

New Leaves

February 2021



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

50p

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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

From the Vicarage February 2021

Firstly I would like to thank everyone who helped with our Christmas worship. It was not what we would usually have planned but it was good to be able to offer a range of services over our two churches. And I'm pleased to say that the sun shone on our outdoor Christingle on Christmas Eve and we welcomed well over 100 people in the churchyard. I would also like to thank those who cleaned and decorated our churches so that they looked festive.

Closure for Public Worship

As Covid cases rose sharply in Exeter in the new year the PCC took the difficult decision to close our churches for public worship. The Bishop of Exeter agreed to the suspension until the end of February (as he has for many parishes). We will review this decision during February in the light of conditions prevalent at the time in the hope of beginning public worship again as soon as it is safe to do so.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us to get our online services going again and I hope that you will be able to connect with our worship. If you don't have internet access please ask and we will try to get you a printed copy of our notices, readings and sermon for the week.

There is no doubt that this third 'lock down' is a testing time for many of us and the need for kindness and fellowship within the church and with our neighbours has never been greater.

We are all missing opportunities to get together and I hope that you will keep in touch with fellow church members as much as possible during this time. Please let your clergy and readers know of anyone you know who is particularly struggling.

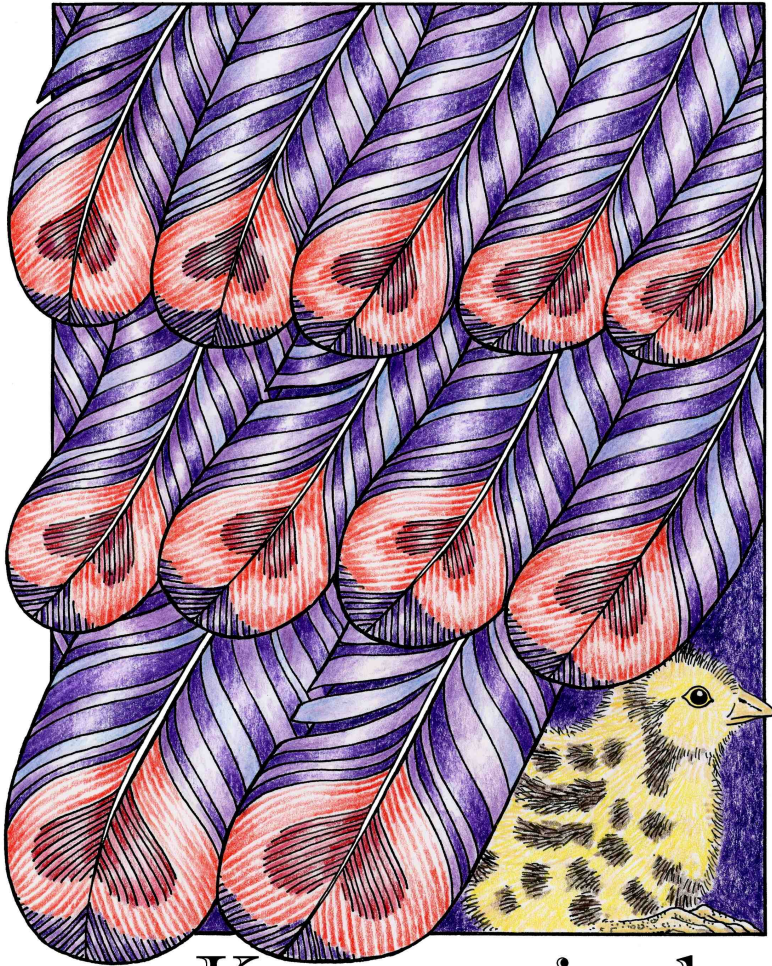
We will continue with our Zoom Sunday Coffee at 10.30am during

the closure of our churches as well as providing a Youtube recorded service each Sunday and 'Thrive' on Zoom at 4pm on Sundays which is a good place to learn and explore the Christian faith with others under Ash's guidance. We will also be keeping our churches open for private prayer. St Michael's will be open from 11am to 12noon on Sundays with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 11.30am. St David's will be open from 10.30 – 11.30am on Thursdays and 9.30-10.30am on Sundays and do join us keeping in mind the usual Covid precautions

Eco Church

As St David's Church works towards an EcoChurch accreditation the Green Team is running a project during 2021 to increase biodiversity in the St David's Churchyard with a few simple measures. We have three immediate aims: firstly to install a number of nestboxes, secondly to make one or two 'bug hotels' from old wood which can gradually rot down and provide habitat for invertebrates and thirdly to trial one or more areas of wild flowers on the north side of church. There was an excellent plan for the churchyard written back in 2014 which is still available on the St David's Church website.

We need to get going quickly with the nestboxes if they might be used this year and we would like to invite you to make or donate a box. If you would like to make one there is an excellent and easy design on the RSPB if you Google 'RSPB Build a bird box'. I have some metal plates to go around a 32mm hole to stop squirrels or other predators getting in and some roofing felt and old inner tubes to make a hinge and I'm happy to deliver these bits if you would like to have a go! There is also a good firm which makes predator proof nestboxes (as used in Bury Meadow) which are long lasting at a cost of £22 and if any of you might like to donate one of those Clive Wilson would be happy to take your offers newleaves_mag@btinternet.com for those or for home made models. We would like to put these up during February.



shelter of your wings Ps 17:8

Keep me in the

Lent Plans

'If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.' is a saying that has come into its own in the past year. But we are making firm plans to keep Lent online. I will host a Zoom service on Ash Wednesday evening at 7.30pm and will publish the link in the notices the Sunday before. This will be a short service with readings and an address. There will be an opportunity to sign yourself with an ash cross during the service but you will need to provide your own ash. Do join us for

this service to begin Lent on Wednesday 17 February at 7.30pm.

Lent Groups will also be run on Zoom , almost certainly on Tuesday afternoons at 2pm for an hour. Details will be published in the weekly notice sheets.

Oliver Nicholson will be running a Discussion group on Zoom on three Thursdays in March, 4, 11 and 18 from 7-8pm. The subject will be 'Persecution and the Early Church' and will look at the reasons for the persecution, the experience of Christians facing persecution and the spirituality and 'inspired endurance' of the early martyrs which strengthened the Church in witness to the faith. Full details can be found in this magazine.

Persevere in Prayer

Although we cannot get together in person at the moment it is vital that we persevere in prayer together for each other and for our nation and wider world. The long-term effects of this pandemic continue to become apparent and it is clear that we will be living with them for many years to come. But we have much to be thankful for in the support which many people have shown for those in need during this crisis and, of course, the rapid roll-out of the vaccines. Let us continue together in thanksgiving for the blessings we have and prayer for those who are suffering most in these days.

With every good wish and blessing

Nigel



February 2021 from St Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham

A few weeks ago I spent some time with Lizzy Hewitt; she told me of a situation where an outcome looked really insoluble and they were praying intensely for an answer to the problem. All the ideas they thought about were not satisfactory. The difficulty, in fact, was resolved in a totally unexpected way, a complete surprise. I was reminded that we cannot suggest an outcome to God: He answers in ways we cannot even imagine, with surprising, stunning results. The hope in God is well-founded. We have to pray our way through this time without attempting to create an agenda that has nothing to do with faith; faith allows us to face the present and the future with God, so that ultimately nothing can destroy us.

At the time of writing, we are 11 weeks away from Easter, the great season of Christian hope. This month sees Candlemas, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and therefore the start of Lent. It hardly seems like yesterday that we were thinking that the first lockdown would last a few weeks. Could this bring a second 'missing' Easter celebration? When churches were only open for private prayer, during the time of silence, I decided to do a bit of serious reading to aid meditation.

Some while back I had bought the late Chief Rabbi's book, '**The Dignity of Difference**'; it was at a time when there were fervid gatherings about endemic racism and prejudice in society. The title was enlarged with the words '*How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*'. The book was first published in 2002, with a revised edition in 2003. It is important to remember these dates. Chapter 2, on the effects of globalisation, starts with two contrasting scenarios, set in 2020, eighteen years ahead: the future.

The first describes a society that we would recognise as the best and most optimistic of our time: information technology has improved our lives immeasurably, we are aware of the needs of the world and are seriously addressing health, education, nourishment and financial lacunae, and the world seems set to move into a new golden age. It is recognisable by most (though the cynics will always be able to point to the unpleasant underbelly of failure).

The second scenario is now all too familiar. Although Lord Sacks suggests the disastrous event of a 'dirty' bomb exploding in New York, we can easily

substitute Covid-19 for that, because the results are immediately familiar: there is a high toll of casualties... 'Air travel is at a standstill...global economy is in a state of collapse...unemployment is at a record high...Pollution has made it impossible to walk in city streets without a protective mask.'

He goes on to say that uncertainty is part of the human constitution; we never know what is going to happen tomorrow, and that seems to be so much of our lives now. Whereas we used to plan, book holidays in the sun and set appointments for the future, we have been jerked back into reality on a short lead. The final chapter is entitled '*A Covenant of Hope*'.

Thank God.

The strident secularism and creeping ignorance of faith in our time has almost silenced the wisdom of the world's religions, but as long as we can develop the interconnectedness that has in some cases become evident in this past year, there is hope, especially if we see it as a challenge to rise to the best, to see the 'divine presence in the face of a stranger.' The three Abrahamic faiths know that '...we are not gods, but that we are summoned by God to do His work of love and justice and compassion and peace.'

This Easter will give us the opportunity to do that work in many different ways, but within a framework of 'tolerance in an age of extremism', sharing the love of God with others.



Stephanie Aplin

The Dignity of Difference

Jonathan Sacks published by continuum,
London & New York



A Letter from Belinda

Dear Reader,

If you were able to read my magazine article back in December you will know that I am a Companion of the Nazareth Community based at St Martin-in-the Fields. The rule of life for the Nazareth Community is based on 7 areas; silence, scripture, sacrament, sharing, service, sabbath & staying with. I have begun to appreciate time spent in silence and please know that there are days when I don't do it but I keep returning to it and it is a blessing. And 'staying with' has kept me grounded and rooted in the light of Christ over the last year when there have been times, as I am sure there have been for many of us, when it was all we could do to put one foot in front of the other and sometimes not even wanting to do that.

Before I moved to Exeter nearly two years ago I used to travel to & from work in Exeter from North Devon on a full time basis. There were times when there were not many blessings to find in that journey but one blessing that I received every day was the ability to gradually leave behind the challenges of the day before I arrived home. Sitting in silence is a bit like that. We are able to sit with God and unwind in his peace, or begin the day in his peace which we can then carry through into our daily tasks.

With all of this in mind I would like to hold a short time of both contemplation and silence as a community. We do this at St David's at the beginning of advent, in particular for women. I would like to do something similar to this on a regular basis, perhaps once a month to begin with. Perhaps the early evening (6pm) for 30-40 minutes would be a good time where we can unwind and reflect on the day. Perhaps even a Friday evening where we can come together and reflect on our week? For now this will have to be on Zoom but my hope is we will be able to hold this as a hybrid time, both Zoom and face to face for those who can.

Please email me on bspeedandrews@gmail.com if this is something that you are interested in and if you have any thoughts to offer.

Blessings

Belinda

Revd Belinda Speed-Andrews, 26.01.2021

The Parish Comms (Communications) Group

Publicising services and events has been really hard to plan recently. For example, we had a pile of posters printed in January which we now can't put up, because the information on them became inaccurate days after going to press. Similarly, in normal circumstances, our parish Comms Group could be meeting around now to plan our publicity for Lent and Easter, but in our current Covid circumstances, we don't know for sure what we can advertise and what we can't, due to lockdowns and government reviews.

However, in many ways, I'm encouraged. We faced a similarly unstable situation in the run up to Advent and Christmas, and yet we can celebrate the success of that season's publicity. For example, even though we were forced to carefully limit our advertising so as to attract manageable numbers for safe distancing, our flagship services such as Christingle Nativity at St David's and Midnight Mass at St Michael's had pretty much the perfect number of people attending - not too few, and not too many!

For me, this indicates a legacy of advertising well, so that enough people knew what to expect, where, and when, in order to show up, and it implies that we pitched our level of advertising this year exactly right – successfully attracting enough people, but not more than we could safely manage within safe and legal restrictions. God was glorified, carols were sung, the gospel was preached, and the sacrament administered. None of that could be taken for granted, what with the way national Christmas restrictions were changing so fluidly, and I believe this success represents a significant win for our comms team in very difficult circumstances.

We have also been able to add a number of new resources to our publicity channels in recent months, including a new welcome poster for St David's West porch, and bespoke prayer cards for both churches, and we are exploring new external signage for both churches.

So, looking ahead, we all need to pay close attention to the weekly notices as our first port of call for current information, and also our websites and social media, which Comms Group work hard to keep up to date. As currently advertised at the time of writing, we have a mix of YouTube, Facebook, Zoom, and in person provision, including midweek offices of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer, and safely distanced

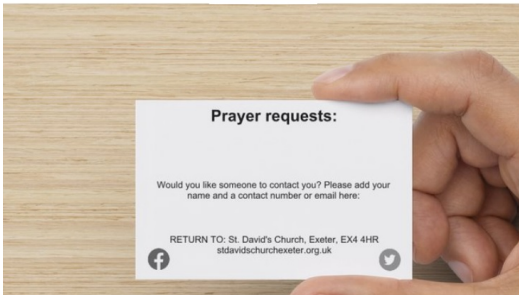


private prayer sessions in church.

The weekly notices, this magazine, and all our online channels are essential sources of information, both for regular congregants and for the folk who have discovered us recently. I'd thus like to take a moment to thank our very strong team for YouTubing, Zooming, Facebooking, Tweeting, and producing resources like this magazine and the vital weekly notices & Pugh sheets; cascading them via our church email lists; uploading to and maintaining our gorgeous websites; and faithfully delivering printed materials to offline people, so they can join in with prayers, readings, and sermons in text form. All of this is such valued ministry, with both internal and external reach, and I am personally blown away by the efforts of all involved.

- Ash LP, as chair of Comms Group

- 20.01.2021



Chosen Readings for February 2021 @St David's

Sunday 7th February 2nd Sunday before Lent

1st Reading: Proverbs 8:1,22-31

2nd Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Gospel Reading: John 1:1-14

Preacher: Bill Pattinson Bible Reader: Jeremy Lawford

Prayer Leader: Adrian Butland

Sunday 14th February Sunday next before Lent

1st Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12

2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Gospel Reading: Mark 9:2-9

Preacher: Howard Friend; Bible Reader: Laura Casimir

Prayer Leader: Nigel Walsh



Sunday 21st February 1st Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: Genesis 9:8-17

2nd Reading: 1Peter 3:18-end

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:9-15

Preacher: Adrian Butland; Bible Reader: Keith Postlethwaite

Prayer Leader: Helena Walker

Sunday 28th February 2nd Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: Genesis 17:1-7,15-16

2nd Reading: Romans 4:13-end

Gospel Reading: Mark 8:31-end

Preacher: Nigel Guthrie ; Bible Reader: Lawrence Sail

Prayer Leader: Graham Keitch

Sunday 7th March 3rd Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Gospel Reading: John 2:13-22

Preacher: Ash Leighton Plom; Bible Reader: Cathy Knowles

Prayer Leader: Belinda Speed-Andrews

Services & Events for St Michael's - February 2021

Our thanks to all who helped provide Music for Worship in St Michael's when this was possible in December & January, between Lockdowns. To Cantors and Quartets conducted by Tasha, to Matt on the Organ with Lorna Cowdry for the Sundays either side of Christmas, and Fr Nigel playing & preaching at Midnight Mass – thank you. From the late-running Advent Procession to Epiphany Plainsong, we were well pleased to have some weeks of Covid-secure Services with music to lift our spirits.

Since then we have adapted again to online worship, but with St Michael's OPEN for private prayer Sundays between 11am & 12 noon.

The PCC will be reviewing the situation mid-February to consider whether it is safe to resume Public Worship in March.

Lent starts mid-month with Ash Wednesday on 17th February. Please look out for announcements of Lent groups, and join in if you can. Oliver Nicholson will be leading a Reading Group over Zoom for the first 3 Thursdays in March.

Online Vespers should be streamed to the "Friends of St Michael's" Facebook group on Tuesdays at 6pm with contemplative plainsong. St Michael's also has a Facebook page where Wednesday Matins and other Services will be found. Its address is:-

<https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsmtdinhamexeter>

Sunday Recorded Service on YouTube are available from links on our website <https://www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk/events/> and St David's Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/stdavidschurchexeter>

The weekly Parish Notices and Pewsheets will keep you informed.

Here is a list of the Services for February we should have had – Pew Sheet links and online worship will cover these as far as possible..

NO SERVICES in Church this Month.

Sun 31 Jan, Epiphany IV as Candlemas transferred.

Tue 2 Feb – Candlemas. Presentation of Christ in the Temple. 6pm Plainsong Vespers on "Friends of St Michael's" Facebook group, and also Tuesdays 9, 16 & 23 Feb.

Wed 3 Feb, Matins. Online on StM Facebook page. Anskar, Archbishop of Hamburg, missionary in Denmark & Sweden, 865.

Sun 7 Feb, Epiphany V, Sexagesima.

Wed 10 Feb, Scholastica, Abbess, sister of Benedict, 543.

Sun 14 Feb, Quinquagesima, Transfiguration,.

Wed 17 Feb, Ash Wednesday. There will be some form of Ashing Service online or using Zoom – look out for details.

Sun 21 Feb, Lent I. Usually includes Sung Litany.

Wed 24 Feb, Matins on Facebook. St Matthias.

On Wednesdays in Lent we would normally pray Stations of the Cross at 6pm. If this cannot happen physically, you might find this link to our Stations helpful

<https://www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk/stations-of-the-cross-1/>

Sun 28 Feb, Lent II. Eve of St David's Day.

Wed 3 Mar, Matins.

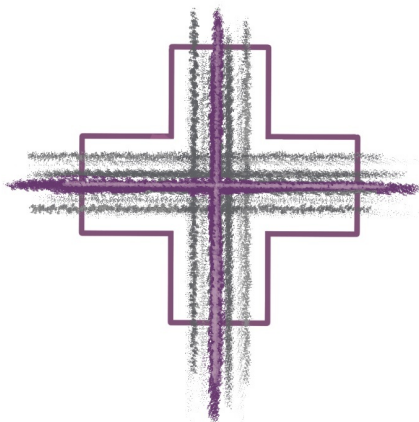
Thursdays 4, 11 & 18, at 7pm over Zoom. Reading Group led by Oliver Nicholson on 'Persecution and the Early Church'.

Sun 7 Mar, Lent III, ...

We hope you can stay safe and stay in touch with Christ and his Church in this time of further Lockdown.



Richard Barnes – 23/01/21.



ASH WEDNESDAY

Poem for the Month

Glynis, our Churchwarden, suggested to me that we might have a poem in each monthly edition of New Leaves. An excellent idea, I thought. So here's the first one which I've chosen - "Breakages" by Stewart Henderson, a stalwart Liverpudlian, broadcaster and songwriter, as well as poet. Indeed, this poem has been set to music and can be heard on the album "Vesper Sky" by Yvonne Lyon, Carol and Stewart Henderson.

Although written in 2018, or should I say 2BC (2 years before Covid), this poem reflects so clearly our anxieties, losses and fractures of the pandemic, where we have indeed "been broken by many things." And yet amongst these breakages are the "waiting seeds" of hope for we know "we can bloom...and...rise". Henderson also reflects his strong Christian faith in the final eight short lines, a reference to Christ's body broken for us, who in turn will break "the many things that now break us." It's my poem for 2020. A.A.Gill, the late cultural critic of *The Times*, once wrote: "We tell poems to God and call them prayers." I hope you enjoy it.

Bill Pattinson (20.01.2021)

Breakages

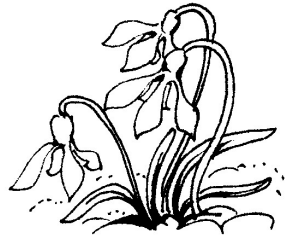
*We will be broken by many things
through fierce and forced intrusions around us,
and our own wrecking ball within.
Our city walls breached,
our wings stuck and skin slicked
by insidious spillage.*

*We will be broken by many things;
our inherited condemnations
and judge and jury sentence.
We will be broken by events and loss;
the diagnosis and gaunt treatments,
the playground...and waiting room of remission;
the riots of grief, and the frozen days that follow.*

*We will be broken by many things;
the snapped promises and the “not heard” seasons,
the infringements and trespasses against us -
our violated times.*

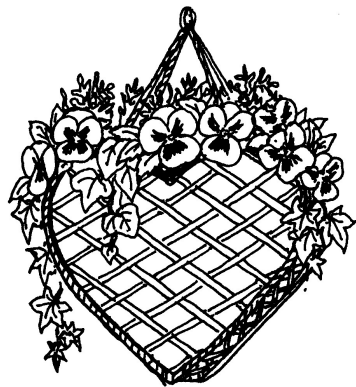
*We will be broken by many things;
the soul appearing lost
through cunning and blatant conspiracies -
and our own collusions,
our sabotage, our dark matter.*

*We will be broken by many things...
and yet, these fractures and fragmentations
do contain waiting seeds and thorough songs.
For, we can bloom...and rise...
and rebel a new anthem;
a Midwinter chant, a Spring shanty,
a Sabbath Requiem for what was, but no more.
We no longer tarred or tethered
but transformed by
the Myriad of light
the First-Born Broken
the original Renaissance
the only Reformation,
who in turn breaks the many things
that now break us.*



Stewart Henderson

October 2018



Punched by God

As a feminist I often wonder how I come to be a paid up member of the Church of England, this patriarchal establishment that at times can be so disrespectful to certain groups and individuals. But here I am.

I am also a mother of a daughter who is so unlike me there are often occasions she confounds me, particularly with her wisdom.

I also have the joy of being a grandmother who has been present at the birth of all her grandchildren, and indeed delivered my grandson Clement.

So it was very late one evening in Advent, feeling very weary and in need of spiritual nourishment that this poem came through on my news feed. My soul and heart felt like they had been punched and I went to bed aquiver.

So at this time of Candlemas, when Mary presented herself at the temple for purification, to be 'Churched' as we say in the Anglican tradition, I share the poem with you.



Glynis Harfleet

*"Sometimes I wonder
if Mary breastfed Jesus.
if she cried out when he bit her
or if she sobbed when he would not latch.
and sometimes I wonder
if this is all too vulgar
to ask in a church
full of men
without milk stains on their shirts
or coconut oil on their breasts
preaching from pulpits off limits to the Mother of God.
but then I think of feeding Jesus,
birthing Jesus,*

*the expulsion of blood
and smell of sweat,
the salt of a mother's tears
onto the soft head of the Salt of the Earth,
feeling lonely
and tired
hungry
annoyed
overwhelmed
loving
and I think,
if the vulgarity of birth is not
honestly preached
by men who carry power but not burden,
who carry privilege but not labor,
who carry authority but not submission,
then it should not be preached at all.
because the real scandal of the Birth of God
lies in the cracked nipples of a
14 year old
and not in the sermons of ministers
who say women
are too delicate
to lead."*

-Kaitlin Hardy Shetler



Soul Gardens

I have a book that is very special to me, and over the years I have dipped into and revisited it every so often with great pleasure. In 'The Feminine Face of God' by Sherry Ruth Anderson and Patricia Hopkins, there is a chapter entitled 'In the Sacred Garden'. This is the place where we grow in relationship with God, meet the divine and become the person whom we are asked to be, with all our frailties and faults as well as our beauty.

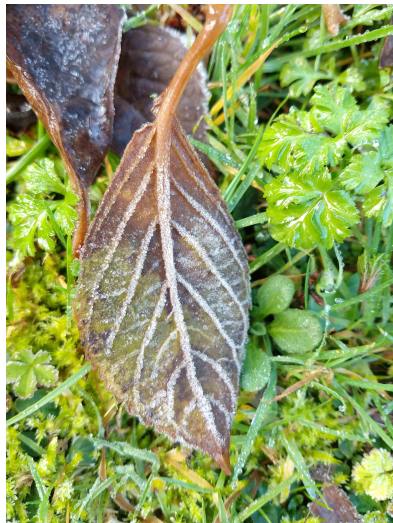
Whilst pondering on this I decided to ask a number of people if they would be willing to write about their soul gardens, so over the coming months we will be sharing and experiencing these unique and individual gifts.

The chapter in the book begins with a quote from 'The Secret Garden' by Frances Hodgson Burnett where Mary Lennox discovers the garden "and she felt as if she had found a world of her own." And as we know in this wintry place she finds evidence of the spring to come. So it seems appropriate to start with the writing offered by Mary Kirkland.



GSHarflett

Jan 4th 2021



My Garden and My Soul

It is the first day of 2021 and I have had a wonderful walk in the countryside at Killerton, accompanied by curious robins darting from the hedgerow to get a closer look, black birds pecking furiously at the ground in attempts to extract an unsuspecting bug or worm and the odd buzzard flying close to the frozen ground boldly searching for voles and mice to fill its daily needs.

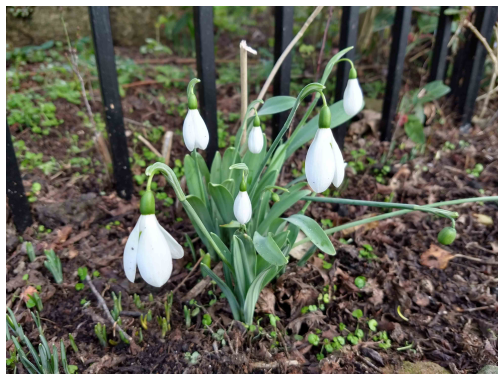
On return home, there is little obvious sign of life in my garden - drooping frosted leaves brown and lifeless, bare branches on shrubs and trees and a stillness to the air of waiting. This echoes my own present experience of trying to keep my relationship with God containing colour and life during this motionless time sheltering from Covid and feeling as if there is no growth in me.

However, if I rouse myself and tidy the wasted leaves around my perennials, I find the shoots of next year's glory already pushing up through the hard cold ground. What joy to realise the work never stops. It may not be obvious to the eye and need seeking out, but all the time it does not give up. This quiet winter garden leaves time and peace to focus on the hidden workings. I too can stop and be, and allow God to form new growth in me. I only need to turn my face upwards and wait.



Mary Kirkland

01.01.2021



A Carol-free Christmas?

Not entirely of course, but far fewer than usual owing to the bleak midwinter resurgence of the Covid-19 Coronavirus.

Very odd to be in the well-spaced, masked, sanitised congregation in St Michael's for Midnight Mass, rather than the choir stalls.

I had been in the Quartet for the delayed Advent Procession and was due to sing at Epiphany, but Lockdown 3 made that a Cantor only event.

So it was the turn of others to sing for the Midnight. And lovely it was too. A few Carols from the Lady Chapel rather than the Gallery beforehand, Once in Royal David's City, Darke in F Communion setting, and Victoria's enigmatic polyphony for O Magnum Mysterium – O what an admirable mystery that the animals should see the Lord laid in their manger by the Blessed Virgin Mary.

It's not yet Candlemas, so I'll continue the Christmas theme.

Sometime after Epiphany, we got round to watching the BBC Songs of Praise UK's Favourite Carols 2020. The top 3 are worth a few comments.

Third was "In the Bleak Midwinter". Christina Rossetti's Victorian poem is well-known and much-loved, as are the 2 tunes composed for it. Harold Darke's setting for choir with solo verses would narrowly get my vote, but this time they used Gustav Holst's hymn tune Cranham which works better for congregational singing (remember when we could do that? Though I fancy there has been much quiet humming behind our masks.).

The top two overshadowed the bluster and chaos of Brexit with Carols originating in Europe.

At 2 was Stille Nacht, Silent Night – but not as we know it. Sir Cliff Richard's touching performance managed to transform (or mangle) the tune's gently swaying 6/8 lullaby into a slow 4/4 rock ballad. It's testament to Franz Gruber's tune that it kindof worked.

At number 1 was "O Holy Night". Not the Americanised version for crooners, Gospel divas or massed choir, paraphrased in 1855 by Boston Unitarian Minister John Sullivan Dwight, but the original French words. These were written for Christmas 1843 by provincial French poet Placide Cappeau, and set to music the following year by Parisian composer Adolphe Adam, most famous now for the ballet Giselle.

The literal translation of the French took us completely by surprise.

Not the cosy American version:

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*

But these solemn words:

*Midnight, Christians, it is the solemn hour,
When God as man descended unto us
To erase the stain of original sin
And to end the wrath of His Father.
The entire world thrills with hope
On this night that gives it a Saviour.*

So, not so much 'The stars are brightly shining' but 'The God-man descends to earth to erase the stain of original sin!'

Hope, Redeemer, kneel down, Deliverance, Saviour, stand up and sing, are its themes. It was sung in magnificent St Paul's Cathedral with solemn devotion by the wonderful Tenor Andrea Bocelli. Definitely worth doing an online search to find.

Far from fluffy romanticism, O Holy Night is a strong piece of Patristic theology linking Incarnation and Redemption.

Two more thoughts. 'The wrath of his Father' ends with the Incarnation, the self-giving love of the Son in becoming human alongside us; it does not involve God punishing Jesus in our place. At Christ's Baptism, God already says 'You are my Son in whom I am well-pleased.'

And in the final verse

*Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother;
And in His name all oppression shall cease.*

is a good translation of the original French. For Rev Dwight and his fellow

abolitionists in pre-Civil War America this carol had a strong message of social and racial justice, as well as Christian hope – words still all too relevant and necessary today.



Richard Barnes – 24/01/21.

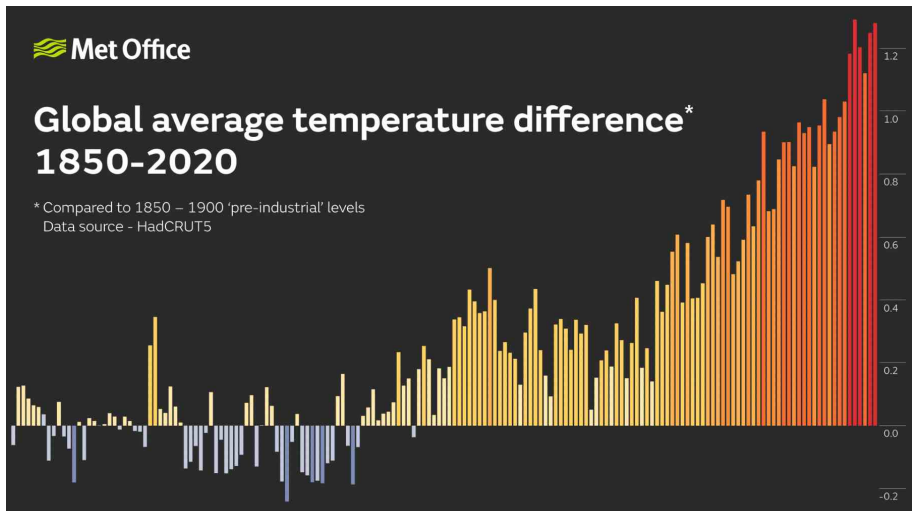


A parcel for Justin! Now lockdown at home would be more bearable.

Green Matters

We hope to include a regular column on “Green Issues” covering both large and small things, global and more local problems and initiatives to combat them.

As I write, the weather is very cold with snow falling over many parts of the country so that it may be hard to believe that global heating is a major problem. It might also be tempting to think that whilst there is the global Covid pandemic we can't worry too much at the moment about the climate and concentrate on the immediate public health problem. Unfortunately climate change and the impacts of global fossil fuel use are becoming more critical, and we cannot afford to neglect them. Also many of the changes to our behaviour forced by the pandemic can have a beneficial impact on our lives and help to reduce our CO2 emissions and to mitigate against the adverse climate changes.



Last year, 2020, was the joint warmest year globally with 2016 according to the Climate Change Service of the EU funded Copernicus¹ Programme, which is implemented and operated by the European Centre for Medium

1. Copernicus is the European Union's Earth Observation Programme, looking at our planet and its environment for the ultimate benefit of all European citizens.

2. Sentinel satellites are launched and operated by the European Space Agency in support of the Copernicus programme

Range Weather forecasts (ECMWF) in Reading. Based on Sentinel² Satellite observations and surface measurements the global mean temperature was 1.25C higher than the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average. This is confirmed by the figure of 1.28C from the Met Office Hadley Centre's joint monitoring with the University of East Anglia and the UK National Centre for Atmospheric Science. They produce a record of the global temperatures based on land and sea observations. 2020 was also the last year of the warmest 10-year period on record. It shows how close we are to the Paris Agreement that aims to limit the long-term average temperature rise to well below 2C and no more than 1.5C. The Met Office forecast that 2021 maybe a little cooler as there is a La Nina (a natural global oscillation of the atmosphere/ocean) which cools the East Pacific ocean.

The rise in CO₂ content has been accelerating over recent years, rising from 400 parts per million in 2015 to breach 415 ppm just four years later according to WMO secretary general, Prof Petteri Taalas. But what about the lockdowns and decreases in industrial and economic activity during the Covid pandemic, surely that can have helped arrest the rise? Unfortunately although there were maximum **global** decreases of 17% during the spring lockdowns the overall effect this year is likely to be a reduction of the global input of between 4.2% and 7.5% compared to the 2019 input. This will only result in a smaller increase of between 0.08 ppm and 0.23 ppm in 2020. This shows how important are the efforts towards a zero net CO₂ input. Radical changes in our lifestyles and economies are needed. Above all we need to move rapidly to green forms of energy. Currently, many people are working from home, but that means they are using more fossil fuels in heating their home in general and the sources of CO₂ have just been displaced from their places of employment. Similarly there is a duplication of input from transport as buses and trains are still running, often empty due to Covid transmission risks whilst more journeys will be by private car which is less efficient in CO₂ use per passenger terms. This is why the "build back better" programme needs to be as green as possible. We cannot afford to revert to business as usual. We really need to move towards a better new normal. This will involve us all in reflecting on what we do and our assumptions on what is justified. We need to become much more aware of the CO₂ costs of our individual actions, nudged by Government policies and initiatives. In terms of our own carbon footprint we are evaluating the Church buildings and activities at St David's as part of

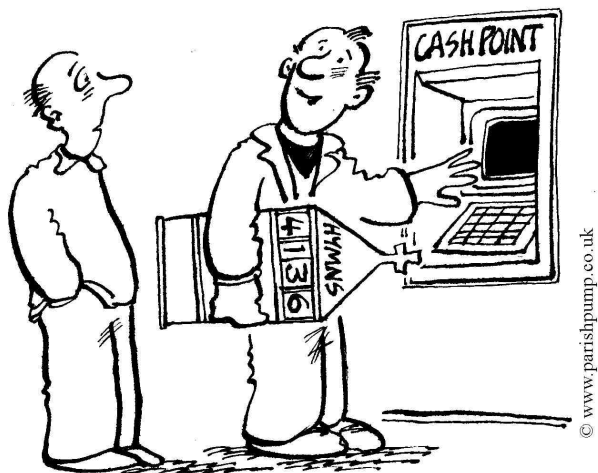
our progress towards the A Rocha Eco Church designation. A major part of the footprint is the heating of the building. The installation of a large array of solar panels on the roof would go a long way to off-setting this with a non-CO2 source. At present many obstacles stand in way of this but I believe in the not too far future these and other actions will become both possible and urgent.

Observing and understanding climate is international and global, as is most science despite the jingoistic waffle of the UK government. The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP26, is the 26th such conference and is scheduled to be held in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November 2021 under the presidency of the United Kingdom. Let us hope that we see world-beating leadership to help make agreements on action that will radically combat the climate change problems.



Clive Wilson

24.02.2021



© www.parishpump.co.uk

*...between you and me, it's the
only way I can remember my PIN number!*

Words of the Year

Always fascinated by words, I was intrigued by Bill's challenge to us in the last issue of New Leaves, under the heading "Word of the Year". However, it turned out I was pretty hopeless, struggling to use 18 of the suggested terms in a sentence that actually made sense. Hopefully others have done better!

News that the Oxford English Dictionary decided not to choose a 'Word of 2020' on the grounds that the year couldn't be summed up in a single word made me wonder what previous years' choices had been. I conducted some amateur google research and can tell you that, prior to 2020, the last 20 OED words of year were: climate emergency, toxic, youthquake, post-truth, an emoji (yes, really), vape, selfie, omnishambles, squeezed middle, big society, simples, credit crunch, bovered, sudoku and chav.

It looked like Bill would get his wish not to read the word 'Brexit' again as it didn't appear in the OED list. Then I discovered that there are numerous 'Word of the Year' lists and another dictionary publisher, Collins, chose 'Brexit' in 2016. For 2020, Collins chose 'lockdown', though of course its meaning has morphed of late. It used to mean preventing anyone entering or leaving a defined area for a short period of time (e.g. sealing off a building while a crime was being dealt with); now it refers to a set of restrictions in a large area to reduce the number of people out and about.



Aside from changes of meaning, some obscure or disused words return to popularity very suddenly. 'Furlough' being one example – a staple of company resource planning for years, it was catapulted into everyday

conversation by the pandemic. Or, going back a bit, the ‘double whammy’, a term that had become quite rare until it was popularised in the 1992 general election campaign and which is still used fairly frequently. My favourite ‘Word of the Year’ was the Macquarie dictionary of Australia’s choice for 2020: ‘doomscrolling’, meaning scrolling through your mobile reading one piece of bad news after another. Not a good habit, rather like being a ‘smombie’ – an amalgam of ‘smart phone’ and ‘zombie’ meaning someone who walks engrossed in their phone and oblivious to their surroundings.

The curious thing about ‘words of the year’ is that they sometimes lack longevity in popular discourse. The linguist and author Professor David Crystal estimated recently that of the new words introduced in the 1970s, only about a quarter are still in popular use. He adds that while World War II gave us a number of words and expressions that we still use today, many more have fallen by the wayside over the years. So who knows, maybe Bill will eventually get his wish not to read that B-word about Europe again



Philip Walker

11.01.2021



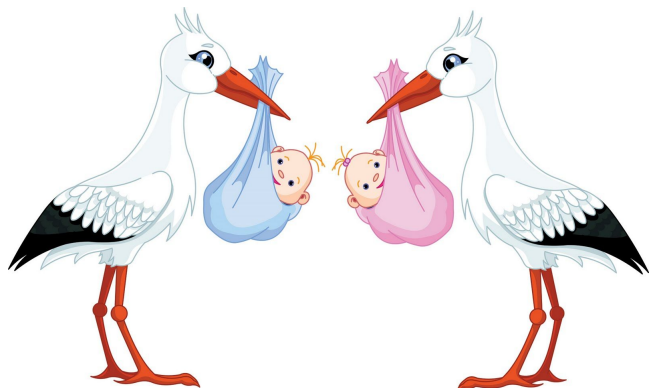
New life – a sign of hope

Basically I am a lazy person. So, when I retired, at fifty-eight, in 1986, I looked forward to doing very little. However, my friend, Marguerite, is the opposite and I found myself coerced into all sorts of activities, swimming, walking etc. One such pastime was attending a weekly class in Lichfield, organised by Keele University. It was botany and I enjoyed it. When our tutor took a sabbatical to write a book, we had a change of subject. Geology, History of churches, our environment etc. One tutor, Clive, told us that he and his wife owned a house with outbuildings turned into cottages, a few miles from Ludlow in Shropshire. So, as it was only about an hour's drive away, I went for a week. I soon went several times a year and soon became friends with the owners and their children, Vivien about 9 and Fenella, about 6 or 7. Fenella and I became friends, over the years she would come into my cottage, eating chocolate and drinking J2Os, soon becoming white wine. Years went by, and I went to her wedding to Sammy, a school friend, who I had watched grow up too. Three years later, 2020, Fenella was pregnant with twins. Good news in that awful year. Hearing that they had arrived on New Year's Eve 2020 set me thinking that they were a bright light in the tunnel of last year. When everything seemed hopeless, with nothing to ease the pain, the births were a sign of optimism and that we can start to enjoy life again. A reminder that life goes on, whatever is happening around us. So, let us look forward to a better world and keep our faith strong. A belated Happy New Year to us all.



Eileen Jarman

8/1/2021



The Orientation of St Michael's Church

Not a piece about sexuality or 'Living in Love & Faith', you'll be pleased to hear.

This is about the physical, geographical orientation of St Michael's Church, the glorious neo-Gothic edifice that rises proudly above the surrounding buildings on Mount Dinham.

All Churches are oriented West-East, aren't they? It's in the word - 'ad orientem' towards the East, the rising Sun, the Risen Son of God, We three Kings of Orient are, Leyton Orient, vaguely towards Jerusalem if you live in the western Roman Empire.

However, when Rev Joseph Theophilus Toye, William Gibbs & Major Rohde Hawkins came to build St Michael's Church in the mid-1860s in memory of John Dinham, the Exeter philanthropist who had built the Free Cottages and Episcopal School, they had a tightly constrained piece of land available.

The road between the Cottages down to the dry fountain overlooking Bonhay Road & the River Exe, and the escarpment that now houses faux-Georgian Dinham Crescent both run very much South-west, not West.

This and the available site mean that St Michael's is aligned much more Southwest-Northeast.

I commented on this on social media in Midsummer, end of June, when I noticed on Lockdown evening walks that the setting Sun around 9 o'clock or so shone fully on the 'North' side of the Nave and Tower/Spire. Psalm 48 came to mind.

At the beginning of December, I happened into the Church while the Djembe drummers were setting up. As I left at about 2.35pm (GMT) I turned towards the High Altar and was stunned by the golden brightness of the Reredos, which had been dim and unremarkable a few minutes earlier.

The next sunny afternoon I slipped in again about half-past-two and, sure enough, between 2.35 and 2.40 the High Altar and the Reredos of Christ in Glory with his Evangelists & Apostles was transfigured as the weak winter Sun shone through the Rose window in the (South)West end to illuminate the mosaic effect figures below the great (North)East window.

This effect may be well known to some of you who love St Michael's, but it was new to me. One isn't often in the Church at 2.30 on a winter's

afternoon.

It felt like Isaiah 40:5 in physical form; the Chorus from Handel's Messiah 'And the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed...'.

I wondered whether this was a happy coincidence, or maybe planned by the architect and builders, given the orientation of the Church. It can't happen all year round because in the other seasons the Sun is too high in the sky as it passes the line between Rose Window and High Altar, and so lightens the tiled floor of the Chancel or Nave instead.

If I were to dig out my undergraduate spherical astronomy, I could find equations. But my thinking is that the angle of the Rose window relative to the High Altar is about 15-20 degrees. At Midwinter the Sun is a mere 17 degrees above the horizon at midday (I hope that's correct). So it can still lighten the Reredos at 2.40pm around the December solstice.

Early January was really cloudy & dull, but the 'glory' still happened on the 14th. By 23rd Jan however, the Sun-Window-Altar alignment time has moved to 2.50pm, owing to the Earth's orbit being elliptical I presume, and the slightly higher Sun now lights up the Altar & steps, but no longer reflects off the Reredos, except near the Sedelia.

A further thought is whether in Midsummer, in the wee small hours of the night, the Moon's softer gleam might shine through and its silver light reflect from the Reredos?

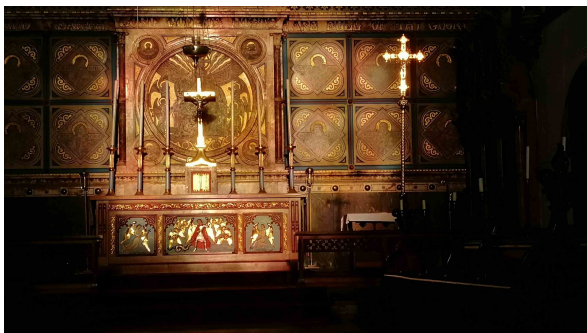
To recap, when a Church is oriented West-East the Sun shines through its West window at 6pm, for Evensong. It did in Spring and Autumn when I was a young chorister, but in Winter the Sun had already set.

The unusual SW-NE alignment of St Michael's gives us this special reflected glory for a few minutes each sunny Winter afternoon. Truly a light shining in the darkness.



**Richard
Barnes –**

24/01/21.



Desert Island Discs from Nigel Guthrie

I was asked last year by Peter King to choose my Desert Island Disks for the Exeter and District Organists Association. Bill asked if he could put them in the magazine, so here they are! Perhaps they will inspire you to choose your own 'disks'. Deciding what to leave out is definitely the trickiest bit.

My Eight Discs

Schubert - Trout Quintet

This is one of the first pieces I remember hearing in a live concert. I spent my early years in Harlow New Town where a resident String Quartet, the Alberni, gave regular concerts. The leader, Howard Davis, later taught my brother who is a viola player in the Ulster Orchestra. My parents had met attending string quartet concerts in Cardiff and became regular attenders at the Alberni concerts. I was taken along and remember this wonderful piece, both the rich texture of the quintet, which includes a double bass, and the lively treatment of 'Die forelle' tune. I still love the sparkling textures and find it most uplifting.

C minor Prelude – Bach BWV 546

This is an organ piece which impressed me very much when our local organist played it at the Congregational Church in Bishop's Stortford that I attended with my parents. His performance helped to inspire me to learn the organ. The church had a fine two manual Hill organ and a few years later I became organist there during my sixth form years. The piece is written to impress with its prolonged pedal notes and bold chords alternating between the hands. The fluid triplet sections, and the alternation between quavers and triplets make it gripping to listen to and exhilarating to play. I find it a very life and faith affirming piece – Bach at his magnificent best.

Mozart 40th Symphony

I went to my first Prom with my father as a young teenager and we sat quite high up in one of the balconies. In the first half Vladimir Ashkenazi played Beethoven's first Piano Concerto and then the orchestra played Mozart's 40th symphony. The compelling first movement of that symphony has always stuck with me and I have a great love of Mozart's music which is so fresh yet powerful. It is a close call for me between this symphony and

the 'Jupiter' number 41 with the breathtaking counterpoint of its last movement. But on balance, and with thanks for my father who took me to such a wonderful event, I will stick with 40th!

Byrd 4part Agnus Dei

I started listening to renaissance choral music in my teenage years and later studied the Byrd five part Mass as part of my final year studies at Bristol. But if I had to choose one movement from the three Byrd masses it would be the Agnus Dei from the four part mass. Byrd achieves such an expressive effect with the simplest of means and seems to put the prayer for mercy into pure musical form.

Messiaen – Dieu parmi nous

Messiaen is another composer who, for me, translates faith into music in an accessible and exciting way, especially in his earlier works. I acquired a recording of Jennifer Bate playing La Nativité at Beauvais Cathedral which is still available I believe, although sadly this distinguished organist died in March 2020. When it came to my degree recital I choose two movements including Dieu parmi nous as part of the programme. It was a thrilling piece to play and although I have long since lost it from my repertoire I always love to hear it. It is a magnificent affirmation of the incarnation – God with us.

Wagner - Overture to the Meistersingers

I hadn't heard much orchestral music when I arrived at university but early on in my time at Bristol the University orchestra played this overture and it knocked my socks off! The sheer magnificent sweep of it and the confidence of its construction and orchestration make it a joy to hear. Tina and I had a cassette tape set of the whole opera and one year we put it on the car cassette player as we were setting off for our summer holiday in France. It was just the right piece and became a tradition for several years that we would listen to it to start off the holiday – until our sons were old enough to object!

Puccini – Recondita armonia from Tosca

When Tina and I lived in Coventry from 1988 to 1994 it was a treat to go to the Birmingham Hippodrome and hear some of the splendid performances given by Welsh National Opera. One of the most memorable was Tosca

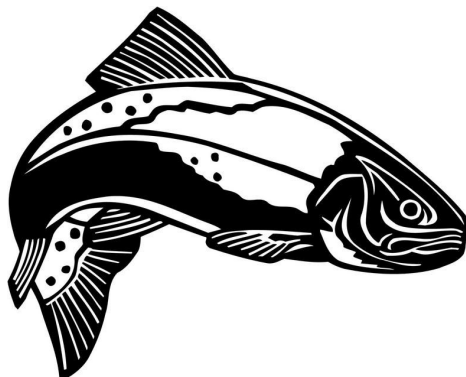
with the fine Welsh tenor Dennis O'Neill. This is the opening tenor aria in which Cavaradossi is painting a picture of Mary Magdalene but thinking only of Floria Tosca. It is a brilliant piece of romantic drama which is so perfectly set that it expresses an extraordinary intensity of desire in a what less than three minutes of music. Tina and I saw the opera again at Torre del Lago, Puccini's Italian home, in an outdoor performance where the warm evening breeze made the scenery sway gently!

Bach – Motet - Singet dem herrn ein neues leid BWV 225

Since moving to Devon I have been privileged to sing with the Exeter Chamber Choir - until such corporate music making was stopped by Covid-19. I had previously sung with larger choirs so it has been wonderful to get to know some of the unaccompanied repertoire including the superbly written and very moving Parry 'Songs of Farewell'. But for me the highlight has been singing the Bach motets that seem to me to be masterpieces of choral music. Singet den Herrn for double choir in particular is a joy to sing and very exhilarating, not least in its closing sections 'let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!'. During lockdown I have particularly enjoyed the fabulous performances of the Netherlands Bach Society on Youtube and there is a vivacious performance by them of this Motet. (Some of their cantata recordings feature the talented Exeter tenor, Tom Hobbs).

One disc to keep – The Trout Quintet might inspire me to do some fishing from the Desert Island and will certainly cheer me up!

One luxury item - A solar powered keyboard with, if allowed, a selection of music in the piano stool!



A Mystery Solved

For some years now a wreath has been appearing on the Large Cedar of Lebanon outside the west door of St David's Church, and during the Christingle on Christmas Eve I discovered the culprit.

Meet Alan Beckett



Alan comes each year to hang a wreath on the tree in memory of his parents, whose ashes were scattered beneath the cedar tree, below the fork, now the large broken branch.

His parents lived on St David's hill having been married in the church in 1953. He was born in 1960 and was baptised at St David's. The family then moved over the river to St Thomas.

Emma (Church Warden) suggested he might like to have the wreath blessed by one of the clergy, and almost in tears he gratefully accepted the offer.

So, once the magical Christingle ended, the wreath was blessed by Belinda Speed Andrews in memory of his parents.

We will watch out for him and his wreath this coming December

Annual Traidcraft report for 2019/2020

The period covered by this report has seen dramatic changes to St David's Traidcraft stalls. Up to February 2020 we ran stalls monthly for the congregation to examine items and buy, or not to buy. In March Covid 19 struck and the stalls and church services were suspended. The question then was how do we continue to support the work of Traidcraft without handling the goods unnecessarily. So we came up with idea of inviting orders from the catalogue which customers would collect in a carrier bag at private prayer time on the agreed Traidcraft Sundays, or bask in the knowledge that I would deliver them on those days. When church services resumed, albeit in a restricted way, the Traidcraft stalls could do so too, though with social distancing, so that the actual placing of the tables became a problem. Meanwhile if church members wish to email me an order to be collected in a carrier bag at a Traidcraft Sunday I am still happy to arrange that and my email address is r.w.featherstone@gmail.com. The congregation of St Davids, in fact, supported Traidcraft to the tune of £1,384 from September 2019 to July 2020.

In March nationally, no doubt due to “lockdown” there was a great surge of new customers going direct via the Traidcraft catalogue or via the website (for toiletries and pasta mainly) matched by a big decrease in sales of craft work through their “Fair Traders” of which our Mary Ellis is one (Mary distributes Traidcraft goods to numerous outlets in the Exeter area). On balance, then, income was not far short of what was expected in normal circumstances. The managers of Traidcraft hope now that the new on-line customers will remain loyal to the organisation! Of course these same managers had a hard time of it because many of the general staff were furloughed in March and the managers were then faced with the task of packing boxes to keep up with the demand, in addition to their administrative duties!

St David's Traidcraft sales held up well over the period, for which thank you, and we continued to order further “real Easter eggs” and “real Advent calendars” at the appropriate festivals (incidentally Traidcraft now do Advent calendars with “windows” but no chocolate, if that's what you prefer!) Our ground coffee came from Traidcraft, though it largely remains in the tins at present of course! Thanks are due to John Sampson as ever,

who in addition to sharing the work on the Sunday stall, returns the unsold goods to Mary later in the week.



Richard Featherstone

17.12.2020



How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!

Romans 10:15

Persecution and the Early Church:

a series of three Zoom Talk-Discussions

Thursdays March 4th, 11th, 18th: 7 pm to 8 pm



March 4th: "The destroyers of our Gods": pagan motives and their consequences

The Romans were not in general intolerant of strange religions, so why did they persecute the Christians? What did the Christians do to deserve it? Or was it what they did not do?

Reading: Pliny the Younger *Letters* X, 96-7. Emperor Maximinus Daza: Rescript to the City of Tyre of 312 AD (in Eusebius *HE* IX, 7, 2-15 = 283-85)

March 11th: Fear, apostasy, flight and defiance: the range of Christian reaction

Our idea of the persecutions is dominated by the passions of individual martyrs, but many of these are fiction. Even the authentic passions record only the last stages of the martyr's trial and execution; it is as if all we had of *Hamlet* was the pile of bodies at the end of the final Act. A more rounded picture of Christian experience under persecution, especially of the fear that it engendered, can be gleaned from reading a wider range of sources.

Reading: Letters of Dionysius Patriarch of Alexandria (*HE* VI, 40-42 = 205-10)

Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria *Canons* of Easter 306

March 18th: "Being made perfect": the spirituality of the martyrs

The *inspirata patientia* of the martyrs their 'inspired endurance', aroused admiration. Where did the inspiration come from?

Reading: Extracts from Origen *Exhortation to Martyrdom*

Passion of Polycarp (Musurillo 3-21 odd)

Passion of Phileas (Musurillo 330-345 or 353 odd)

Pychester Lockdown – Chapter 6

An affectionate satire on a fictional diocese.

Nothing can quite compare with Christmas Eve 2015 in Pychester, when Mary and Jo had their baby in the Choir Vestry at St Pythag's during Midnight Mass.

See https://www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/A_Pychester_Christmas_orig.pdf

But for our more recent incumbents, Fr Basil & Mthr Helen, the Covid Christmas of 2020 at St Pythagoras is as good as could be hoped for and more.

The delayed Advent non-Procession tries a stereo effect with hymns & carols from a Quartet in the choir stalls and, looking from afar, the plainsong O antiphons from a few voices at the back of the church.

That modern Sacrament, the Christingle, an outward & visible sign of inward & spiritual grace, is celebrated down at Little St P's Mission Shed, the open air liturgy rising above the noisy River Pyke. As the Sun sets on Christmas Eve the many families there use smartphones and binoculars to view the conjunction of Jupiter & Saturn above the South-west horizon and marvel at the tenacity of the Wise Men.

Midnight Masses in all Churches great & small across the Diocese are full to their Covid-secure capacities. Many a well-spaced, sanitised choir sings 'Tiers and smiles like us He knew' and 'Whence is that goodly fragrance flowing, cleansing the virus all away.'

At St Pythag's Basil celebrates Mass while Helen plays the Organ. Could it have been the other way round? Not yet.

The promise of Five Gold Days becomes an oven-ready partridge with Sage stuffing. The over-inflated balloon of hope hits the holly prickles of data with a loud bang. The media say "We've saved Christmas!" – forgetting it is Christ's Feast that saves us – but at what cost?

The 'Intinction Rebellion' of Communion in Both Kinds at the Cathedral is short-lived, as most clergy don't have the juggling skills required.

Meanwhile Gems mined from Nativity Plays do the rounds:-

Who sent the Angel Gabriel? – Virgin Media.

Why was Mary special? – She was hand made by God.

What did the Innkeeper say? - Sorry, Bethlehem's in Tier 4 so you can't stay here.

Why was Herod angry? – Because it was a fake prophecy, and he demands a recount in Bethlehem.

Early in January Bishop Ric reads a letter from Dr Rose Trellis of Ottery St Pycrust.

"This 'Living in Love & Faith' book is hard going. 400-odd pages on Identity, Gender, Relationships & Marriage, and no pictures. Not as much fun as The Joy of Sexagesima. All very worthy, but I hope your Cathedral discussion groups will be more stimulating.

As for that CEEC Beautiful Story film, my husband was so disappointed it was not about Football.

I find the best way to watch it is to mute the sound and enjoy all those fit young men, with those emphatic hands nailing their arguments and failing to bless. I can't be doing with their smug smart casual certainties and buttoned-down doctrines. The real world and the Bible are more interesting and varied than that."

The House of Bishops January Zoom is serious and grim, as Covid continues its cruel slaughter of the innocents. Even the Freshest Expression of Bishop no longer views Lockdown as an opportunity to 'do Church differently'.

What is the 1st Lesson from 2020 for the Churches? Some may find Celebrity Preachers aping 'Live at the Apollo' (minus the swearing) scratch their itch, but most still want their local church and minister who knows their needs. But who is more cost-effective the cash-strapped dioceses ask?

Bishop Sarah's Covid Recovery Group now has Guidelines for Lent and even Easter, only 2 months away. Someone managed to educate the neo-Puritans at Lambeth Head Office about the need for Liturgy.

Prayer has been answered, not by signs & wonders, but by scientists, of all faiths and none, developing vaccines; their work rooted in the observations & experiments 220 years ago of Dr Edward Jenner, son of a Gloucestershire

manse, after seeing a fair maid in a lowly milking parlour.

Felicity, the Bishop's wife, looks up from editing "Reverend Spooner's Lockdown Cookbook"...

Passing the buck to the PCCs & Clergy now, whether to open or close?

They didn't like being told to close last year, but we're not passing the buck. They understand their local risks and vulnerabilities. They have various options for pivoting Worship & Prayer.

Spoken like a true bishop. It's the Servers I feel most sorry for when Public Worship is stopped. Do you think God did a Risk Assessment before Creation?

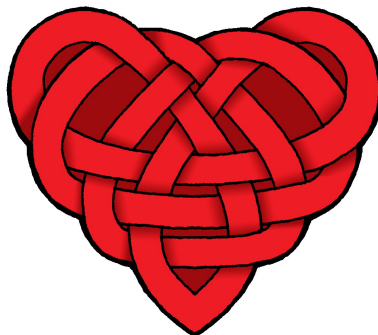
No, Love takes risks – as we know. But... Hopefully this new variant tsunami is nearly past and we can all get back in the sea of faith in our churches soon.

So, 2020 in one word? Perhaps, Dis-con-nec-ted. Let's hope & pray that during 2021 people can gradually come together and begin to reconnect, with themselves, their support networks, activities and churches, with God and the world.

As the new banner adorning the East wall of St Pythagoras Church says, "Try Reconnecting".



Richard Barnes – 25/01/21.



GREEN MATTERS

Tip One

If you are an owner of a pet who might wee on soft furnishings, this tip is for you.

Blot the wee initially with a soft kitchen towel or kitchen roll. Once the area is reasonably dry

Spray the spot with white vinegar. Again blot with a clean towel.

This leaves you with no smell and no stain

THE TREASURES OF ROMANIA.

The Treasures of

Romania

Led by Bishop Martin and Mrs Elspeth Shaw

Monday 20th - Wednesday 29th September 2021



Monday 20th - Wednesday 29th September 2021

Bishop Martin and Elspeth Shaw invite you to join them on a journey into the landscape, history, spirituality and resilience of a nation in its traditions and development. From the vibrancy of Bucharest, through rural Marmures' ancient villages; wooden churches; staying at an Orthodox Convent, we will move across the Carpathian Mountains to the famous World Heritage [UNESCO] Bucovina monastery churches. Via Moldavia, We will come to the mysterious culture of Transylvania, staying at the historic mansion of Szekerland. Our journey will be completed by a visit to a Children's Hospice, cared for by an Orthodox priest.

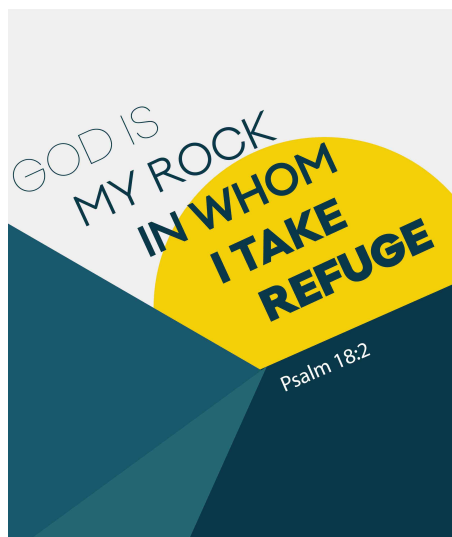
This journey is a pilgrimage into the heart of the Orthodox tradition. We'll have a daily Eucharist and time to enjoy new as well as deepen friendship.

Cost: £1695 [which includes a deposit of £200].

If you are interested to receive more information and a booking form, please get in touch with Bishop Martin:

07801 549615 or amartinshaw@gmail.com

The Pilgrimage company is: Worldwide Christian Travel, 36, Coldharbour Road, Bristol BS6 7NA. Email: info@christian-travel.com Website: www.christian-travel.com



we're here to help



Monday-Friday 09:30-16:30

The FORCE Cancer Charity Support & Information Centre is now open.

Our support services are also available by phone, email and video call.

**For cancer support and information
plus advice on claiming benefits** ☎ 01392 406151
Oncology physiotherapist ☎ 01392 403094
✉ support@forcecancercharity.co.uk

For psychological and emotional support
☎ 01392 406168 / 406169
✉ help@forcecancercharity.co.uk

www.forcecancercharity.co.uk

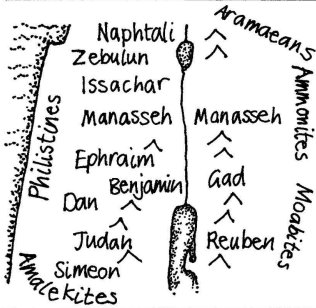
cancer charity
force
Registered Charity No. 1140676

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Josh 13:8-20:48
1 Sam 31:1-5, 2 Sam 2:4-24, 3:12, 17-27, 4:5:1-5

When the Jews reached the place that God had promised them, each tribe was given land to live in. But they were surrounded by enemies..



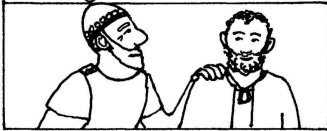
King Saul and two of his sons died fighting the Philistines.



David was made king of the southern tribe of Judah.



But Saul's army commander, Abner, took Saul's last son, Ishbosheth, north and made him king of the rest of Israel.



Joab was David's commander. The two armies fought and Abner killed Joab's brother.



Ishbosheth was a poor king and Abner decided to join David.



Abner persuaded all of the northern tribes to have David as king.



Abner came for a secret meeting with David.



But Joab found out.

So Joab tricked Abner into another meeting and killed him.



This is for my brother!

Then two men sneaked into Ishbosheth's house and killed him as he had a nap.

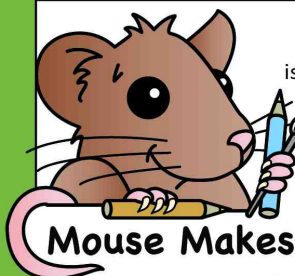


They expected a reward from David but he was very angry because they had murdered Ishbosheth.



So David became king over all of Israel.





FIND THE CREATION PAIRS from Genesis 1 and 2

EARTH	MORNING
LIGHT	FRUIT
DAYS	SEA
TREES	NIGHT
LAND	FISH
EVENING	YEARS
ADAM	HEAVENS
DAY	DARK
BIRDS	WATER
SKY	EVE

WHAT AM I?

The last letter of one word is the first letter of the next

E _ _ _ _ I

- What two things did God create first?
Genesis 1:1

_ _ S _ _

- What was the Earth without? Genesis 1:2
- What came before morning? Gen 1:5

_ _ _ _ G

- Who is the creator?
Genesis 1:1
- What was separated from light? Gen 1:4

S _ _ _ _

- Which day did God finish work? Gen 2:2
- Who was created God's image? Gen 1:27

_ _ _ H _

- Who moved over the water? Gen 1:2

I _ _ _ _ S



By the **seventh** day God finished the work He had been doing. God *blessed* the seventh day and made it *holy*. When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments the **fourth commandment** said to *remember* the seventh Sabbath day, to *keep it holy* and set apart for God.



DID YOU KNOW?

The first word of the Old Testament in Hebrew is **bereshith** which means "in the beginning". The Greeks translated this word as **GENESIS** which means *creation, origin and generation*



C R E A T U R E H G O D P
D G A L R E F R U I T E L
L O R I E S L B M O S E A
A O T G E T Y D A R K P N
N D H H E A V E N I G H T
D A Y T R R S P I R I T W
A S E E D S K Y B I R D O

Can you find these words in the word search?
GOD • HEAVEN • SPIRIT
FLY • DEEP • EARTH
DARK • DAY • LIGHT
NIGHT • STARS • SKY
SEA • LAND • BIRD
CREATURE • HUMAN
TREE • PLANT • SEEDS
FRUIT • GOOD • TWO



Smilelines

Miscellaneous observations on modern life

As any member of a church committee will tell you, after all is said and done, there's a lot more said than done.

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink lager all day.

If I wanted to hear the pitter-patter of little feet, I'd put shoes on my cat.

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Good judgment comes from bad experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

A closed mouth gathers no foot.

'Most cars on our roads have only one occupant, usually the driver.'
(BBC reporter)

I really don't mind getting older, but my body is taking it badly.

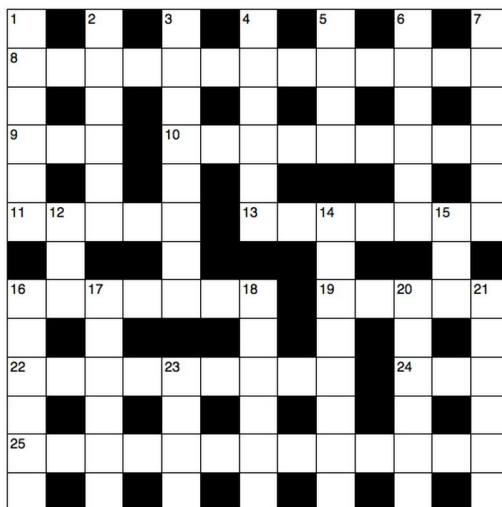
I thought getting old would take longer.

Cleaning is just putting stuff in less obvious places.

Fox

I called the RSPCA today to report I had just found a suitcase in the woods containing a fox and four cubs. "That's terrible," she said. "Are they moving?"

"I'm not sure, to be honest," I replied, "But that would explain the suitcase."



Across

8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)

9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)

10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)

11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)

13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)

16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)

19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)

22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)

24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

Down

1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)

2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)

3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)

4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)

- 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
- 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
- 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
- 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
- 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)
- 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)
- 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
- 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
- 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
- 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
- 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)
- 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

Sudoku - Medium

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

Word search



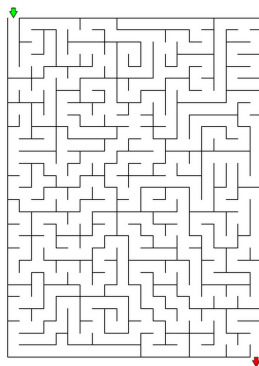
fighting
David
Abner
king
land
tribes

brother
Philistines
meeting
Ishbosheth
sneaked
Israel

commander
Saul
secret
angry
promised
reward

northern
tricked
armies
Joab
southern
enemies

Maze



Days of Note - February

2nd Feb: Candlemas, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2nd February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present Him to the Lord'. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So, where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.

14th Feb: St Valentine's Day, a poem

Saint Valentine's Day, many believe, was named after one or more Christian martyrs and was established by Pope Gelasius 1 in 496 AD. Valentine of Rome was martyred about 269, and this day usually 'belongs' to him.

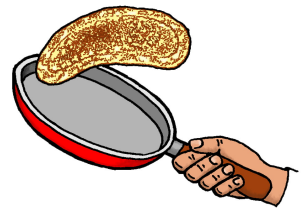
The first recorded association of Valentine Day with romantic love (1382) is from Geoffrey Chaucer. He wrote, 'For this was Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird cometh there to choose his mate.' This poem was in

honour of the first anniversary of the engagement of King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia. Valentine Day is referred to by Ophelia in Hamlet (1600-1601).

*To-morrow is St Valentine's day
All in the morning betime
And I a maid at your window
To be your Valentine.*

The modern mention of Valentine's Day can be found in a collection of English nursery rhymes (1784):

*The rose is red, the violet's blue
The honey's sweet, and so are you.
Thou are my love and I am thine
I drew thee to my Valentine.*



Shrove Tuesday: Who's for pancakes?
by David Winter

Why do we have pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day, as we call it today? And what is Shrove Tuesday? And why do thousands of people feel it rewarding to race along a street somewhere tossing pancakes from their frying pans as they go?

Well, the answer to the first question is that it is the day before Lent begins and for well over a thousand years that has meant it was the last chance to enjoy meat, fat and other tasty dishes until Easter Day. The 'Lent Fast' was widely and strictly observed. The food in the larder wouldn't keep for six weeks so it had to be eaten. With all these rich foods no wonder the French call it 'Fatty Tuesday' – Mardi Gras.

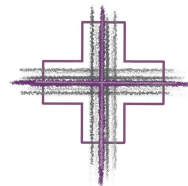
So, what have pancake races got to do with all this solemnity? 'Shrove' is an old word for 'forgiven' and in those days to prepare for the rigours of Lent people would want to confess and seek forgiveness – not quite what you want at a party. The answer is quite simply enjoying yourself while you can! So, on Shrove Tuesday this year let's have some fun and make it last as long as possible.

The most convincing (and amusing) of the explanations of pancake races is of outwitting the Sexton who rang the curfew bell that marked the start of Lent. He was reluctant to do it while the race was unfinished. So, the revelry caused by dropped pancakes, postponed the inevitable.

Since the Reformation it has not been so rigorously observed in Britain, but still people will resolve to 'give up something for Lent'. Six weeks is about right as a duration and Sunday has always been exempt but make the most of those pancakes. They may well not reappear until April 4th!

17th Feb: Ash Wednesday; mourning our sins

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why 'Ash' Wednesday? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament.



In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally came to their senses, and saw their evil ways as God saw them, they could do nothing but repent in sorrow. They mourned for the damage and evil they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head, and even rending your clothes, was an outward sign of their heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of sin. (See Genesis 18:27; 2 Samuel 13:19; Job 2:8, 30:19; Isaiah 58:5; Jeremiah 6:26; Jonah 3:6)

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly 'class' of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time, and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom, and to do so at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to 'rend your hearts and not your garments' (Joel 2:12-19). Ash Wednesday became known as either the 'beginning of the fast' or 'the day of the ashes'.

18th Feb: Fra Angelico, patron of artists

If you enjoy drawing or painting, Fra Angelico is the patron saint for you. This devout Dominican priest of the Early Renaissance (1387-1455) used his

superlative talent to the glory of God to such an extent that even six centuries later we are inspired and blessed by his art.

For while you may not be familiar with his name, but you'll know his work: Fra Angelico's *The Annunciation* or *Adoration of the Magi* has adorned many classical Christmas cards. He is reckoned to be one of the greatest Italian painters of the 15th century.

Fra Angelico was born at Vicchio near Florence, and as a young friar worked at illuminating manuscripts such as the *Dominican Diurnal*. Ordained priest at Fiesole in 1418, he continued painting, spending the 1430s decorating the interior of the friary of San Marco, Florence with his masterpieces. Work at the Vatican followed, especially his paintings of Stephen and Laurence in the chapel of the artistic pope Nicholas V.

Fra Angelico's work is sublime, revealing a marvellous command of colour, light and perspective. It radiates spiritual serenity, and a dedication to God that is matched by few others. He has been described by experts as having "a rare and perfect talent", and that "it is impossible to bestow too much praise on this holy father, who was so humble and modest in all that he did and said, and whose pictures were painted with such facility and piety."

From 1449 to 1452 Fra Angelico was prior of Fiesole. Then he moved to Rome, where three years later he died. He was beatified in 1960 and declared patron of artists in 1984. Pope John Paul II described his paintings as 'miracles'.

27th Feb: George Herbert, vicar and poet

On this day the Church Calendar celebrates George Herbert. For those who are muttering 'never heard of him', just think of the hymn 'Let all the world/ In every corner sing', which he wrote, along with several other hymns which are still popular, even if they are well over 300 years old. In the course of his short life he was a graduate of Cambridge University, a favoured politician of King James, a distinguished poet of the so-called 'metaphysical' school, and a much-loved parish priest at Bemerton, in Wiltshire. The whole of his ministry was fulfilled in that one parish, until he died at 39 from what we would now call tuberculosis.

It is of course his hymns for which he is chiefly remembered today, though his Collected Poems are also regarded as jewels of English poetry.

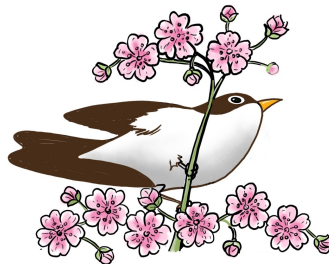
Easter Wings

By George Herbert

*Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.*



*My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.*



Puzzle solutions

O		H		I		E		O		O		A
C	R	O	S	S	E	X	A	M	I	N	E	D
E		P		L		H		A		S		D
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N		N		M		R				E		L
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H		E		E		T		G		W		E

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

The deadline for inclusion of articles for the March issue of New Leaves is Sunday 21st February

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.