtual degree celebration speech with: "I hope that your path will always lead you back here to Jesus, and you'll feel like you're coming home. You may be leaving Jesus now, but Jesus will never leave you." A simple unintentional summary of the Christian gospel! Fr John Hughes would have approved.

'Daily Julian' on twitter was a joy I found quite lately. She concluded 100 days of excerpts from Julian of Norwich Revelation of Divine Love with:- 'Do you want to know your Lord's meaning in this? Be well aware: love was his meaning. Who showed you this? Love. What did he show you? Love. Why did he show it? For love. Hold fast to this, and you will know and understand more of the same.'

It's a world, though, with a new hierarchy of Rights & Wrongs.

The killing of a black man in Minnesota caused a tsunami of righteous anger to spread around the globe reshaping history in its path. But the media response to the brutal killing of 3 gay white men in Reading a month later barely rippled as far as Reading Gaol.

And then the CofE and ABC tie themselves in knots in a Statement on statues & monuments in churches. One sentence seemed to me & to many to redefine Christianity as we knew it,

“As the Archbishop of Canterbury has said, we can only forgive the actions of the past when we have justice in the present...”

What does he mean? Justification by justice, rather than by Faith. Saved by virtue signaling, rather than by Grace.

And then I thought what about the Oil Industry, Abuse cases, LGBT Christians, them too?

One shouldn't judge other Churches, especially not by a single tweet, but hey why not when our local Resource Church @StMattsExeter says “Get the coffee brewing, pancakes on the grill, find your favorite Netflix spot & church is about to start.” Christianity as \Box-set Entertainment, with Jesus as your style guru?

The trouble is, wasn't Augustine of Canterbury as Resource Hub Plant from Rome? No coffee, but loads of monks & scribes, demonstrate the abundant benefits of Christianity, convert a celebrity/King, grow your Church by peer/feudal pressure. But is it right for the 21st century?

I see we're re-printing Bp Robert's Ad Clerum full of breast-beating and virtue signalling over Slavery & Colonialism.

A more nuanced article appeared on the BBC website recently:-

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-53444752>

entitled “My Nigerian great-grandfather sold slaves.” There is a telling quote from Nigerian journalist, Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani, “Assessing the people of Africa's past by today's standards would compel us to cast the majority of our heroes as villains.” And yet that seems to be the approach the West is being asked to take with its past.

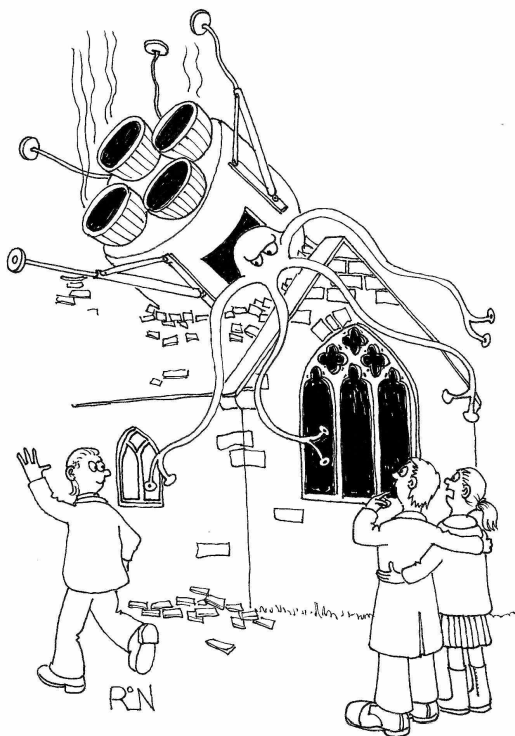
How long before Paul's Letter to Philemon, with its patronising, or some

would say progressive, attitude to slaves, is torn from the Bible?

One thing you can say about the Romans of Christ's time, they weren't racist - they were happy to make slaves (and free-men) of anyone.



Richard Barnes – 26/07/20.



*As Lay Rectors, he reminded them, the chancel
roof was their responsibility*

Countryside code

I think we have all been disturbed by the innumerable images of litter marring our beautiful beaches and countryside, and it made me wonder what had happened to the Countryside Code and why it wasn't receiving more publicity?

So here it is. It was last updated on 2 July 2020 and this is the short form:

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways is clear
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths but give way to others where it's narrow

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit, take all your litter home
- Don't have BBQs or fires
- Keep dogs under effective control
- Dog poo - bag it and bin it

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs and obey social distancing measures

There is a longer version and also a colourful leaflet format to be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code>

Please can I encourage everyone to read and share it in whatever form you choose? I've added it to my Facebook page as a start.



Hilary Todd

27.7.20

A Lockdown Story.

In a Diocese not so far, far away, the Bishop of Pychester and the Church of St Pythagoras & All Angles 'do Church differently' in this time of Covid-19 & Lockdown. Humour can be risky, so please pardon any offence, but here goes...

The performance of Beethoven's Mussa Solemnis by Pychester Symphony Orchestra & Chorus in the Cathedral on Sat 14 March is moving & prophetic. The Agnus Dei felt like he couldn't bear for the music to stop - playing extra time. We think it's all over – it is now!

Lent 3 is 'normal'. Fr Basil & the Choir sing Solemn Mass at St Pythag's; Howells' Anthem is so beautiful. 'Like as the hart... when shall I come before the presence of God?' Indeed.

His wife, Mother Helen, shepherds her flock at Little St P's, the Mission Shed down on the Riverside on the Allotments. They do Earthy Churchy, 'you O Lord are the apple blossom of my eye'. Mutual flourishing.

Mothering Sunday but not as we know it - well-distanced private prayer in worried churches, flowers left outside to be taken from Gopak tables. Who would believe you'd be seeing Gopak in the PM's Rose Garden in 2 months' time?

Lockdown Monday – Bishops still have their Palace Chapels, but CofE clergy are banned from our Churches, for the first time in 800 years, people say. Only the peregrine falcons locked down on their eggs in the Spire notice Fr Basil re-lock St Pythag's with a substantial package cradled in his arms.

Archbishop Justin Pediment, as they call him, insists it's 'like the earliest Christians', but historians know it's not, and tell him so. #ChurchAtHome tweet the opportunists with glee. #ChurchAtIKEA more like.

Bishops and others who remember the 6 Million Dollar Man from their teenhoods say, 'We have the technology; we can rebuild the Church.'

Vicarage studies & kitchens across Pyfordshire become ad hoc recording studios, lest those helpful advisers at the Old Deanery try to centralise Worship & Liturgy. Most people, even those who don't go to church, want to see their local Vicar – Prayer in the Community.

As Mtr Helen streams Morning Prayer for the Annuciation to St Pythag's Facebook page, the Church's much-loved statue of Our Lady of Walsingham has miraculously appeared in the Vicarage study.

Philosophers & quantum physicists may ponder whether Crosses & Statues were veiled this year, but if Passion Sunday feels this isolated, how will Holy Week feel, behind closed doors for fear of the virus.

With Confirmations postponed, nothing to bless, Suffragan Bishop Cindy House furloughs herself and returns to nursing, Stabat Mater Dolorosa juxta Covid lacrimosa. Better to be clapped as an NHS hero than criticised every week for passing on orders from Lambeth HQ.

Time for Bishop Ric Shaw to put weeks of prayer into practice with 20/20 foresight. Did you notice in the streamed Chrism Mass, blessing a fourth oil alongside the 3 traditional ones – the new oil of hand



sanitisation. He is also aware that Easter Communion will not happen for most, but what can he do?

A few Maundy Thursday streamed services encouraged folk to put their own bread and wine in front of their tablet or smartphone – isn't it what Jesus would do? But the Bishops frown, theologians tremble, and this isn't repeated – well not openly.

Wisely very few priests stream family foot washing – just too creepy.

While Comms Teams all over England are spinning #ChurchAtHome as the best thing since unconsecrated sliced bread, Bp Ric hears the lament of his people longing for the Blessed Sacrament. But what can he do?

He feels like Pilate, washing his hands, saying the Lord's Prayer his mind wanders – lead me not into temptation, but deliveroo ... – what if... a swift Ad Clerum wings its way to clergy across his diocese – numbers, addresses, is it possible, legal?

With commendable imagination, an Easter Vigil is live-streamed from drawing rooms & gardens around the Cathedral Close. Like a safari supper without food or fellowship. The Dean reads those fierce Old Testament passages 'horse & rider cast into the sea', the Precentor Exults 'This is the unprecedented night...this naughty world...the work of bees,' but the Paschal Candle is ready on the Palace patio, waiting for Bishop Ric to bless the fierce new fire and light a gentle flame for the Diocese.

'Mrs Bishop', author of racy ecclesiastical novels, looks on. Be careful, darling. The Bishop of Bristol's Candle has just toppled over into the Palace fish-pond - gone viral on twitter. She wonders what it could mean.

The Paschal Moon rises behind the ancient Cedar tree, seed brought back from the Lebanon by a Crusader the legend goes; more likely a Victorian

plant hunter. Deep roots, firm trunk, the canopy battered by storms, broken and growing in different directions now, but still one tree – an image of the Church, of Marriage?

Ric could still light her candle if he wanted to, but he's weighed down by the cares of the world and crowing corvid voices on every side.

Justin can't see the problem. We may have the technology, but we've lost the theology, she muses. You didn't always understand what Rowan said, but you knew it was beautiful & holy.

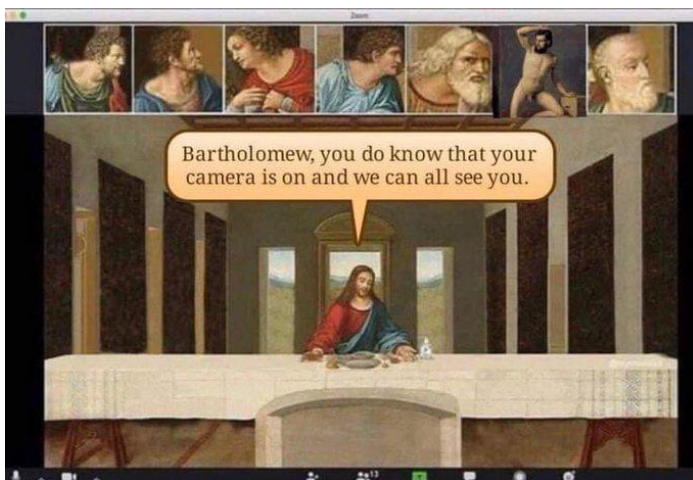
Easter Morning Eucharist, streamed from Bishop Ric's Chapel, 5000 seems the right number of individually wrapped Communion wafers to consecrate. By next Sunday, his Deloveroo Deacons will have distributed them to the faithful, and he will lead a unique post-Easter Liturgy of the Presanctified. Pychester doing Church differently.

Sermon prologues also adapt to the times. As the Venerable Alan Bennett, Archdeacon Beyond the Fringe, might say, "Isn't the Christian Life a bit like a Zoom Meeting? Jesus sends you the email invitation but you still have to click on the link. It may seem like he has forgotten you, left you in the waiting room of doom, but have faith and you will see him through a glass screen darkly, and he knows your needs in prayer even if your mike is muted."

So, as Basil & Helen take their turn on the Pychester Churches' weekly rota for online Compline, like the Two Ronnies, 'it's a quiet night from me' – 'and a perfect end from him'.



Richard Barnes – 26/07/20.



Phoebe

I thoroughly sympathise with Hilary Todd (July 2020). Dogs can be dangerous and unwelcome. I like dogs and many do splendid work: helping the visually challenged, deaf people, finding missing persons, sniffing out disease, drugs and weapons and of course companions to the lonely etc. One of our dogs, Phoebe, stands out for me. She was our last dog, living for about fifteen years. Phoebe was a Yorkshire terrier. Usually depicted as small yappy dogs with long hair and be-ribboned, Phoebe was the opposite. About as big as a Westie, with short hair and a lover of long walks and climbing hills. Our niece, Daphne, rescued her parents Delilah and Samson from bad treatment.



Phoebe was one of five, 3 small puppies and two large ones. She was a few days old and fitted on my husband's hand - black with a tan face and paws. She had just had her tail docked, the fashion then, thankfully not now. Her coat changed to silver and her face and legs to a lovely teddy-bear colour.

Alan trained her well. Phoebe followed orders, never jumping up or getting on furniture. If we were sitting on grass for a picnic, she would sit a few yards away with her back to us. She would wait with Alan at the kerb until the pips on crossing places went, when she would cross. Once, in Banbury, the crossing was by a cashpoint machine which made a similar sound when used and she crossed to the consternation of motorists. In the country she would chase squirrels- even up a tree. She would suddenly realise where she was and fall to the ground with a bashful expression. She loved the car

and camping. Walking on the pavement, Phoebe would leap through an open car door. One night, Alan had packed the car ready for an early departure the next day. At bedtime Phoebe was missing. She was sitting in the driving seat ready to go. She behaved on campsites, never intruding. When told by Alan to stay outside the trailer, she would creep after him, freezing if he turned. I kept her camping toys in the trailer; on arrival she would take them out, sniff them and check them over. Phoebe would protect our trailer. Once, in the Lake District with friends, on the last day we packed everything up and left the car in the car park. We went for a final walk and on our return heard barking. We realised someone had set up camp on our ex-site and Phoebe was defending it for us.

Phoebe like routine – Chum and biscuits outside at 5pm. When the clocks changed this made for much fussing. Once a group of us were walking on Dartmoor when Phoebe left her explorations and ran to Alan to nudge him; after a moment we realised it was 5 o'clock. At 9pm Alan would make supper. If he was reading, she would emerge from her favourite place, underneath his chair, and stare at him until he went into the kitchen, and she would follow. Given a piece of cheese, Phoebe would go outside and neatly devour it. Then she would come inside and trot off to bed. After a few moments she would come down as she realised we weren't following.

Phoebe knew when Alan was due home. She rarely barked at the door, but would breathe heavily at it. He cycled a few miles away but didn't have a regular time, so, how did she know? Alan would note the time when he left the office and I would note the time she began sniffing at the door. Almost always she was right. The BBC did a programme about cats and dogs who did this, but no conclusion was reached.

We were on holiday in East Anglia when one day I noticed that Phoebe had blood near her tail and we rushed her to a vet in Norwich, who diagnosed a lump, possibly cancer. We cut short our holiday and Alan took her to our vet. It was cancer and we decided to save her from more pain and Alan stayed until Phoebe died. We

bought a plaque in the Animals Memorial Garden at Redwings Horse Sanctuary in Norfolk.

I have many more memories of Phoebe and can't believe how much I missed her, so now I can empathise with grieving pet owners. Phoebe enjoyed life to the full and brought the family much happiness.



Eileen Jarman, June 30 2020

"The world and all
that is in it belong



to the Lord, the
earth and all who
live on it are His."

Psalms 24:1

Update on Parish Quiet Day

Wed October 14th

We are going ahead with our plans, which of course are dependant on Government advice, to have the Quiet Day. Sheldon doesn't have a big enough space so we are returning to Millhouse, who do. Our speaker Penny Warren is keen to be with us. The subject remains 'Celtic Spirituality'

I will be reviewing our plans in early September.
In the meantime, please pencil it in your diaries.

Howard

PS The good news is - it's likely to be less expensive at The Millhouse



Smilelines

Some miscellaneous observations on modern life...

Fools rush in where fools have been before.

It's called 'take home' pay because you can't afford to go anywhere else with it.

Success is relative – the greater the success, the more relatives.

If at first you succeed, try to hide your astonishment.

You must have learned from others' mistakes. You haven't had time to think all those up yourself.

People like criticism – just keep it positive and flattering.

It's okay to let your mind go blank, but please turn off the sound.

Worry kills more people than work because more people worry than work.

Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.

Misers aren't much fun to live with, but they make great ancestors.

Opportunities always look bigger going than coming.

The real reason you can't take it with you is that it goes before you do.

Junk is something you throw away about three weeks before you need it.

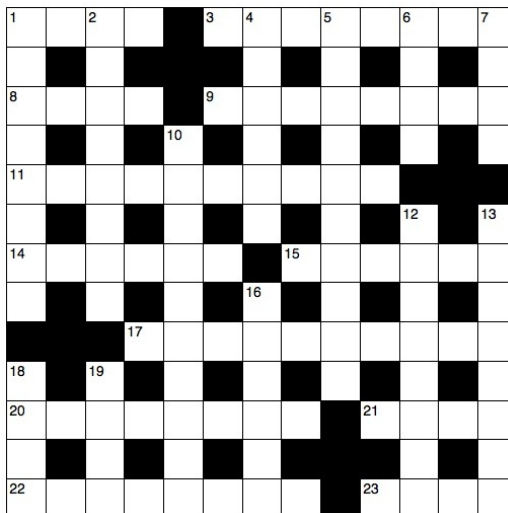
Hospitality is making your guests feel at home, even if you wish they were.

Some people are like blisters. They don't show up until the work is done.

A babysitter is a teenager acting like an adult while the adults are out acting like teen-agers.

Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a mechanic.

Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognise a mistake when you make it again.



Across

1 and 3 Two of the disciples who witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus (Luke 9:28) (4,3,5)

3 See 1 Across

8 'Let us draw — to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith' (Hebrews 10:22) (4)

9 O Simon is (anag.) (8)

11 Form of government under the direct rule of God or his agents (10)

14 How Jesus found his disciples when he returned to them after praying in Gethsemane (Luke 22:45) (6)

15 In The Pilgrim's Progress, the name of the meadow into which Christian strayed, which led to Doubting Castle (2-4)

17 Glad sin rat (anag.) (10)

20 Spinal column (Leviticus 3:9) (8)

21 Valley of the Balsam Tree with a reputation of being a waterless place (Psalm 84:6) (4)

22 'The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of one — — sees clearly' (Numbers 24:3) (5,3)

23 Adam and Eve's third son (Genesis 4:25) (4)

Down

1 David's great friend (1 Samuel 20:17) (8)

2 'The Lord... will bring me safely to his — kingdom' (2 Timothy 4:18)

(8)

4 'I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; — — or wine touched my lips' (Daniel 10:3) (2,4)

5 Seeking to vindicate (Job 32:2) (10)

6 Female servant (Isaiah 24:2) (4)

7 'For Christ died for — once for all' (1 Peter 3:18) (4)

10 'Offering spiritual sacrifices — to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Peter 2:5) (10)

12 Jesus said that some people had renounced this 'because of the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 19:12) (8)

13 One of the three men thrown into the furnace for refusing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image (Daniel 3:20) (8)

16 'You have — of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry' (Luke 12:19) (6)

18 'There before me was a white horse! Its rider held — — , and he was given a crown' (Revelation 6:2) (1,3)

19 Equipment to Charity Hospitals Overseas (1,1,1,1)

July Sudoku - Medium

7				2	1			3
		8	3	5				
		4						
	9	1			4			
	6						2	
			8			1	5	
						6		
				3	8	7		
3			2	9				4

Word search

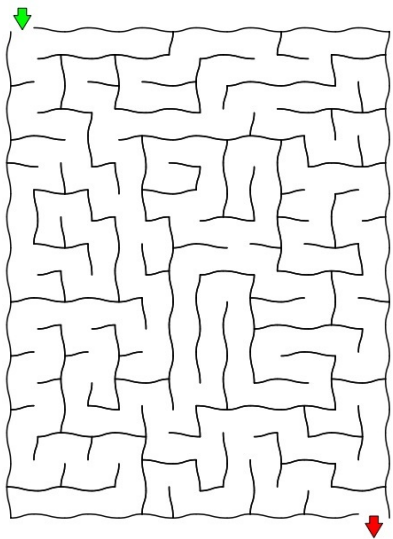
a	n	y	o	n	e	h	p	a	i	n	z	m
d	a	p	e	o	p	l	e	m	s	v	l	e
h	e	u	b	c	e	o	n	a	h	k	d	s
o	o	s	t	h	h	a	j	z	l	s	e	e
u	b	c	e	h	q	f	i	e	w	e	k	d
s	l	e	a	r	o	t	r	d	d	r	d	x
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t	r	i	c	k	y	l	e	a	d	e	r	s
h	r	o	m	a	n	s	z	d	u	l	v	m
q	i	n	v	a	d	e	d	x	o	m	g	k

Romans
loves
pain
healed
asked
leaders
people
anyone

Jesus
help
invaded
friends
understand
amazed
servant
tricky

faith
believed
centurion
authority
house
deserves
Capernaum
Israel

Maze



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 7: 1-10, Matthew 8: 5-13

When the Romans invaded Israel, they used soldiers to keep order. For the centurion in Capernaum it was more than just a job...

The centurion had a young servant who was in great pain and dying.



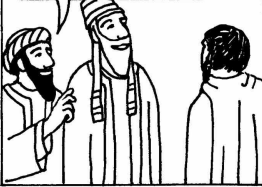
When he heard that Jesus was near, he asked the town leaders to ask Jesus for help.

The Leaders told Jesus..



This man deserves your help. He loves our people.

He has even built us a meeting place!



This could have been a tricky situation, for Jews never went into the houses of non-Jews.



But Jesus said..

I will go and heal the boy.



But the centurion knew that, as a Jew, Jesus could not go into the houses of non-Jews so as Jesus got near, he sent some friends to him.



He says he isn't worthy enough for you to come to his house.

But he says he understands authority and knows you have it. You only have to say so and his servant will be healed



Jesus was amazed!



I have never met anyone in Israel with as much faith.

He said to the friends...



You may go now. What he has believed has happened.

When the friends got to the house they found the servant completely healed!



Days of Note - August

6th August: The Transfiguration - a glimpse of Jesus' future glory

The story is told in Matthew (17:1-9), Mark (9:1-9) and Luke (9:28-36).

It was a time when Jesus' ministry was popular, when people were seeking Him out.

But on this day, He made time to take Peter, James and John, His closest disciples, up a high mountain. In the fourth century, Cyrillic of Jerusalem identified it as Mount Tabor (and there is a great church up there today), but others believe it more likely to have been one of the three spurs of Mount Hermon, which rise to about 9,000 feet, and overlook Caesarea Philippi.

High up on the mountain, Jesus was suddenly transfigured before His friends. His face began to shine as the sun, His garments became white and dazzling. Elijah and Moses, of all people, suddenly appeared, and talked with Him. A bright cloud overshadowed the disciples.

Peter was staggered, but, enthusiast that he was - immediately suggested building three tabernacles on that holy place, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. But God's 'tabernacling', God's dwelling with mankind, does not any longer depend upon building a shrine. It depends on the presence of Jesus, instead. And so, a cloud covered them, and a Voice spoke out of the cloud, saying that Jesus was His beloved Son, whom the disciple should 'hear'. God's dwelling with mankind depends upon our listening to Jesus.

Then, just as suddenly, it is all over. What did it mean? Why Moses and Elijah? Well, these two men represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they are handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their true and final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

Why on top of a mountain? In Exodus we read that Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the sacred covenant from Yahweh in the form of the Ten Commandments. Now Jesus goes up and is told about the 'sealing' of the New Covenant, or New Testament of God with man, which will be accomplished by His coming death in Jerusalem.

That day made a lifelong impact on the disciples. Peter mentions it in his second letter, 2 Peter 1:16-19, invariably the reading for this day.

The Eastern Churches have long held the Transfiguration as a feast as important as Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension and Pentecost. But it took a long time for the West to observe the Transfiguration. The feast starts appearing from the 11th and 12th centuries, and the Prayer Book included it among the calendar dates, but there was no liturgical provision for it until the 19th century.

8th August: Dominic - the saint who believed in learning

If you enjoy reading the Bible and in encouraging others to have faith in God, then Dominic is the patron saint for you. His passion for helping Christians to learn and proclaim their faith led him to found the Order of Preachers, or Black Friars, because of the black cape they wore over white habits. They are also known as the Dominicans.

Dominic was born in Castile in 1170, the youngest son of the warden of the town and nephew to the archpriest of Gumiel d'Izan. Becoming an Austin canon of Osma cathedral, Dominic spent seven years as a priest, devoted to prayer and penance. In 1201 he became sub-prior to his community.

In 1208 the Papal Legate was murdered. It sparked a crusade or 'holy war' against the Albigensian heretics. Dominic worked for reconciliation, refusing to join in the violence and massacres against them. Instead he used instruction and prayer to woo the heretics back, which led to him playing a leading role in founding Toulouse University. That became the foundation for his work in establishing the Friars Preachers at Toulouse in 1215, which occupied the last seven years of his life. (Three times he refused a bishopric, believing that this work was more important.)

Dominic's 'order' provided communities of sacred learning, with monks devoted to study, teaching and preaching as well as the usual prayer. Dominic believed monks should do more than just commune with God; they should proclaim God's love to others. Dominic was an excellent organiser, and soon his order spread rapidly all over Italy, Spain and

France. It met an acute need in the medieval church, and in time the Black Friars became a pioneering missionary force in Asia and even (much later) the Americas.

Dominic travelled widely from 1216 until his death in 1220. His simple tomb was later embellished by Michelangelo, and his usual attributes in art are a lily and a black and white dog, which is a pun (Domini canis) on the name of Dominic. The dog holds a torch in its mouth as a herald of the truth.

11th August: St Clare of Assisi

Assisi, a beautiful town in the Italian province of Umbria, was the birthplace in the 12th century of two of that country's greatest saints, Francis and Clare. Francis first, and then Clare, discovered the liberating effect of release from the burden of wealth.

For them, simplicity, or godly poverty, was the way to blessing. Their followers – Francis's monks, the Franciscans, and Clare's nuns, the 'Poor Clares' as they were known, set themselves to live without any kind of luxury. This freed them, they believed, for a life of prayer and service, to care for the poor around them without distraction. They built no elaborate basilicas, though one was erected after the death of Francis, strictly against his wishes, to surround the simple chapel (his 'hovel') where he and his followers were based. The present-day house of the Poor Clares is a perfect example of the sheer beauty of simplicity.



Their lifestyle, their message, their simplicity of life and love of the Creation and its creatures, offered a striking alternative to the society around them, where wealth (which Francis had enjoyed but rejected at his conversion) and poverty and sickness lived side by side. It has to be said, too, that their message is on collision course with the values and goals of much of the western world today. Simplicity of life and affluence don't sit easily

together.

13th August: Radegund – victim of domestic abuse

St Radegund (518-87) is a saint for anyone who has suffered domestic abuse. She is also a reminder that domestic abuse can occur in any family, however wealthy, and can span the generations, so that some women go straight from violent father to violent husband.

Radegund was born in 518, the daughter of Berthaire, king of Thuringia in east-central Germany. Berthaire was a brutal man, and Radegund grew up surrounded by violence and intrigue. When she was only 12, she was captured by the Franks, converted from paganism to Christianity and at 18 was given in marriage to Clotaire, a king of the Franks.

Sadly, Clotaire's nominal Christianity did not affect his own natural bent for violence and immorality. Though Radegund was said to have been both beautiful and good, Clotaire was repeatedly unfaithful to her, ridiculing her for her childlessness. When, six years into the marriage, Clotaire murdered Radegund's brother, she fled the court for her life, and sought refuge in the Church.

Radegund took the veil at Noyon, and became a deaconess, known for her alms-giving. But it seems that a lifetime of violence had left deep scars on her spirit, and instead of enjoying her newfound peace and freedom, Radegund turned savagely upon herself. She became an extreme ascetic, refusing most foods. She began to self-harm, binding her neck and arms with three iron circlets which badly cut into her flesh. Sadly, it seems that although her body was freed from the violence of her father and husband, her spirit was still in subjection to violence and suffering. Though she was a Christian, she never took her rightful possession of the joy, love and peace that God offers to all believers through the grace of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Still, Radegund meant well and God blessed her as much as she would let Him. She founded the monastery of Holy Cross at Poitiers, which became a centre for scholarship (the nuns spent two hours a day in study) and also of Radegund's various peace-making activities.

Various ancient churches in France and England were dedicated to her, as well as the Cambridge College now known as Jesus.

28th August: Augustine of Hippo - the Christian for all seasons

After St Paul, who was the most influential Christian writer ever? Probably St Augustine of Hippo (354–430), whose feast-day is on 28th August. He lived and wrote in a time of social and spiritual chaos. The Roman Empire was collapsing, the world was about to slide into the dark ages and the Church was under serious threat from both heresies within and paganism without.

What St Augustine wrote at this time helped the Church both to avoid perversions of Christianity, and to stand strong and unafraid amongst the violent tumult of the times. His writings held sway over Christianity for the next 15 centuries or so, and still influence us heavily today.

Augustine was born at Tagaste, in modern Algeria. His father was a pagan, but his mother, Monica, was a Christian. After studying rhetoric at Carthage to become a lawyer, Augustine instead became a scholar-philosopher. He abandoned Christianity for Manichaeism, and lived with a mistress for 15 years. He moved to Rome and then Milan to teach rhetoric, but slowly grew disenchanted with Manichaeism.

After a long interior conflict, vividly described in his '*Confessions*', Augustine was converted and baptised a Christian in 386-7. He returned to Africa in 388, and joined some friends in establishing a quasi-monastic life. He was ordained priest in 391, and four years later became coadjutor-bishop of Hippo. From 396 until his death in 430 he ruled the diocese alone.

Augustine had a brilliant mind, an ardent temperament and a gift for mystical insights. Soon his understanding of the Christian Revelation was pouring forth in his many voluminous writings.

So what did he write? Most famous is '*The Confessions*', the sermons on the Gospel and Epistle of John, the *De Trinitate* and the *De Civitate Dei*. This last, 'The City of God', tackles the opposition between Christianity and the 'world' and represents the first Christian philosophy of history.

Many other works were undertaken in his efforts to tackle various heresies: Manichaeism, Pelagianism, or Donatism, and led to the development of his thought on Creation, Grace, the Sacraments and the Church.

Augustine's massive influence on Christianity has mainly been for the good. Few others have written with such depth on love, the Holy Trinity and the Psalms. (The preamble to the marriage service in the BCP is closely based on Augustine.) But his views on Predestination and some of his views on sex (that it is the channel for the transmission of Original Sin) have since been mainly ignored by the Church.

As bishop, Augustine fearlessly upheld order as the Roman Empire disintegrated around him. By the time of his death, the Vandals were at the very gates of Hippo.

30th August: John Bunyan – the man who wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*

After the Bible, John Bunyan's wonderful Christian allegory, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, is one of the most celebrated and widely-read books in the English language. It has been translated into more than 100 languages around the world and keeps its place as a Christian classic.

Names of people and places from its pages have been commonplace wherever English is spoken. We need only recall Mr Great-Heart, Mr Valiant-for-Truth, Giant Despair, Madame Bubble, the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, the Delectable Mountains, the Hill Difficulty and the Celestial City.

Bunyan was born on 28 November 1628, at Elstow, near Bedford, England, of a poor family. He had little formal education and his father taught him to be a metal worker. His first wife died young. His second wife, Elizabeth, helped him considerably with his blossoming literary career. His conversion was the result of reading the Bible, and the witness of local Christians. From that time the Bible became the great inspiration of his life. He wrote more than 50 books on Christianity. A Baptist by conviction, he had little time for the Established Church.

Bunyan became a popular preacher, but because of his opposition to the Established Church and because he did not have a Church of England

preaching licence, he was imprisoned in 1661. It was in prison that he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*. It was not only Bunyan's greatest book, but was destined to become one of the most popular Christian books in the world.

Pilgrim's Progress is an allegory, using the names of people and places from the Bible to teach spiritual lessons. The vivid and unforgettable imagery in the *Pilgrim's Progress* covers the whole Christian gospel from sin and condemnation all the way through faith, repentance, grace, justification, sanctification, and perseverance to heaven itself.

Bunyan died on 31st August 1688. His portrayal of the death of Mr Valiant For Truth is Bunyan at his allegorical best. This brave old soldier of Jesus Christ had received his summons to 'go home.' Calling his friends together he says, "My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my pilgrimage ... My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought His battles, Who will now be my rewarder." ... So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side...'



The doctor and the ill person

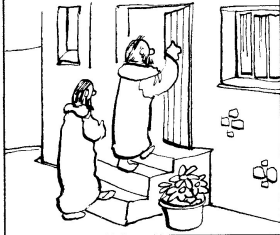


JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ON ONE OCCASION JESUS CALLED MATTHEW - A TAX COLLECTOR TO BE HIS FOLLOWER.

JESUS EVEN WENT TO MATTHEW'S HOME.



THIS SET PEOPLE'S TONGUES WAGGING. THEY THOUGHT JESUS WAS LETTING THE SIDE DOWN!

BUT JESUS EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO TALK TO EVERYONE!

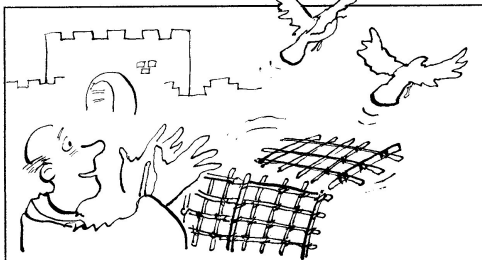


"PEOPLE WHO ARE WELL DO NOT NEED A DOCTOR"



"BUT ONLY THOSE WHO ARE SICK"

"IT IS KINDNESS THAT GOD WANTS"



"NOT ANIMAL SACRIFICES!" see Matthew Ch. 9 v.9-13

Puzzle solutions

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9	1	2	7	4	5	6	3	8
5	4	6	1	3	8	7	9	2
3	8	7	2	9	6	5	1	4

The deadline for inclusion of articles for the September issue of New Leaves is Sunday 23rd August

If you have images of any events of interest to the Parish community please send them to us. Any information and articles you'd like to submit for inclusion in future issues should be sent to the new editorial team at:

newleavesnews@gmail.com

Please send digital files via email and please make the subject header fit the content of the email - thanks!

Thank you to Graham Lerwill for organising the printing of this magazine

- his hard work is much appreciated.