

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,

I am continuing this week with looking at the 'Everybody Welcome' course written by Bob Jackson and George Fisher. This is a course that helps each one of us to play our part in encouraging the church to grow through helping people discover a sense of belonging. In session two we will look at the premises and how we can make them more inviting. This theme will be discussed on zoom on Wednesday 19th May at 7.30pm. In the first session we established that people experience our church's community and worship in a variety of ways. Baptisms, weddings, funerals, carol services and regular services, Tiny Saints, school services are some of the ways but the numbers of people who become regular members or people who find a sense of belonging are few. How can we improve the initial experience of those people joining us as newcomers? Two obvious dimensions to this. One the physical environment and two the human response. In this session it is the physical environment we will explore:

1. Exterior and entrance
2. Worship Space
3. Kitchen and Social Space
4. Provision for people with needs

If you think about the world we live in most organisations see the value in first impressions and in trying to improve their facilities. Few people would choose a restaurant that is unclean or lacking a fresh coat of paint. Also, many building including sporting venues, are used for other community events. They are open to the public for activities separate to the main function of the building.

1. Exterior and entrance

Many churches have had love and money lavished on them so that they are attractive and welcoming set in lovely grounds. The church can seem like a second home to regulars but how do they feel to newcomers? We have a beautiful churchyard, quadrangle and Birinus Garden. However, these facilities if left unloved can turn people away. It was wonderful a few years ago when a group of people cleared the church yard and people did notice. One person from the wider community even sent cakes to thank us! The Archdeacon at the time and now our Bishop, Olivia commented when she came to view the church floor a couple of years ago that we looked closed. The gates were closed, the church was locked and the signs pointing to the office were far from clear. During our branding project eighteen months ago some young parents of Tiny Saints said that it was a pity the church was not open more to the community.

On the main Bath Road where large numbers of cars pass, we have a notice board! It is broken and rotten to the core. Altwood school promote events on that same corner with bright new banners. For insiders this does not matter. We have the Parish News, the times of services and we know how to contact each other. But what about newcomers? We are fortunate that Rod Broad has spent hours making the Web-site accessible and that we have folk helping with Facebook and Twitter to let people know that there is still a community at All Saints.

2. Worship Space

As people enter the church is it a place of welcome? Is the church dimly lit and does it look cluttered? The course material says 'Do we walk straight into a warm, clean, well-lit worship space to be greeted by a smiling human being?'

The course material suggests that anxiety levels can be raised by:

- a. Uncertainty – where do I go, what do I do when I don't know the house rules?
- b. Clutter – Does the building look cared for and do we give the impression that there is space without worrying about knocking things over? Is there room to sit comfortably following the service for coffee and refreshments? Is there room for children to play while their parents talk with friends?
- c. Is there litter, neglect, discomfort, dim lights, uneven floors, cold? Hopefully our floor will be even from September!
- d. Do we have people at the back of church willing to help newcomers feel welcome and more comfortable? It isn't just at the back. How does the way we offer instructions to the people as we lead services? Do I/we assume that no- one new will darken the doors so everyone knows what is expected?

When we hand new people lots of materials at the door do we show them how they can be used? Thankfully, thanks to kind generosity, we have new hymn books and new service books. Other issues are how warm is the building and how comfortable is the seating? Do newcomers run the risk of sitting in a place where they might be moved on? The course goes onto look at the sound system. Can people hear the person leading the service/preaching/ giving notices? Is there a projector and screen for people to sing from or perhaps to use DVD clips to offer sermon illustrations? A screen can offer words of welcome and instructions to make people feel at ease.

Many other questions are raised in the course material. Do we have available toilets and are they well kept and looking cared for? Do we have baby change facilities and wheelchair access? Does the building offer places for private prayer and quiet devotional space? Do the windows, statues, communion table, pulpit, candles etc help us to engage?

3. Kitchen and social space

Once the service is over do we invite people to stay for refreshments? One person during our branding exercise spoke about being invited but not then being introduced to anyone so that it felt hard to talk. In one church the course information suggested that coffee was only offered to regulars! How clean is the kitchen space and the area where refreshments are offered? The content of the refreshments is mentioned. Do we offer pleasant coffee and biscuits that we would enjoy eating at home? Again, the suggestion from the course is that a budget should be set to offer free refreshments with food and drink that is of good quality

and fairly traded. The 'Back to Church' opportunities that we will have moving through September of this year through All Saints Day, All Souls Day, School services and carol services will offer many opportunities to welcome people. Of course, if we can create a Christmas Market as well that would add to our welcome and belonging opportunities.

4. Provision for people with needs

So many issues might come under this heading, but clearly hearing and poor vision would be two. Do we have a good sound system and large print copies of services and hymn books? Is wheelchair access helpful and are there language barriers etc? I will read out the full list at the course and we can discuss the issues together.

Of course, for some people even getting to church is challenging. To what extent are we able, particularly coming out of the pandemic, to offer lifts to people who can no longer drive? A large number of our people come from outside the parish.

Some excellent work has been taking place decorating some of our buildings and of course a massive floor project is taking place. Let us look closely though at the opportunities to be a church that welcomes and enables a sense of belonging. I think quite a number of the issues raised above we are aware of and do try to improve. Equally I guess many of us could play our part in contemplating and putting into place a few of the suggestions from the course.

RESOURCES THIS WEEK

Thursday 13 May

8.00pm Night Prayer for Ascension Day

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75976544021?pwd=Q1pJVtIpTytOdHg0VXhSRGxWRzIzZz09>

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziv

Psalm 47, Luke 24: 44-end and Ascension Hymn

Sunday 16 May

9.30am Eucharist in the Parish Centre

It will also be possible to watch on zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82847310425?pwd=VW1QK2xxYTQyNWg2bGN4Smt5b3VLUT09>

Meeting ID: 828 4731 0425

Passcode: 960719

11.00am Eucharist in the Parish Centre.

Monday 17 May 7.30pm Prayer Group on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85011600714?pwd=Y0x2VWpMQ3JFUStsQ0plbEFLOEQrQT09>

Meeting ID: 850 1160 0714

Passcode: 553120

This group, following the example of our successful 'Church on the Move' from a decade ago, focusses on an area of mission that we would like to pray for. If you have anyone you would like us to pray for please let Fr Jeremy know.

Wednesday 19 May
10.00am Eucharist in the Parish Centre

7.30pm Everybody Welcome Course (See Fr Jeremy's Introduction)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82056018434?pwd=MTRFeVVIVTQrWGtla2Y3Sm5VeEhXQT09>

Meeting ID: 820 5601 8434

Passcode: 586093

PRAYER INTENTIONS

Lord Jesus, as your disciples in the world today, we thank you that your word of truth, your prayer of power and your heart of love, continue to protect, inspire and unite us as we live out our faith, build up our relationships, and hold the world before you in prayer. AMEN.

Lord be the Ascended one in our Church. Where our vision can be small and our faith thin, remind us again of the towering beauty, reigning over all things. Give your Church throughout the land a vision of your glory that nothing on earth can compare, and nothing can tear us away from our faith. (A prayer of John Pritchard, former Bishop of Oxford)

As we pray begin the 'Everybody Welcome Course' we pray that we may discern your calling for each one of us Lord. We pray that we may be a church of welcome allowing people to free a sense of belonging within the community.

Christian Aid Prayer

Great God, who makes the sun to rise, and opens the heavens. Hear the cry of the people who sow in hope for rain, but reap only despair. Hear the cry of the people seeking shelter from the storm, their hopes and homes submerged. Hear the cry of the people when creation is hitting back, with rage and resistance. Give us hope, grant us salvation, give us a new relationship with creation with reverence to tend this gift from You and say once again of the earth and all you created. It is Good. Amen

We continue to hold within our prayers George Hutchison, Mandy Rogers, Danielle, Nick, Fr John, Sister Mary Philip, Roger Baldery, and Albert. We pray for Christine Pocock on the loss of her brother Tony and we pray for her sister-in-law, Eve who grieves the loss of her husband. We remember too Duleep and Dinali on the loss of their mother Neila.

We remember all the recently departed among them Jane Fostekew (sister of Canon Dean Fostekew, former curate of this parish), Neila De Silva and Tony. We remember all those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

From Charlie Mackesy The horse and the boy look out over water and watch two swans
'How do they look so together and perfect?' Asked the boy.
'There's a lot of frantic paddling going on beneath.' Said the horse.

May we all be blessed by God's love this week.

Fr Jeremy

Fr Jeremy's Sermon preached at All Saints on 9 May Sixth Sunday of Easter

Text: John 15: 9 – 17 Verse 12 'Love each other as I have loved you'

I watched one evening part of a programme called 'Home Truths'. It was presented by the former Arsenal and Crystal Palace footballer Ian Wright who revisited the house in South East London where he was brought up. The story told how Wright was subjected to abuse and bullying by his step-father. In a harrowing scene he described the furniture within the room of the house that they lived in. Wright turned towards a wall which he remembered having an orange coloured wallpaper and he touched the wall and told how he was forced to face it by his step-father. Wright described how on Saturday evenings his favourite program 'Match of the Day' would come on with the familiar music that has remained the same to the current day. For football fans like me and millions of others this was a highlight of the week as you watched some of the biggest stars of the day. Wright though was forced to keep his head towards the wall not able to view the football that he loved. He showed how he would try to turn his head towards the screen only for his step-father to force him to turn away.

The programme went on to show that Wright despite going on to become a wealthy man continues to live with those wounds from his childhood. The programme then continued to show Wright meeting other people who had suffered abuse at home and his conversations with health care professionals. Some of these people who had suffered (including Wright) had been told they should never have been born. As a young person growing up it's hard to imagine the hurt and pain caused by these comments. However, by showing his own vulnerability I think Wright is helping others come to terms with their feelings as they try to move forward in life.

A more positive story from our own community this week. I received a phone call from a lady who sought advice on how she could help a vulnerable neighbour. The good neighbour despite having a young family, a job and studying on Saturdays for a new career cooks three hot meals a week for the vulnerable person. She watches to see if the older person needs assistance as she tries to catch a bus or walk to her local shops. The neighbour wants to get more help with assisted living for her neighbour. The person who is receiving the support is someone who has given much of her life supporting others through community projects and Meals on wheels. I do not know if the carer is a Christian, but she did ask me to pray for the situation. I thanked her for the compassion and love she was showing.

The text from John's gospel continuing the story from last week of the true vine, the farmer and the branches continues this week as we are told to love our neighbour and produce fruit that will last. God has given us life, which is sustained by the vine (Jesus) and the sap (Holy Spirit) that helps us the branches to produce fruit. The text demonstrates that Jesus' love through the cross helps make the lover and the beloved more human. The love of the neighbour is a response to Jesus who first loved us. Catherine of Siena the mystic whose prayers led to action spoke of her dialogues with God. In one of the conversations with God in prayer she is told by God that she cannot love him as he loves her. His complete love cannot be offered back. Instead, she must do for her neighbours what she cannot do for God. This is love for one's neighbour without concern for thanks, or profit but rather consider the deed done for God.

The command to love by the one who has given all his love might be like a father or mother creating an environment where the child feels free to love in return. (The opposite of the experiences Ian Wright had). If a manager runs a company which values people and respects them the people will give value back to the company. The London Institute of Contemporary Christianity has shown how this might be viewed in practice.

Tom Wright in his commentary on John's gospel reminds us of George Orwell's '1984' where Big Brother is a domineering ruler who oppresses his subjects and at the same time orders them to love him. The hero (Brainwashed) loves Big Brother at the end but out of fear and the reader knows says Wright that he has ceased to be human.

If we are connected to the vine of love as the branches producing fruit that will last, we discover that Jesus wants us to be more human not less. As Catherine of Siena said, 'Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.' Jesus tells us that the fruit that will last out of love is where a single life can be changed because we have loved someone as Jesus loves us. Equally one single action made by us out of love can make the world a better place.

Bear Grylls in his devotional book 'Soul Fuel' writes that good relationships are at the heart of success. Nobody can achieve what they were created for without strong relationships at the centre of their life. You are not rich if you are a billionaire without friends, family, community, to love you. Grylls says that the team that helps him cope with being away from home, the fear of jumping out of a plane or working long hours through rain and cold, get through it because they know each others frailties and vulnerabilities. You love these people (writes Grylls) not because they are brilliant but because we don't have to hide the cracks and flaws and together share life's challenges.

We can however appear 'Sorted' in control writes Grylls and he feels that this is a problem within society. Being too sorted creates a distance between us. Without good honest relationships we can become anxious. We see the weaknesses in ourselves in the mirror and we can see the 'highlights' in others and we destroy self-worth. If we know God's love, we can be vulnerable and real and we can see God in other's vulnerability, and this can lead to acceptance. We protect, give help because we found acceptance first in the Almighty. Faith gives us a relationship with the God of love, forgiveness and kindness because we are rooted in the vine and nourished by the sap. Our church will be looking over the coming weeks through the Parish news and the study course how to become a welcoming community. What we learn may well shape the way we re-open with confidence All Saints for worship and mission in September of this year.

Perhaps most importantly we will help people to find a sense of belonging, a sense that they are loved by God and by those of us, who claim to know that they are loved by God.

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Worship for SUNDAY 16 MAY ASCENSION DAY

Sounds of Worship

Brian Graves

The Ascension marks the next big transition in Jesus's ministry. This where he transfers the responsibility of spreading his word and ministry to his disciples. First, he explains to them the scriptures and then he promises that they will be given the gift of the power of the holy spirit, of which we hear more next week.

In the gospel Jesus speaks of the fulfilment of the Law of Moses, the words of the prophets and psalms. We see these references occurring in the two hymns I have chosen. The first is "All hail the power of Jesu's name" AM 223 words by Edward Perronet (1726 – 1792) (and others) set to the tune Miles Lane by William Shrubsole (1759 – 1806) harmonised by John Bacchus Dykes (1823 – 1876).

This hymn was first published with 8 verses and over the years, has been altered in many ways but the version below is as close as possible to the original. The hymn references the creation story of genesis in

verse 2, the crucifixion in verse 3, the old testament fall in verse 4 (note this verse is missing on the recording), redemption of sin through the crucifixion in verse 5 and a verse of praise in verse 6. The hymn was first published in full in *The Gospel Magazine* (April 1780), in eight verses, with the title '*On the Resurrection, the Lord is King*'. Before that, the opening verse had appeared anonymously in the same magazine (November 1779) together with a tune, now known as Miles Lane.

The fervent enthusiasm of this text is well suited to *The Gospel Magazine* which was an important focus of the Evangelical Revival, and it certainly accords with what is known of Perronet's impetuous nature. The tune, Miles Lane, was written at Canterbury and later given the name by Stephen Addington, minister of Miles Lane chapel in London. It contains a double repetition of the words 'Crown him' in line 4. Vaughan Williams thought it 'a superb tune', and recalled that Elgar had described it as 'the finest in English hymnody'¹

1. All hail the power of Jesu's name;
let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem
to crown him, crown him, crown him
crown him Lord of all.
2. Crown him, ye morning stars of light,
who fixed this floating ball;
now hail the strength of Israel's might,
and crown him, crown him, crown him
and crown him Lord of all.
3. Crown him, ye martyrs of your God
who from his altar call;
praise him whose way of pain ye trod
and crown him, crown him, crown him
and crown him Lord of all.
4. Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,
ye ransomed of the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him, crown him, crown him
and crown him Lord of all.
5. Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
the wormwood and the gall,
go spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him, crown him, crown him
and crown him Lord of all.
6. Let every tribe, and every tongue
To him their hearts enthrall,
Lift high the universal song,
and crown him, crown him, crown him
and crown him Lord of all.

All hail the power of Jesu's name AM 223 Miles Lane (5 verses)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmxCpX28-Gc>

The second hymn is “Alleluia, sing to Jesus!” AM 422 words by William Chatterton Dix (1837 – 1898) set to Hyfrydol a melody by Rowland Huw Prichard (1811 – 1887).

This hymn is modelled on the Alleluia hymns of ancient liturgies and breviaries, but is far more than a simple hymn of triumph. Interwoven with the cries of acclamation which begin the first and third lines of each verse are lines expressing the significance of the Redemption, the Ascension, the power of faith and the Eucharist. Specific biblical sources include Mark 16:19 and Luke 24:49-53 (today’s gospel reading), which refer to the Ascension, Hebrews 3-9, which discusses Christ as High Priest, and Revelation 4:6-11 and 5:9, which relate to the worshippers around the throne and the redemption by Christ’s blood. Christ’s promise to remain with his followers comes from Matthew 28:20 and the phrase ‘living bread’ is from John 6:50-51. The hymn is a powerful celebration of the Redemption and is particularly suitable for Eucharistic and Ascension-tide services.

Written in 1866 and first published in the author’s *Altar Songs, Verses on the Holy Eucharist* (1867), with the title ‘*Redemption by the Precious Blood*’. It was included in the Appendix (1868) to the First Edition of *Hymns Ancient & Modern*. It was set to that tune Hyfrydol in *English Hymnal* in 1906.²

Unusually, for a prolific Victorian hymnwriter, Dix was not a member of the clergy. His father was a surgeon with literary interests, whose publications included a life of the poet Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), after whom he named his son. William attended Bristol Grammar School: after a commercial training, he became the manager of a marine insurance firm in Glasgow. On retirement, he returned to south west England, where he lived at Cheddar.

A committed high church Anglican, Dix was a prolific writer of hymns and devotional works. Hymns by Dix appeared in the St Raphael’s hymn book, *Hymns for the Services of the Church, and for Private Devotion*. Other collections of hymns and poetry by Dix included *Altar Songs, Verses on the Holy Eucharist* (1867), which, as we have seen is where ‘Alleluia! sing to Jesus’ was first published; *A Vision of All Saints* (1871); and *Seekers of a City* (1878).³

In the same way that Dix was not a member of the clergy, Rowland Huw Prichard was not a professional musician. Prichard worked at Bala as a weaver for most of his life but moved in 1880 to Holywell in Flintshire to a post with the Welsh Flannel Manufacturing Company, where he remained. He is said to have written Hyfrydol when he was twenty. He published it in *Cyfaill y Cantorion* (‘The Singers’ Friend’) in 1844, a collection for the use of Sunday Schools. Hyfrydol means, ‘cheerful’ or ‘melodious’ and was set for three voices, there being still at that time those who thought that there was something improper in four-part singing.

Hyfrydol appears to have been published in an English book first in the *Wesleyan Methodist Hymn Book* (1904) but was brought to wider attention by its inclusion in *English Hymnal* (1906), where, in a reharmonised version, Vaughan Williams set it to ‘Alleluia, sing to Jesus’.⁴

1. Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
His the sceptre, his the throne;
alleluia! his the triumph,
his the victory alone:
hark, the songs of peaceful Sion
thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation
hath redeemed us by his blood.

2. Alleluia, not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
alleluia! he is near us,
faith believes, nor questions how:
though the cloud from sight received him
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise,
'I am with you evermore'?
3. Alleluia, bread of angels,
thou on earth our food, our stay;
alleluia, here the sinful
flee to thee from day to day:
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
earth's Redeemer, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.
4. Alleluia, King eternal,
you the Lord of lords we own;
alleluia! born of Mary,
earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne:
thou within the veil have entered,
robed in flesh, our great High Priest;
thou on earth both Priest and Victim
in the eucharistic feast.

Alleluia, sing to Jesus! AM 422 Hyfrydol <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJDWFYIkBns>

- 1 JRW. "All hail the power of Jesu's name." The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology. Canterbury Press. Web. 17 Apr. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/a/all-hail-the-power-of-jesu's-name>>.
- 2 Sheila Doyle. "Alleluia! sing to Jesus." The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology. Canterbury Press. Web. 17 Apr. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/a/alleluia!-sing-to-jesus>>.
- 3 Sheila Doyle. "William Chatterton Dix." The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology. Canterbury Press. Web. 17 Apr. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/w/william-chatterton-dix>>.
- 4 Alan Luff. "Rowland Huw Prichard." The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology. Canterbury Press. Web. 17 Apr. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/r/rowland-huw-prichard>>.

COLLECT

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we in heart and mind may also ascend and with him continually dwell; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God, now and for ever. Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 1: 1 – 11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This,' he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days

from now.’ So when they 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.’

GOSPEL Luke 24: 44 — 53

Jesus said to the disciples, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you – that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

A MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS & THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE VIA ZOOM AT 7.30pm on MONDAY 24 MAY 2021

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89893013369?pwd=ZU5ja2NrNmpxMjQ5eVFOemRPR2Rydz09>

Meeting ID: 898 9301 3369

Passcode: 242825

The Agenda, the Minutes of the 2020 Meeting and the Church Annual Report (different to the Report & Accounts – this details the activities of church and associated organisations) are attached to this edition of the Parish News.

The Electoral Roll is now closed until after the APCM.



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 9 – 16 MAY

300,000 STEPS x 2

Rev David Downing has taken up the challenge to take 300,000 steps to raise money for Christian Aid. He would be very grateful for sponsorship for this challenge; the money raised will go to help make sure people who are suffering the most from climate change are getting the support they need through Christian Aid.

You can contact Rev David directly at revmandm@gmail.com or sponsor him directly at

www.facebook.com/donate/137225505049642/

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Cox Green has also taken up the challenge so if you would prefer to sponsor the Revd Joan Hicks, some of her family and one of her Churchwardens then

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/chogs-300000?channel=status> is the link. This doesn't offer you the opportunity to send a personal message but if you like you can email revjhicks@gmail.com

PSALMATHON SUNDAY 16 MAY

Thank you everyone who has already registered to take part; almost 60 readers have been lined up but another 20 or so would be appreciated. If you would like to take part, please go to [The Great Christian Aid Psalmathon Tickets, Sun 16 May 2021 at 12:00 | Eventbrite](#) and register. If you have friends or family who are interested please encourage them to join in too.

There is a £5 registration fee and you will be asked to specify a one hour slot during which you will get your turn. You will be encouraged to get sponsorship for your reading but it's not essential that you find sponsors, the organisers would love to have you as readers anyway.

There have been one or two enquiries about when the readings etc. will be allocated. The booking site is open right up to midnight this coming Friday and details of which passage you will be reading, and the Zoom code to join the call, will be confirmed by lunchtime on Saturday.

If you have any other questions, or wish to change the time slot you have booked, please email psalmathon2021@gmail.com

QUENCH CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOP HAS REOPENED: Monday to Saturday 11.00am – 4.00pm

Please support them if you can; they have an excellent selection of cards and gifts for all occasions as well as the books.

WAMCF WOMEN'S GROUP Monday 24 May 7.30pm on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84369552849?pwd=cW5PV0hiTU9iVFBVYVpmSjQ0UmJnUT09>

Meeting ID: 843 6955 2849

Passcode: 272010

Reflecting on 40 years of WAMCF so come with your memories – however recent or distant.

We will also introduce a project to create a wall hanging between us so you may like to have pen and paper to jot down your ideas.

FOODSHARE NEEDS are in the Maidenhead Advertiser each week.

REFLECTION by Greg Hurst

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus talks of how some seeds fail to grow. Some fall by the wayside and are devoured by fowls. Some fall upon stony places where the earth has no deepness. When the sun was up they were scorched and withered away.

I like to think our garden has good ground. Seeds sown in our earth should bring forth fruit.

For most of the spring, however, little has grown in the garden owing to lack of rain. In what ought to be the busiest time of the year outdoors, I found not much to do in the garden other than water the shrubs and flower beds. I ran the mower over the lawn but barely collected any grass clippings. I pulled up the odd weed. That was about it.

Last weekend it all changed. After a week of heavy rain I watched the garden take on a verdant hue and explode into life. Another torrential downpour on Saturday meant all my gardening jobs had to be done on Sunday. My first job was to trim the hedge. After a few steps outside, however, my eye fell on a flower bed. Just as the sower found in the parable, my bulbs risked being choked although in our case by weeds, not thorns. I stopped to dig them out. And so it went on. The hedge was overgrown. The grass was long. My

gardening took up the entire day. I was exhausted. But it was a reminder of the power of nature, the theme of the parable.