

ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD

PARISH NEWS

www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk

Issue 10

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Dear parishioners and friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

It's hard to believe that this is issue 10 of the Newsletter from All Saints. We started producing this at the beginning of the Lockdown and we are continuing in the hope that it helps people feel connected as a community of believers, the Body of Christ. This week I begin by thinking about the importance of this period in the Christian year for all Christian communities. When this Newsletter goes out to you, via email or delivery, we will be celebrating Ascension Day. At 8.15pm on Thursday the Diocese are celebrating Ascension by offering us a recorded service. You will be able to find this on the website. I will also be offering a short message, a collect, reading and blessing from the church.

The key message from our new service books for Ascension and Pentecost is the charge that we are called to be Christ's body in the world. In the Ascension liturgy we pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit following Jesus' Ascension to the Father and at the new Pentecost Liturgy we pray for personal renewal in the power of the Holy Spirit. We pray

'Be with us, Spirit of God; **nothing can separate us from your love.**

Breathe on us, breath of God; **fill us with your saving power.**

Speak in us, wisdom of God; **bring strength, healing, and peace.'**

Following this short act of prayer people come forward to receive the ministry of prayer and are anointed with the oil of Chrism blessed by the Bishop of Oxford, Steven, at the Chrism Mass. Last year I think just about every person attending the Eucharist at Pentecost came forward to request the power of the Holy Spirit for playing their part as a baptised member of the church. The Pentecost liturgy which we will look at next week will challenge us to go out into the world as his light.

I have preached to you many a time on being drawn into the story of the Christian faith. At this time of year, the scriptures offer us perhaps the greatest story-teller in the bible, St Luke. We have experienced Jesus on Maundy Thursday washing feet and offering an example of leadership that is challenging us to follow. He wants us to wash other people's feet in the pastoral sense that we are seeing people do in our community and across the country in this time of the pandemic. Then we experience Jesus coming among us in times of suffering as we hear from the cross 'My God, My God, why hath thou forsaken me? We are not alone in this time of suffering the struggle that the pandemic has brought to the world. We then experience the joy of resurrection through the great stories like Luke's Road to Emmaus. The supper at Emmaus reminds us that the early Apostles were drawn into communion with the Risen Lord as Jesus took, blessed, broke and gave the bread. The early apostles were drawn into the relationship with the Risen Lord and their hearts burned within them as the scriptures came alive.

Jesus disappeared from their eyes and the disciples were charged to go back to Jerusalem to live the Christian faith and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to use their gifts to build the community. We read all about this message, the greatest story ever told in Luke's Acts of the Apostles which begins on Ascension Day with Acts 1.1-11 and continues with the early believers breaking bread, living the common life, praying and sharing needs (Acts 2: 42-47).

If ever there was a need to live this message, it is now during the pandemic and it is wonderful to see so many of All Saints community playing their part to support one another.

Luke asks us over the coming ten days from Ascension to Pentecost to pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit so that we might discern our calling and discover the energy and power of the Holy Spirit. We are looking for people to join with the communities of St Luke's and the Church of the Good Shepherd in praying for the Spirit in the day of prayer on the 30th May. It will start at 8am with a Zoom morning worship and be followed by people praying quietly at home for half an hour or an hour until 8pm when Joan Hicks will lead us in a Zoom compline. If you would like to offer to pray quietly at home or in your garden for half an hour that day please let me know and I will add you to the people covering the 12 hours of prayer.

News this week

We have had some exciting news this past week from our community. Revd Judith and Ron have received news that Judith's son Owen and his wife Sue have had a baby girl called Nora Lynn who is now a sister to Emmie. Nora Lynn was born on 14th May weighing in at 8lbs. Congratulations to the grandparents.

Sally Deal texted me on Sunday morning to share the news that her son Peter and his wife Marie have had a son, Benjamin Rowan, who weighed in at 10lbs 1oz. This is wonderful news for Sally as she becomes a grandparent for the first time.

We pray the Mothers' Union prayer for the gift of a child

Heavenly Father, creator and giver of life, there is much joy in our hearts at the news of a baby's birth, a most special and complete gift of your love, a new being and a wonder of creation. Be with the mother and father of this little baby in their happiness, and accept their praise and ours as we give thanks to you through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Also, on Sunday Jan and Mike Moss celebrated their 51st Wedding anniversary and were able to do so celebrating with their family including, most wonderfully, Nick via modern communication. We give thanks for Nick's continued road to recovery.

We continue to give thanks for all our health care workers

John Bolodeoku, Helen Broad, Joanne Hawkes, Karen, Carole Nicholson, Richard Stafford, Eleanor Kershaw, Ricky and Dagma Powley and Emmanuel. We give thanks too for all you that are supporting people by shopping for them, those collecting medicines, those making phone calls of friendship and those offering acts of kindness.

Please keep within your prayers the couples who were due to have wedding services at All Saints this summer and have had to postpone.

Tom Smith and Joanna Figueira

Jason Gratton and Samantha Palmer

Ryan Kennedy and Chloe Watts

We remember too all the baptism families who are having to postpone their services until we are able to return to church safely.

Blogs

Apart from following the blog on Word Press or on our All Saints Church website I am going to record two blogs a week on video which you can watch again on the website. If you cannot access material from the website please contact me and I will send you a copy of the audio blog through post or delivery should you wish to read it.

Jeanette has this week put together another excellent service for the Nursing Homes. Within the service folk are able to sing 'O Jesus I have promised to serve thee to the end' and to hear the Gospel message of loving one another

from John 15:12-17. Jeanette has had wonderful feedback from the care homes. There has been a shortage of spiritual support offered to these vulnerable people and the services are greatly valued. Thank you, Jeanette, for this excellent ministry.

On Sundays we are encouraging you to watch the Church of England service or the Oxford Diocese service. I am hoping to record a collect, reading, short reflection and blessing from the church each Wednesday. We are also keeping contact with the schools of Boyne Hill and All Saints via assemblies and Lilly the Dog is keeping contact with the Tiny Saints! Thanks to Jenny Wilks for the last few weeks excellent Young Saints sessions.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to this newsletter. I know that many people are giving their time and energy to keeping us connected in this way.

Finally, a prayer from the Church of England for those feeling isolated

O God, help me to trust you, help me to know you, help me to know that you are with me, help me to believe that nothing can separate me from your love revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Eucharist

We have reached the 4th part of Geoffrey Howard's book on 'Dare to Break Bread' which looks at how we might understand the Eucharist.

Geoffrey offers just a brief input for the intercessions but never-the-less powerful. He writes that when we accept the invitation to share with our Lord at his table we are receiving his great gift to us and at the same time 'ask him to extend his rule beyond that table into our lives, families, neighbourhood, and across the world. Feasting at the Lord's banquet, without interceding for those who are absent, is as obscene as eating dinner without concern for the starving.'

As a practical response to prayer it is good to hear that Food Share are still continuing to provide food and that I know some of you have responded to the request in a recent newsletter to support this valuable ministry. Thank you as well to all those who have supported financially Christian Aid and Thames Hospice and to Alexander Devine Children's Hospice in recent weeks. We think around £600 was raised for the two hospices.

Following on from the prayers Geoffrey looks at the prayer of Humble Access.

Geoffrey reflects upon the metaphor of a dog waiting for scraps under a table and linking it to the manifold and great mercies that we seek from God. We are reminded by this pastoral priest that we love this prayer for our own comforts but sometimes forget the homeless and refugees of our world. He is relating this challenge to the Syrophenician woman who wants Jesus to heal her daughter. Jesus replies that he cannot take what belongs to his children to feed a dog! It is a difficult text, but the woman replies that even the dog gets the scraps. This response reminds us that we are all able to receive God's mercy.

Geoffrey takes up a post at an inner city parish. It is a beautiful church in the middle of an urban priority area. It is a Waterloo church built of Yorkshire stone and the only imperfection is the lack of new railings. The heating is kept on most of the day and so homeless people and alcoholics gather near one of the ventilation grids of the church to keep warm from the air blowing from inside. This means that the beautifully kept churchyard is sometimes looking untidy due to the people using the churchyard that have no home. Within 2 days of his induction a handful of people ask for new railings. While alcoholics, homeless and people in need are with us in society, 'they show up our failure to be salt, light and yeast.' If we can remain 'insulated from the sin, pain and sickness in the world we could get back to congratulating ourselves on the beauty of our building and worship.'

Three weeks later £110,000 is spent on brand new railings. No one can ruin the beauty of the church anymore. Fr Howard wonders however if the money might have gone to helping the poor and he has 'a mental picture of a winter night. A dishevelled man, bottle in hand, has his face to the padlocked gates, watching hot air rise.' Howard reflects he has a dog at home called Alf who sleeps in his house. He goes to bed knowing that his dog is not out on the streets.

As I read this again after all these years I am challenged by Howard's words and reflection on the Prayer. Thank goodness particularly at this time of the pandemic that there are people who care for those in need.

Bible Study

Another text from our great story teller, St Luke. This time Luke 18: 9-14

This week I am using Tom Wright's Lent for Everyone Luke year C bible commentary which I am sure Quench bookshop could order for you if you would like a copy. Wright asks us to think about the text carefully. 'You've worked hard all your life. You've always played by the rules. Never done anyone a bad turn. Never cheated on your tax returns. Never, never even dreamed of going off with someone else's wife. If the law says you calculate exactly a tenth of your income and give that to God, that's what you do.'

You see where Wright is going with his text. If we live like this and a few more followed, then the world would be a better place. In fact, says Wright 'It would speed up the arrival of God's Kingdom.'

Wright points out that many of us think the same way as the Pharisee. We have got it right and we can see clearly that our good works are taking us to heaven. However, the humble Tax collector makes us think. We are reminded by Wright and indeed other biblical commentators and of course Jesus himself that it is humility in prayer that we need. We are called to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and our neighbour as oneself. It says nothing about comparing oneself smugly with our struggling neighbour.

Tom Wright suggests that we follow the Tax collector in humility and acknowledge God's grace and mercy. As a form of prayer, he suggests the Jesus Prayer 'Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

As a study this week

1. Compare this parable with the Prodigal Son Luke 15: 11-32. Are there any similarities with the tax collector and the Pharisee?
2. Are we tempted to see ourselves in the position of the Pharisee at times? Looking at others thinking they are not in the same spiritual league as us!
3. Pope Francis wants a church of Mercy and with open doors for all those who seek God's love. How do we understand these texts with that thought in mind?
4. Think about a way of praying that asks for a sense of humility. Try praying the Jesus prayer above.

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

Fr Jeremy

Worship for Sunday 24 May The Sunday after Ascension Day

Sounds of Worship

Brian Graves

The Gospel for the Sunday after Ascension is John 7: 1-11. Before this section, Jesus has already tantalised his disciples about his forthcoming death and resurrection by saying that in a little while, they will see him no more and again a little while later they will see him. The gospel text then describes how Jesus looks to heaven and speaks about the promise of eternal life for those who believe that Jesus was sent by God. This prayer to God, which is said in the presence of the disciples, continues by reassuring them that they belong to God and their closeness to God will bring them closer together between themselves.

The words of the hymns and anthem I have chosen reflect on the union between ourselves, the ascended Jesus and God. As it happens, between them, the authors and composers of these works, have a connection with each of the Nations of Great Britain and Ireland. Also, by coincidence, at the end of Mental Health Awareness Week, two of

them succumbed to mental health conditions, in one case with tragic consequences, but all of them have provided a legacy of creative work which illuminate and express the key facets of today's gospel.

The first hymn is "Hail the day that sees him rise" AM 228. Written by Charles Wesley it was published in 1739 in Hymns and Sacred Poems under the title "Hymn for Ascension-Day." The original poem comprised 10 stanzas, of which the first, second, fourth (highly altered), and fifth are preserved in our hymn book, Ancient and Modern.

The first stanza addresses the day of Jesus' ascension, the second the gates of heaven which accept Christ in glory. The third emphasises the true humanity of Jesus and his continued connection in the lives of those on earth. The fourth stanza describes his crucifixion and the final two stanzas present Christ as the intercessor for humankind through him our own ascension to an eternal heavenly life.

The hymn was published in 1820 in "Selection of Psalms and Hymns". An editor, Thomas Cotterill made some minor textual changes. The addition of "Alleluia!" at the end of each line was instigated by E.G. White for the 1852 publication of "Hymns and Introits".

It is interesting to note some of Cotterill's textual changes. A couple of them reflect the subtle change in meaning of words over time. For example, in the first stanza, the original "Ravish'd from our wishful Eyes" is altered to "To his throne above the skies". The origin of the word "Ravished" comes from the Latin rapere which means to seize. Hence, we lose the sense of loss which Wesley was trying to convey in his original text. Similarly, in the second stanza, the word "pompous" is replaced with "glorious," again we lose the power of the original meaning of the word which was magnificent or splendid.

One of the least justifiable 'corrections' is the replacement of "Wide unfold the radiant scene" with "Christ hath conquered death and sin," which looks like change for change's sake.

The tune now associated with this text is Robert Williams' melody "Llanfair", which first appeared in John Parry's collection, Peroriaeth Hyfryd (Sweet Music), in 1837. The tune name is an anglicised form of the author's hometown in Wales, Llanfechell.

Text: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), Thomas Cotterill (1779-1823) and others

Tune: "Llanfair"; Robert Williams (1782-1818)

1. Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
to his throne above the skies; Alleluia!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given, Alleluia!
enters now the highest heaven! Alleluia!
2. There for him high triumph waits; Alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates! Alleluia!
he hath conquered death and sin; Alleluia!
take the King of glory in! Alleluia!
3. Lo! the heaven its Lord receives, Alleluia!
yet he loves the earth he leaves; Alleluia!
though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
still he calls mankind his own. Alleluia!
4. See! he lifts his hands above; Alleluia!
See! he shows the prints of love: Alleluia!
Hark! his gracious lips bestow, Alleluia!
blessings on his Church below. Alleluia!

5. Still for us he intercedes, Alleluia!
his prevailing death he pleads, Alleluia!
near himself prepares our place, Alleluia!
he the first fruits of our race. Alleluia!
6. Lord, though parted from our sight, Alleluia!
far above the starry height, Alleluia!
grant our hearts may thither rise, Alleluia!
seeking thee above the skies. Alleluia!

[🎵 Hymn | Hail the day that sees him rise | with LYRICS](#)

An anthem that the choir has sung many times and is appropriate for this Sunday is “O for a closer walk with God”, words by William Cowper (1731-1800) arranged by Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924).

Stanford has selected three of the six verses from Cowper’s hymn:

1. O for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heav’nly frame,
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb!
4. Return, O holy Dove, return,
sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
and drove Thee from my breast.
6. So shall my walk be close with God,
calm and serene my frame;
so purer light shall mark the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

The full text can be found in our hymn book AM 131.

The hymns today set the tone of the joy and celebration of the ascension. This anthem provides a contrast and expresses the inner joy and confidence that can be found in being called to God through Jesus. These three verses have a symmetry which makes for a satisfying anthem text. The third line of the 6th verse makes an expressive high-point which Stanford emphasises by building a musical climax here and then allowing the music to subside to a quiet end. You will notice that he repeats the word “Return” in the first verse several times to provide an extra piece of word painting.

The melody itself is not by Stanford but is taken from a “Scottish Psalter” published in 1635 and is called Caithness in our hymn book.

The author, William Cowper William one of the most popular poets of his time. He changed the direction of 18th century nature poetry by writing of everyday life and scenes of the English countryside. In many ways, he was one of the forerunners of Romantic poetry. Samuel Taylor Coleridge called him "the best modern poet", whilst William Wordsworth particularly admired his poem Yardley-Oak.

After being institutionalised for insanity, Cowper found refuge in a fervent evangelical Christianity. He continued to suffer doubt and, after a dream in 1773, believed that he was doomed to eternal damnation. He recovered and wrote more religious hymns.

His religious sentiment and association with John Newton (who wrote the hymn "Amazing Grace") led to much of the poetry for which he is best remembered, and to the series of Olney Hymns. His poem "Light Shining out of Darkness" gave English the phrase: "God moves in a mysterious way/ His wonders to perform."

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford was an Irish composer, music teacher, and conductor. Born to a well-off and highly musical family in Dublin, Stanford was educated at the University of Cambridge before studying music in Leipzig and Berlin. While still an undergraduate, Stanford was appointed organist of Trinity College, Cambridge.

In 1882, aged 29, he was one of the founding professors of the Royal College of Music, where he taught composition for the rest of his life. From 1887 he was also Professor of Music at Cambridge. Among his pupils were rising composers whose fame went on to surpass his own, such as Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams. As a conductor, Stanford held posts with the Bach Choir and the Leeds triennial music festival.

[O for a Closer Walk with God](#)

The final hymn is another well-known Ascension hymn, "The head that once was crowned with thorns" AM 232

Erik Routley, the hymn writer and musicologist, described this hymn as "perhaps the finest of all hymns; (the author,) Thomas Kelly, has comprehended the whole Gospel, and he tells of the Good news and of the mysterious mercy by which we may lay hold of it" ('Hymns and Human Life', 1952).

Kelly's words are built around two passages from the New Testament: Hebrews 2:10 and 2 Timothy 2:12 – both of which reflect on the attainment of salvation by persevering through suffering.

It is possible that Kelly derived his first line from a poem by John Bunyan, which includes the lines:

"The head that once was crowned with thorns
Shall now with glory shine;
That heart that broken was with scorns
Shall flow with life divine."

Thomas Kelly was ordained into the Church of Ireland in 1792. (He had been born in Kellyville in 1769 and died in Dublin in 1855.) He became well-known as a preacher but the Archbishop of Dublin eventually prohibited him from preaching in the diocese because of the evangelical emphasis of his message. As a result, Kelly left the Church of Ireland and preached as an independent minister in two unconsecrated buildings in Dublin. Those who followed him were known as 'The Kellyites'.

Thomas Kelly's life has echoes of the brothers John and Charles Wesley. Like John, he also formed congregations in other towns, became active in many good causes, and was particularly esteemed by the poor; like Charles, he was a prolific hymn writer. Kelly's 'Hymns on Various Passages in Scripture' went through a number of editions during his lifetime and, by the last printing in his lifetime, it included 765 texts. As well as "The head that once was crowned with thorns", these included "We sing the praise of him who died.

The tune most associated with this hymn is "St Magnus" which first appeared in Plyford's "The divine companion" in 1709 and is attributed to Jeramiah Clarke. Clarke was one of the pupils of John Blow at St Paul's Cathedral and a chorister in 1685 at the Chapel Royal. Between 1692 and 1695 he was an organist at Winchester College, then between 1699 and 1704 he was an organist at St Paul's Cathedral. He later became an organist and 'Gentleman extraordinary' at the Chapel Royal, he shared that post with his friend and fellow composer William Croft. They were succeeded by John Blow.

Clarke did not live to a great age, sadly he committed suicide whilst suffering from fits of depression brought on by unrequited love.

1. The head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now:
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty Victor's brow.
2. The highest place that heaven affords
is his, is his by right,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords,
and heaven's eternal Light:
3. The joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below,
to whom he manifests his love,
and grants his name to know.
4. To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is given:
their name an everlasting name,
their joy the joy of heaven.
5. They suffer with the Lord below,
they reign with him above:
their profit and their joy to know
the mystery of his love.
6. The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him:
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

Text: Thomas Kelly (1769-1855) Tune: "St Magnus"; Jeremiah Clarke (c1673-1707)

[The Head That Once Was Crowned](#)

Collect

O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

NT Reading [Acts 1: 6 -14](#)

When the apostles had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.' Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon

the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Gospel John 17: 1 – 11

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.'

Sermon Jeanette Lock

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."



Those of us who have been to Walsingham will know that there are numerous small chapels within the Shrine church. There is one which always make me chuckle when I see it. It is the Ascension Chapel which depicts a baroque-looking cloud sculpted into the roof with two feet sticking out as a visual representation of the ascending Christ. Of course, if you look closely, those two feet are not just any two feet; they clearly show the wounds of the cross as a potent reminder of what Jesus suffered, bearing the scars of his sacrificial love.

This image came into my mind while I was reflecting on our Epistle for today from Acts 1. In particular, the verse that caught my attention was verse 11 where we hear the two men in white robes saying to the disciples, *"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."*

Do you remember the television programme called Candid Camera? My favourite prank was when the actor pretended to be eating a goldfish-it was actually a thin slither of carrot but when it was wriggled around it looked just like a goldfish. It was very funny. But I digress! The sketch I actually wanted to draw your attention to was the one where the actor stood still in a busy place and just looked upwards. Very quickly, others passing by would stop, and also look up towards the sky. What was the man looking at? What were they missing? What was so captivating? But, of course there was nothing there, it was just another prank!

In our Acts passage, the two men in white ask the disciples, "Why are you standing and looking upwards?" Perhaps they saw on their faces looks of confusion, amazement and fear. What do we do now? Where do we go? But it's a

rhetorical question. As if to say, stop standing and staring into space but instead look around you, because that's where Jesus is.

It is not the first time that the disciples seemed to be looking in the wrong direction. Just 40 days ago, on the first day of resurrection two men in white had asked them, *"Why do you look for the living among the dead?"* In all fairness, so many strange things had happened to the disciples in this post resurrection roller-coaster of emotions, and it is not surprising they were somewhat bemused, confused, frightened and asking more questions than getting answers. Sound familiar?

Now the two men in white robes are back again, encouraging the disciples to move forward, to find Jesus not where He had left them, but in their futures, as those spreading the Gospel and bringing good news to others. If the disciples want to find Jesus, they just need to look for Him in the Christian community they are being sent out to establish, to find Him in those they mix with every day of their lives. Every time they receive the love of a stranger on their travels, it is in the presence of Jesus. Every time they share their love with those they meet, they are making Jesus present to that person. They need to go back to Jerusalem, that great city of hope, where they will be filled with the Spirit of God and of the Risen and Ascended Jesus. Just before his disappearance into the cloud Jesus had given them a mission, *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"*. Their commissioning was to be like Jesus in the world. To focus on what God has called them to do by being the body of the Risen Christ.

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Mulling over this text a bit more, I was drawn back to that image from the Ascension Chapel at Walsingham, of Jesus disappearing upwards through the cloud. In a spiritual sense, the "lifting up" is referring to the risen Jesus being raised to the glory of God the Father. We hear this in today's Gospel reading from John 17. 1-11 where in verse 1 Jesus says, *"Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you."* This is emphasised by the cloud that hid Jesus from the disciples' sight, the cloud being a sign of God's presence. If we think of heaven and earth as being two interlocking spheres of God's reality, then Jesus has gone into God's dimension of reality. But actually, Jesus did not have to go anywhere to be with his Father, because God's presence is everywhere, heaven and earth existing side by side. Jesus, our triumphant Messiah-king, reigns in glory over all creation. Jesus has not been taken up into the clouds and left us, he is very much still with us, among us, surrounding us with his loving presence.

The men in white robes pose an important question for us today:

Where is Jesus in our lives?

In the Walsingham Ascension Chapel, notice the two pierced feet have not completely disappeared into the strange looking cloud, instead they are still visible as a reminder again that Jesus has not left us, that he still abides with us. Jesus ascended not upwards, but **into** his assembly of people, tasking us, like his disciples, to help each other along the journey of life, not least now during the coronavirus crisis, with all its challenges and uncertainties.

And like those early disciples, we just need to look for him. We just need to look around us because that's where Jesus is. He is with us when we make those phone calls to one another to offer friendship and support as we struggle in the lockdown. He is with us when we pray for one another because we have read in the weekly Newsletter that someone needs our prayers. He is present with us in those smiles and small acts of kindness that ripple outwards as a reflection of God's love spreading amongst us.

Let us live with an Ascension attitude. Jesus' Ascension into heaven is not the end, but rather the beginning. Let us be witnesses to the risen Christ in our lives. Let's not stand staring into the sky; Jesus is right here!

Alleluia! Amen.

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 about All Saints Church and **the plan is attached to the newsletter**. If you have downloaded any of these lessons for your children do let us know by contacting Jenny Wilks at jwilks@jwa-consultancy.co.uk or Louise O'Dwyer Barnard at lodwyerbarnard@hotmail.co.uk. We really would value your feedback!

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK



Fr Jeremy and Monika, accompanied by Lilly, walked for two hours on Saturday morning. So far £4,300 (including Gift Aid) has been pledged to the Maidenhead justgiving page, but there is still a little time left to donate. **Please don't leave it too long; the page will close.** Of course, those who have not got access to a computer can donate directly by post, Christian

Aid's Head Office address is: [CHRISTIAN AID, 35-41 LOWER MARSH, LONDON, SE1 7RL](#).

In these difficult times we can really make a difference. Our 'JustGiving' site can be found at: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/MAIDENHEADCHRISTIANAID2020>

INSPIRATIONS

LOVE

Love bade me welcome ; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lacked anything.
'A guest', I answered, 'worthy to be here'.
Love said, 'You shall be he'.
I, the unkind, ungrateful?' Ah my dear,
I cannot look on thee'.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
'Who made the eyes but I ?'
'Truth , Lord, but I have marred them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve'.
'And know you not,' says Love, 'who bore the blame?'
'My dear, then I will serve.'
'You must sit down', says Love, 'and taste my meat'.
So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert

CONVERSION

He was a born loser, accident prone too; never won a lottery,
married a girl who couldn't cook, broke his leg the day before the wedding and forgot the ring.
He was the kind who ended up behind a post in almost any auditorium.
Planes he was booked to fly on were delayed by engine trouble with sickening regularity.
His holidays at the beach were almost always ruined by rain.
All his apples turned out wormy.
His letters came back marked 'Moved, left no address'.

And it was His car that was cited for speeding from among a flock of others going 60 in a 55 mile Zone.

So it was a real shocker when he found himself elected, chosen by Grace for Salvation,
Felt the exhilaration of an undeserved and wholly unexpected Joy
and tasted, for the first time, the Glory of being on the winning side.

Luci Shaw

THE GREAT INTRUDER

It is exasperating
To be called
So persistently
When the last thing
We want to do
is get up
And go
But God
elects
To keep on haunting
Like some
holy ghost.

Thomas John Carlisle

Everything will be all right in the end.
If it's not all right; it's not the end.

Anon

Please send them to nordbergjs@aol.com or

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

Reflection by Greg Hurst

During weekdays our house used to lie quiet. Once we all departed for school and work it was empty other than for Merlin, our rescue cat, who would sleep in the unused rooms in turn. Alas Merlin is no longer with us. And if he were, he would no longer recognise it.

Various rooms now double up as an office, classroom, dance studio and gymnasium for sessions via video. Exercise mats and dumb bells lie in corners. This activity is taking its toll. Constant occupation by a family of four (the eldest works elsewhere) means wear and tear. Scuffs, streaks and smudges have appeared on walls. Computer cables and phone chargers have bent at odd angles and work only intermittently.

One of the joys of lockdown has been sitting down together for each meal. But there are breakages. We have smashed more plates than a 1970s Greek restaurant. Mugs and glasses have met their end on the tiled kitchen floor. In charge of supper one evening I baked four potatoes for two hours but they were rock-hard when I set them on the table. The element in the oven had packed up. Soon afterwards the red light in the dishwasher blinked and went off, never to return. A new fuse made no difference.

I know we should not lay up for ourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, as Matthew tells us. But these are modest everyday items. A backlog of redecoration, maintenance and bills for new appliances awaits me once all this is over.

Foodshare Needs

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](#) on Newsletter Issue 8** 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/>

And if you're missing the church why not take a virtual tour by going to

<http://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk/welcome-about-all-saints/3d-virtual-tour-all-saints-church/>

Armchairs in need of a good home

2 very comfortable excellent quality armchairs originally from Maples, which have been reupholstered and all fireproofed. If interested please contact Andrew Stafford ahstafford@hotmail.co.uk

A Final PS from the Covid19 Frontline

Day 58 of the lockdown and Day 56 in hospital for our son, Nick, who is now out of intensive care and receiving excellent rehab treatment on the stroke ward at Wycombe Hospital. We don't know what the future holds for him but he is a very determined young man. We believe that in order to be discharged from hospital he needs to be able to walk so that is his first goal.

He is completely bemused when we tell him how many people all over the world have been praying for his recovery but if ever tangible evidence of the power of prayer is needed it can be seen in Nick propped up this lunchtime with a can of Pepsi max (other fizzy drinks are available). The first item of what he would regard as proper food since 25th March!

Please do keep him in your prayers; we'll stop the weekly update as he is now Covid negative but if he should be discharged whilst there's still a need for the Parish News we'll let you know. Thank you all so much; your support means such a lot to us.

Mike & Jan Moss