

ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD

PARISH NEWS

www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk

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Dear parishioners and friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

In this week's newsletter I will be reflecting upon the NHS through the theme of last weekend's Gospel of the Good Shepherd, some thoughts on the VE commemorations, a blog that I wrote last weekend with help from the National Trust and the regular items of the thoughts on the Eucharist and the Bible study.

Last weekend I alongside many people who wrote and delivered sermons thought about the theme of the Good Shepherd. This is Jesus who loves us and knows us and challenges us to love others. Two people spoke powerfully about this calling to answer our call in the Church of England recorded service last weekend. The first was Matt Sanderson from Oldham, who is due to be ordained Deacon in the Church of England later this year. He spoke of how God speaks even in the most difficult times. Matt is a senior paramedic like Richard Stafford, son of Andrew, member of All Saints and Monika's cousin Tomek in Poland. These people are on the frontline during this pandemic. Matt said 'My job challenges me, every day my colleagues and I walk in to the unknown, to offer hope and relieve suffering as best we can. There is no better feeling than having made a difference in someone's life and as frontline technicians that is what drives us into work each day. These are challenging times and the world has become a scary place, fighting an invisible enemy.' Matt goes on to explain though that he is not alone. He believes that God guides him and carries him along his footprints.

From another person at the frontline but in a different way Robert Vassell spoke about his role as a bus driver in Wolverhampton. He spoke about 'interacting with passengers in his job and how his faith helps him to give reassurance to passengers and colleagues who are anxious and uncertain as a result of the pandemic. He too feels God is present with him as he supports and encourages those around him.'

In this time of need, of fear and worry for the future, of worries for our loved ones we give thanks for the loving Shepherd to guide and protect us. We give thanks too for all those with key roles who offer pastoral care to others. We pray that All Saints may be a pastoral church community whose doors are open to all. We give thanks within our own community for the people who live vocational lives within the health service and care homes. Please pray for Ricky Powley who works in minor injuries and Dagma Powley who works in a care home. We continue to pray for John Bolodeoko, Helen Broad, Joanne Hawkes, Pauline Hole's daughter Karen, Carole Nicholson, Richard Stafford and Eleanor Kershaw. I give thanks too for all of you supporting people with the delivery of food, medical supplies and kindness.

75th Anniversary VE Day commemorations

As chaplain to the Royal British Legion in Maidenhead I receive the Legion newsletter once a month. This week that letter focusses on the news that 75 years ago, households across Britain eagerly awaited news that after 6 years of conflict, the war in Europe had ended. The news came on the 8th May, 1945 and was declared Victory in Europe Day. My mother told me that she can remember the day spent with my grandparents, Edgar and Rene in Rogerstone, near Newport, South Wales as the communities came together to celebrate. However, millions of lives were lost, homes and cities had been destroyed and people had been displaced by the War. Guy Upward, Assistant Director for the RBL wrote 'As our Nation pulls together now in the Covid 19 crisis making sacrifices to help others, we can look

to the Second World War generation and learn from their resilience, determination and hope for better days to come.'

We are asked as a Nation to reflect at 11.00am and pause for a 2 minute silence, to remember the service and sacrifice of the 2nd WW generation but also this year to reflect on the devastating impact Covid 19 has had on so many lives across the world. For those of you with access to the internet you will be able to hear stories of those who served on a VE Day livestream following the silence at the RBL website. (found on All Saints Church web-site too). At 3.00pm on BBC1 Winston Churchill's victory speech will be broadcast and at 9.00pm on BBC1 you can join Dame Vera Lynn's 'We'll Meet Again' to mark the 75th anniversary.



VE day Newton Abbot

Can you spot an All Saints legend in the bottom right hand corner? Answer on page 14.

I have my own reflections of the Second World War through having the privilege of sharing a trip with my stepfather Reg to Normandy in 2014, the year before he died. He reminded me of the many friends he had, who never returned to live the rest of their lives in freedom. As we looked over the sea from France back towards England on a beautiful sunny day before returning home, I watched Reg reflect, thinking probably how very different things were from the time he and his two brothers had been part of the Normandy Landings. I remember too speaking to ladies in Bracknell who never married. One told me that she fell in love and planned to marry. The gentleman never returned from war and that was the man she loved. She never sought to find another special person in her life. I gave my mother the novel 'A God in Ruins' at Christmas. Kate Atkinson, the author, showed how the impact of war can leave people feeling devastated by loss in that excellent novel.

Our prayers in time of war and now in this time of the awful pandemic is that men and women do not die in vain. Yes, the course of life, the hopes for life may be changed (Atkinson's novel speaks on that theme) but the hope of the resurrection leads us to believe that we look forward to the Kingdom of Heaven. The suggested service for VE day has as one of the texts the climax of the story of the Prodigal Son and the welcoming joy of God. (Luke 15:18-24). I hope to record a service of prayer using the suggested texts for the web-site which you can share if you would like to.

As a number of you will know I am writing a daily blog during our time in Lockdown and through the Pandemic. Thanks to Michelle and Abigail Symonds for the excellent running of the blog and the wonderful visual images to accompany the words. In this week's newsletter I am sharing a blog written last weekend on a day off. The blog is influenced by my mother's Christmas gift to Monika and me of National Trust Membership.

Blog – I am no Percy Thrower or Alan Titchmarsh

I am taking a day off today. I have played football with a beachball with Lilly the dog, having started to read the 5th in the brilliant CJ Sansom series of Reformation novels, called 'Heartstone'. This book is written off the back of King Henry VIII's invasion of France which went badly wrong. This ill-fated trip to France has led to economic crisis in Britain. These books have reminded me of the many crises we have faced as a nation before.

My next thoughts on this day off are perhaps doing something in the garden although hopefully not gardening. It's not my favourite pastime. However, I did turn to my lockdown email from the National Trust. In the early part of this year before Covid 19 had really registered in most of our minds, Lilly, Monika and I have enjoyed the walks of Cliveden and one or two other beautiful places. Sadly, in these troubled times the enjoyable walk in a garden like this, is denied us but the email did give me some interesting tips on gardening which cheered me up.

Now I know I should be more at one with nature and God's world and I do like looking at natural beauty and of course Jesus used quite a few stories about growing things not least the seed and the sower story. I am afraid though that many of my attempts at gardening have fallen on stony ground and my seeds have certainly got caught up in weeds. You can imagine then my delight when I read the nine tips for gardening from the National Trust.

1. Don't mow the grass for the whole of May! This is for me like winning the lottery. I hate cutting grass and now my lawn mower has blown up this means I can follow tip one seamlessly. What's more I am doing good things for the environment by sitting in the sun reading all about Shardlake going to war against the French while drinking a cold beer. Yes, by letting the flowers bloom on my grass (daisies and white clover) I am providing a source of nectar for the bees, butterflies and other bugs. This is called Plantlife's 'No Mow May'. By doing this you are boosting nectar tenfold. The Oxford Diocese will be pleased with me playing my part in saving creation.
2. Make a bird box for feeding- may be beyond me but I will throw out the crusts. Gave me curly hair as a teenager and have never forgiven them.
3. Grow climbers. I watched people climbing in the Lake District on a parish holiday once with All Saints. Watching is enough as I hate sheer drops. However, Monika has got clematis growing and this gives wildlife exercise too.
4. Build an insect hotel. Now I have never seen myself in property development but wow all that rotting wood I chopped down which I have left in piles around the garden (No way of off- loading at the tip) are five star hotels for spiders and beetles. My trip to the South coast of Italy may have gone but beetles and spiders chill out.
5. Create a pond. Best I think I can do here is buy Monika and Lilly a paddling pool that they keep going on about. A real pond will get you some waterlilies.
6. Compost – loads of raw materials but I suspect putting a compost bed together is beyond me. If you are interested, then 60% brown of wood and twigs with 40% grass might do the trick.
7. Leave gaps in the garden fence for hedgehogs and frogs to join your garden party. As I have bits of fence falling down naturally, hey this should be quite a gathering.
8. Grow flowers – my friend Colin tried this for me in our garden maybe 10 years ago. I can make plastic flowers wilt!
9. Have a break from weeding – Now I can't say I have ever started weeding but this advice takes away the worry of the Protestant work ethic that has caused me sleepless nights for years. By cracking open a second can of beer this afternoon I am providing moths and butterflies the equivalent of a medium rare, fires and mushrooms with a nice touch of English mustard. Just by offering them a weed or two.

National Trust, you are 'Simply the Best' as Tina Turner sang so wonderfully all those years ago. You have given me the perfect Saturday afternoon.

Eucharist

In the second instalment taken from a book by Geoffrey Howard called 'Dare to Break Bread' we encounter Howard's experience of 'Confession' within the Eucharist.

In the story I have chosen to share with you from Geoffrey Howard's book we are told of a tax collector called Harry. He was a small man like Zacchaeus who collected rents. He was an understanding man, well dressed in his trilby and tweed overcoat and he would be supportive of families that couldn't pay. However, one day Fr Howard saw Harry and his usual twinkle in the eye had disappeared. Geoffrey let Harry into his house and Harry broke down with emotion pleading for God to forgive him. Over a cup of tea Harry told his priest the story.

He shared how just after the war he had been married to a lovely girl to whom he was devoted. However, she became ill and her condition got worse and she ended up in hospital. Harry would visit straight after work and stay until late at night. One night though he left the hospital early to catch up on household chores. 'I'd not been home half an hour when a policeman knocked on the door. He told me my wife had died just a few minutes after I'd left her. I'd let her down. I wasn't with her.'

Geoffrey Howard goes on to write that Harry's feelings of guilt had gone on for more than half a life-time. Many people had told him he was not guilty and yet his conscience still burned within him. Together they went to the communion rail and asked God for peace of mind. The priest did not feel that Harry had sinned on that tragic night in 1946 but Harry had become cut off from God's love by his feelings of guilt. Geoffrey offered from 1 John 'If we acknowledge our sins, he is trustworthy and upright, so that he will forgive our sins and will cleanse us from evil. (1.9) the priest offered the absolution and Harry began a new relationship with God.

Many people go through life crushed by guilt and as Howard says 'a sense of their own worthlessness'. Far too many people carry the burdens of the past without knowing that Christ meets us at the cross. It is there that we can know God's love, his grace that we may live lives blessed by him and we might share his love with others. The confession is an important part of the Eucharist. We need to find peace with God and with each other so that we can feel a valuable member of the body of Christ, confident that God's Holy Spirit is at work within us.

Word – Bible study based on Kenneth Bailey's book 'Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes.'

Over the next few weeks, we will consider the texts of well-known parables with Bailey's help.

Luke 10.25-37 The Good Samaritan

The famous question. 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?' Bailey asks 'What can anyone do to inherit eternal life? After all inheritance is a gift. It is not payment for services. We are told from the great commandment to Love God and our neighbour that Jesus places God in front of neighbour. Bailey reminds us that there is a reason for this. Try loving an unlovely neighbour without being filled with God's love which provides the motivation to care for the neighbour.

The lawyer then wants clarification of who is my neighbour? Surely, it's just people like me. Jesus answers with the story of the Good Samaritan. Is this the best-known story in the whole of the bible? Certainly, it's one of them.

As we know the priest and the Levite walk by and yet the Samaritan stops to help. The one who we would expect to ignore the situation is the one who helps. Bailey says that the Samaritan risks his own life in trying to help. He takes him to an inn and seeks help. The people watching a Samaritan help a Jew might take offence. Bailey compares the story with 1850's America. A native American helping a cowboy walking into Dodge City. The chances are the people would not take kindly to the native American even if he is showing compassion.

The story is about who we can be a neighbour too, but it is also about compassion. Harper Lee in 'To kill a Mockingbird' has Atticus saying to his children 'You never know a man until you understand things from his point of view, until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.' This is a book and a film against hatred and prejudice.

Questions:

1. Who is our neighbour? Are we an open church with open doors and a church of mercy? Or would we prefer to limit who our neighbour is?
2. Can you see in the action of the Samaritan a possible demonstration of the passion of Christ?
3. Tom Wright says 'No church, no Christian can remain content with easy definitions which allow us to watch most of the world lying half dead in the road. Do we see the Gospel as something that is written just to comfort us, or does it trouble and challenge us?

News this week

Sad news from three of our parishioners. Christine Pocock's niece Emma Clark has sadly died at the early age of 45. The death was unexpected and in these difficult times when it is hard for family to share grief we pray for Christine and her family.

We remember too Brenda Ilott as she mourns the loss of Trevor Davies the husband of her dear friend of many years Stephanie.

Finally remember Leon, Nelli and Clara Pang. It wasn't that long before the lockdown that we celebrated a very happy baptism at the 10.00am Eucharist for Clara. Sadly though, Leon's grandfather who lived in Henley has died at the age of 93 through the Covid virus. Nelli tells me that he did enjoy a good life.

On a happier note congratulations to Sue and Roy Stannett who celebrated their Ruby Wedding anniversary on Sunday 3rd May. Love from all of us, Sue & Roy!!

Thy Kingdom come – this is a time from Ascension Day through to the day of Pentecost that we pray for God's Holy Spirit. We pray too for our discernment of God's calling for each one of us. This year we will be praying at this time of need for all our own worries and concerns as we face the challenge of Covid 19.

The parishes of The Good Shepherd, St Luke's and All Saints have agreed to pray from 8.00am on Saturday 30th May until 8.00pm that same day. The day will start with a simple time of prayer at 8am on Zoom and the day will finish with a Zoom night prayer at 8.00pm. We are looking for people to offer a half hour or an hour of prayer to cover the twelve hours. You do not have to be linked technology wise. Just send me an email on jeremy-harris@outlook.com or telephone on 01628 626921 to say that you would like to pray at home. If you would like to pray say from 10.30am – 11.00am for example just give me the times and your name. If you need prayer resources, please let me know. The Church of England prayers for use during the Coronavirus are helpful. If you would like a copy again let me know.

Christian Aid – please see the information from Stella Harding. There is no Street collection this year but I am hoping, if fit to run for 2hours 57 seconds again on Sunday 17th May. If not fully fit I will do a sponsored walk.

May you all be blessed by God's presence this week,

Fr Jeremy

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 10 MAY THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MUSIC Brian Graves

The gospel for this Sunday has two notable quotes, "In my Father's house are many dwelling places" and "I am the way the way; I am the truth and I am the life; no one comes to the Father except by me." This gospel reading is also set as a reading in the Prayer Book for funerals because it summarises the essence of the relationship between God the Father and His son Jesus Christ and the hope of eternal life. The gospel describes the union we have with God through the humanity of Jesus Christ and the promise of heavenly life for all people. The music this week provides an interpretation of the key themes of faith, unity and the embodiment of the nature of God in Jesus Christ.

The first hymn is “Christ is the world’s Light” AM 609.

1. Christ is the world’s light, he and none other;
Born in our darkness, he became our brother.
If we have seen him we have seen the Father:
Glory to God on high.
2. Christ is the world’s peace, Christ and none other;
No one can serve him and despise a brother.
Who else unites us one in God the Father?
Glory to God on high.
3. Christ is the world’s life, Christ and none other;
Sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother.
He who redeems us, reigns with God the Father.
Glory to God on high!
4. Give God the glory, God and none other;
Give God the glory, Spirit, Son, and Father.
Give God the glory, God with us our brother;
Glory to God on high.

Text: Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000) Tune: Christe Sanctorum; from Paris Antiphoner 1681

[Christ Is the World's Light \(Christe Sanctorum\)](#)

The hymn is closely structured with the first two lines of each verse having the same basic formula but subtly varied to cover Christ’s birth, teaching, passion and redemption and union with God. It makes for a very concise and powerful hymn using simple means. The author, Fred Pratt Green was a Methodist Minister and prolific hymn writer. For example, in the Sounds of Worship for Maundy Thursday I featured “An upper room did our Lord prepare” AM 165 which is also by Green.

The hymn tune “Christe Sanctorum” has its origins in a 17th century Antiphoner. An Antiphoner is the name given to a book containing the chants used for the Divine Office as opposed to a Graduale which contains the antiphons for the Mass. The Divine Office, also known as the Breviary contains the official set of prayers "marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer". It consists primarily of [psalms](#) supplemented by [hymns](#), readings and other prayers and antiphons. Thus, the tune Christe Sanctorum would have originally used as an option to a plainchant melody for a text used in one of the Divine offices such as Lauds or Matins. Indeed, in most hymn books the tune is linked with a morning hymn “Nocte Surgentes”.

The tune has a very unusual, if not unique, metre which suggests that Green had this tune in mind when he composed the text.

The Anthem which we would have sung to complement the above gospel hymn is “The Call” by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), which uses a poem by George Herbert (1593- 1633):

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.
Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.
Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joys in love.

Herbert was born into a wealthy and politically active family. After attending Westminster School he received a scholarship at Trinity College Cambridge. Subsequently he was appointed a fellow of the College where he specialised in Latin and Greek. He then had a short career as a Parliamentarian before being ordained in 1629. He was appointed rector of the small parish of Fugglestone St Peter with Bemerton near Salisbury. He was there for only a short time before he died of consumption in 1633. However, he left a lasting legacy of poetry and other publications. He was also an accomplished lutenist and his musical skills probably contribute to the way in which many of his poems have been set to music subsequently, including this setting by Vaughan Williams which is taken from his collection of "Five Mystical Songs".

The poem "Come my Way" illustrates Herbert's literary and word-play skills. For example, the structure of the first words of each line in all three stanzas. Also, the way in which he uses each of the key nouns from the first line in each of the subsequent lines. The meanings of some of the words have changed over time which partially obscures the immediacy of the text to our minds. Thus, in the second stanza, third line, "mends" should be understood as "improving" rather than "repairing".

Vaughan Williams' music has a melody which allows for the accentuation of the words in the opening line. The melody is repeated for the second stanza but with subtly different harmonies to create interest. Then the music shifts key for the final stanza and the melody is stretched to create emphasis on key words. The music gets quieter towards the end and the last but one word "joys" gets stretched the most to underline the joyous hope of the entire piece.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52zriSYfCpA>

The final hymn is "Thy hand O God has guided" AM 814

1. Thy hand, O God, has guided
Thy flock, from age to age;
The wondrous tale is written,
Full clear, on every page;
Our fathers owned thy goodness,
And we their deeds record;
And both of this bear witness:
One Church, one faith, one Lord.
2. Thy heralds brought glad tidings
To greatest, as to least;
They bade men rise, and hasten
To share the great King's feast;
And this was all their teaching,
In every deed and word,
To all alike proclaiming
One Church, one faith, one Lord
3. Through many a day of darkness,
Through many a scene of strife,
The faithful few fought bravely,
To guard the nation's life.
Their Gospel of redemption,
Sin pardoned, man restored,
Was all in this enfolded:
One Church, one faith, one Lord
4. And we, shall we be faithless?
Shall hearts fail, hands hang down?
Shall we evade the conflict,
And cast away our crown?
Not so: in God's deep counsels
Some better thing is stored;

We will maintain, unflinching,
One church, one faith, one Lord.

5. Thy mercy will not fail us,
Nor leave thy work undone;
With thy right hand to help us,
The victory shall be won;
And then, by men and angels,
Thy name shall be adored,
And this shall be their anthem:
One Church, one faith, one Lord.

Text: Edward Hayes Plumptre (1821-1891) Tune: Thornbury; Basil Harwood (1859-1949)

[Thy Hand, O God has guided - Choirs of Blackburn Cathedral](#)

As a summation of the theme of our union with God through Christ, this hymn makes a triumphant declaration “One Church, one faith, one Lord”.

Edward Plumptre was home schooled, after which came a brief attendance at King's College, London, before winning a scholarship at University College, Oxford, where he took a double **first**, in mathematics and classics.

He was ordained in 1847, by Bishop Wilberforce, and joined the staff of King's College London where he stayed for 21 years. In addition to his academic and administrative activities at Kings College, he was also active in church ministry. From 1851 to 1858, he was assistant preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and in 1863 prebendary of St. Paul's. He was rector of Pluckley from 1869 and of Bickley from 1873.

In 1881, he resigned his work in London to become [Dean of Wells](#). He died in 1891 and was buried in the cathedral cemetery.

He wrote extensively in areas ranging across the interpretation of scripture, biography, verse, translation of Greek plays and hymns. The hymn “Thy hand O God” has been a regular in many hymn books along with one or two others. However, this ever-popular hymn gets a very powerful shot in the arm from its usual companion, the vigorous tune, “Thornbury” by Basil Harwood.

Harwood, like Plumptre, had strong Oxford connections. His first professional position was organist of St Barnabas', Pimlico in 1883, a post he held until 1887. He then served as organist at Ely Cathedral for five years, followed by a final move to Oxford in 1892 where he remained organist of Christ Church Cathedral until his retirement in 1909. After which he returned to Gloucestershire to manage his family estate there.

COLLECT

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

NT READING [Acts 7: 55 – 60](#)

Standing before the high priest and the council, Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he died.

GOSPEL [John 14: 1 — 14](#)

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you

may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.' Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

SERMON Jo Sheppard

The Way, the Truth and the Life

Risen Lord, Lord of our salvation, still our minds and free our souls. Let us hear your voice and commands today. Alleluia! Amen

I write this sermon in the 4th week (I think as I am beginning to lose track!) of the lockdown. Like many, living alone, I have not found it easy. The isolation has been daunting. Making me feel forlorn and lethargic. I am sure we all have had good days and bad days. Waiting for some positive news that never seems to come. I pray that by the time this sermon is read there will be positive news for everyone.

It has made me question what sort of Christian I am. I want to rush out and help people. But cannot. Through restrictions and if I am honest fear. My heart goes out to the NHS, shop assistants, delivery drivers and other keyworkers. Many of whom are our unsung heroes. The little I do is to get shopping and medication for my parents. It does not feel like enough. I wish I were able to help more. Do something productive.

I want to say the panic of the virus has not overwhelmed me but sometimes it has. I pray for all those who are ill and for their recovery. I pray that a vaccine is found so we can get our lives back on track.

But the thing I pray for most is that humanity learns from this. That it learns we can come together to do what is right for the community of the world, to work together to defeat evil, to stop abusing each other and God's planet. My fear is that after this we will just go back to how it was before. But we have an opportunity to reach out to Christ. To listen to his word and accept it. ***'Do not let your hearts be troubled' Jesus said, 'Trust God and trust me too'.***

My faith is being tested. We need to hold on to Christ and carry him in our hearts. Never to falter and continue to pray to him every day. In this Gospel verse Jesus is telling the disciples who he is. He tells them where he is going and Thomas, forever doubting, questions him, 'How can we know where you are going'. Jesus tells them ***'I am the way, the truth and the life. Nobody comes to the father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known the father. From now on you do know him! You have seen him.'***

Then Philip exclaims ***'Just show us the father, then, master....that will be good enough for us'***. And so, this goes on with Jesus questioning them and their doubts. How could they not know him as they have been with him for so long and seen many signs. Jesus clarifies ***'It's the father, who lives within me, who is doing his own works. You must trust me that I am in the father and the father is in me. If not, then trust because of all the things you've seen done'***.

They have come to Jerusalem for the Passover festival and Jesus has already spoken of his betrayal and death, told the disciples ***'he is troubled in spirit'*** and told them one of them will betray him. Judas. In this intoxicating atmosphere the disciples must have not only felt a sense of awe and wonder at Jesus but trepidation and foreboding about their future and what was going to happen next. There is a sense of a quickening pace towards the events of the crucifixion and now Jesus needs them to understand.

Jesus tells them to believe despite what is happening, despite what they cannot control. He calls them to believe not only in God but also in him. The time will come when they will believe, but they are not quite there yet.

The Oxford Bible Commentary (OMC) explains that *'John anticipates Jesus' return in the spiritual presence of the risen Lord' and 'the verse describes that Jesus is our leader and is the way to eternal life with the father and this is because Jesus himself revealed the truth which he learned from him'*. In other words, we need to follow Jesus so we can dwell in the kingdom. We cannot see him like the disciples could, but this passage tells us through faith and belief that Jesus is the way and the life, and that he has prepared a place for us with him.

Jesus speaks of his special relationship with the father and how they are connected. As we move through the verses he speaks of the missionary work of his disciples and he underlines the importance of prayer even after his departure to the father. Then the context changes. ***'I'm telling you the solemn truth. Anyone who trusts in me will also do the works I'm doing. In fact, they will do greater works than these, because I'm going to the father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, so that the father may be glorified in the son. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it'***.

Notice the **I will**. Jesus is saying **he** will hear our prayers and **he** will answer them. He is in the father and the father is in him. Jesus is saying he has the authority and the power to answer our prayers. He is also sending us out to do his works. OMC informs us that *'In the synoptic material we have only one explicit text about a prayer in the name of Jesus (Mth 18 19-20) but in Acts the disciples baptise and do miracles in his name'*. And today (coronavirus aside) we are still baptising in his name, praying to him and miracles happen in his name.

Tom Wright in John for Everyone sums this up. *'Praying in Jesus' name, then, means that as we get to know who Jesus is, so we find ourselves drawn into his life and love and sense of purpose. We will then begin to see what needs doing, what we should be aiming at within our sphere of possibilities, and what resources we need to do it. When we ask it will be 'in Jesus' name', and to his glory; and through that, to the glory of the father himself. But when this is understood, we shouldn't go soft on that marvellous word anything. He said it and he means it'*

After Jesus' death and resurrection, Stephen, the first Christian martyr had a vision when being interrogated by the Sanhedrin. He is filled with the Holy Spirit and he looks up to heaven and see's the glory of God with Jesus standing at his right hand. This vision sustains him and his faith in Jesus when he is being stoned to death. He proclaims, ***"Lord Jesus receive my spirit'. Then he knelt down and shouted at the top of his voice 'Lord do not let this sin stand against them"***.

Stephen is confirming that Jesus is the son of God. That Jesus is in the father and father is in him. When Stephen dies, he calls upon the Lord, reflecting Jesus' call to God on the cross. The difference is Stephen calls to Jesus and expects him to give mercy and to receive his spirit.

He is responding to what Jesus says in John 14. He is praying to Jesus with faith that Jesus will hear his prayer and he will show mercy. He knows without a shadow of doubt that Jesus has made a place ready for him.

Stephen is one of our first witnesses. Martyr technically translates as witness. Remember rocks are being thrown at him and battering his body, he is bloodied and bruised and has no way out but death. Yet he looks to the Lord for his transgressor's mercy and not retribution. He identifies and witnesses that Christ is our salvation.

Tom Wright in Acts for Everyone says *'There is of course only one explanation. They (the disciples) really learned something from Jesus, who made loving ones enemies a central, non-negotiable part of his teaching'*. This shows us that through faith we too can learn and understand Jesus by building a relationship with him through prayer, scripture and communion. At the moment we cannot celebrate communion together and watching it virtually is not quite the same. However, knowing the priesthood are holding communion services and can receive on our behalf may sustain us with prayer and scripture until we can come together again.

The Lord has told us he has prepared a place for us in his father's house. What a privilege. Do we not clean and tidy our house when we expect a guest? Even more so we should make ourselves ready for the place Jesus has prepared

for us. Let us do so joyfully. Let us remember the fear of the disciples and fervent faith of Stephen. Albeit especially difficult now in our time of fear and dread, they got there in the end through faith and so will we.

In a very understandable and straightforward way, and far better than I could, this is Tom Wright's summary of these verses. *'And we will be joined to Jesus and the father by an unbreakable bond of love. This, in turn, leads back where the sequence began. He will show himself to us. All the main themes of the Gospel so far are now revealed for what they are; truths about the inner life of the father and son, truths which turn to fire and love and invite us to warm ourselves within their inmost circle.'*

The Lord has departed but he is the risen Lord who resides with us. Let us have the courage to hear the Gospel and learn as the disciples did. I started by praying for some positive news and I finish with the Gospel. The most truly positive news that has ever been proclaimed. Let us hold heart and have faith in the Lord.

Praise be to God,
Let us thank the Lord of our salvation, Jesus Christ
The way, the truth and the life.

Alleluia!

Amen

Note: Bible Translations of John's verses by Tom Wright in John For Everyone and Acts for Everyone by Tom Wright

Young Saints at Home

This week we have put together a lesson plan, including a story and activity, for parents or carers to lead a session with their children. This lesson is called All Things Bright and Beautiful and **the plan is attached to the newsletter**. We are interested in your feedback. Please contact Jenny Wilks at jwilks@jwa-consultancy.co.uk or Louise O'Dwyer Barnard at lodwyerbarnard@hotmail.co.uk if you have any questions or feedback.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Please be aware that Christian Aid Week has **not** been cancelled but because of the COVID-19 outbreak it has been changed. This year none of the usual activities, including 'House to House' collections will take place but there will still be opportunities to worship together and to donate.

A '**Justgiving**' page has also been set up for donations, this can be found at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/MAIDENHEADCHRISTIANAID2020>

Fr Jeremy is repeating his run around his garden for Christian Aid on 17th May and would be grateful for your sponsorship using the Justgiving page.

Although there will be other ways to donate including E-envelopes and directly to the Christian Aid website or by post, it would be great if as many people as possible could use the 'Justgiving' page. By so doing Christian Aid will be able to monitor the response from our area which in past years has been excellent.

I would commend Christian Aid's work to you all and humbly ask you to respond both by prayer, and financially as much as you are able to further their work with the poor and underprivileged of this world. Please spread the word, safely and as much as you are able to friends and family so that Maidenhead's tradition of care and generosity can be maintained, even in these very testing times.

Thank you for your prayers and for all you are able to do.



This Christian Aid Week, why not virtually gather with other supporters as we host a virtual Christian Aid Service! A special service as it links people in both Maidenhead and Marlow.

Sunday May 10th at 5.00pm

Venue: Your choice! Living room? Kitchen? Study? Conservatory? Bedroom?

We would love you to join us using Zoom. If you need help using Zoom, please get in touch and we can try and help! You can phone in to hear, or you can use your computer/tablet/smart phone...

We look forward to seeing you as we gather on the same day as other Christian Aid supporters around the UK. It would be good if you could have a bowl of water, a little bit of soap, and a towel with you for the service.

Don't forget, that people around the world still need our support. You can still donate using:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/MAIDENHEADCHRISTIANAID2020

Zoom Details

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2557731522>

Meeting ID: 255 773 1522

Dial by your location

0203 481 5237, or 0203 481 5240 Meeting ID: 255 773 152

Inspirations

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified... because the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.

Deuteronomy 31: 6

This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it *Psalm 118: 24*

I think the thing to do is to take each day as it comes, be grateful for it and meet it with love.

Jane Duncan 'My Friends the Macleans'

I have always considered
the grasshopper
to be the finer fellow
He did not scrape and hoard
worldly possessions
He would not have turned away
a friend hungry
He had more fun
in one fiddle foot
than the ant in his whole diligent body
Gladly the grasshopper
glorified God by the
sensuous enjoyment
of each irretrievable moment
while the ant grieved his yesterdays

and grumbled each tomorrow
IS THERE A LIFE BEFORE DEATH ?
Wrote the grasshopper
on the lavatory wall
and added
NOT FOR ANTS

Go To the Ant Barbara Dickinson

Do not look forward anxiously to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace then, put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations, and say continually: the Lord is my strength and shield; my heart has trusted in Him and I am helped. He is not only with me, but in me, and I in Him.

Prayer of St Francis de Sales

We would really welcome words to inspire us from everyone reading this. We're all in it together!

Please send them to nordbergjs@aol.com or

Sue Nordberg, Twelfth House, Ray Mead Rd., Maidenhead SL6 8NJ

Reflection by Greg Hurst

The carrier bag had been knocking around our kitchen for weeks. When her university closed its campus our daughter brought the contents home to give to a food bank: tinned food, dried pasta, bags of noodles. She intended to donate them on campus but, in the rush to leave, didn't do so. She meant to donate them in Maidenhead but didn't. And so they stayed in our kitchen.

By Saturday I'd had enough. I cycled to town and walked to the former Argos shop in the Nicholson's centre, now home to Foodshare Maidenhead. Shelving units reached to the ceiling, lined with tins and packets of food. A woman wearing a facemask broke off from sorting out food parcels to greet me. "You're here to make a donation?" she asked politely. I handed over our modest offering, conscious of how small it was. And yet, she told me stocks were running low. Tinned meat and fruit, sauces and tea bags were especially needed.

I walked out into Queen Street, passing lines of volunteers in masks loading food parcels into volunteer drivers' cars: activity everywhere.

Here is a paradox. Many charities, like Maidenhead Foodshare, face unprecedented demand from people in need. But during the lockdown fund-raising activities have stopped and charity shops shut, depriving them of income. The instinct of many during this crisis has been to raise money for the NHS, via hospital charities. But the health service is funded by government, which has promised the NHS "whatever it takes". It is charities that need our support more than ever.

Foodshare Needs

At the moment, Foodshare have plenty of volunteers and now they have a second base they have good facilities. But, their concern is securing the food that they need to continue the brilliant work being done. Demand on their work has shot up recently.

The items most in need are:

- * Tinned meat
- * Tinned fish
- * Tinned tomatoes
- * Tinned vegetables (except sweetcorn)
- * Tinned fruit
- * Cooking sauces

The Maidenhead Advertiser always has a list of things most needed each week, and there are food drop-off points all over Maidenhead; [see attachment **foodshare drop-off**](#) to find one near you.

Music on the Web

There is a growing library of music to be accessed through our website. Please save this link in your browser

<https://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk/information-children-and-familie/services/holy-week-2020-easter-services-use-home/>

PS from the Covid19 Frontline

Day 44 of the lockdown and Day 42 in hospital for our son, Nick. Since last week he has been moved to Wycombe Hospital which is the local centre of excellence for stroke patients, and the really big news is that they have started to wean him off the ventilator! We've equipped him with an iPad and just as I started to write this – we had a message from Nick himself!! It really does seem for the first time that there is light at the end of the tunnel! Weaning off is a very gradual process and there is a long way to go, and as we've said before we are so appreciative of all the prayer and practical support we receive.

Mike & Jan Moss

[The All Saints legend pictured on page 2 is none other than a very young Ken Smith, our Churchwarden.](#)