



Chepstow Parish Magazine

LENT 2021

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."
So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.
And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.



Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm.

(Psalm 20 vs 7-8)



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PARISH INFORMATION
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Curate	The Revd Lea Ryder	
Lay Readers:	Joyce Amphlett	626445
	John Gale	629753
Lay Eucharistic Ministers:	Susan Amos, Catherine Higgs, Kevin Higgs, Noreen Shaw	
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Alpha Coordinator	Catherine Higgs	624026
Director of Music	Brian Ellam	
Verger, St Christopher's	Valmai Pegg	626340
Bell ringers	Jack Hoskins	408328
Editor	Lorraine Sampson 01633 961887 lorraineesampson@gmail.com	
Distribution	Lorraine Sampson	

Sunday Morning Worship

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WHEN RESUMED

CHURCH SERVICES - ALTERNATIVE SUNDAYS

Services at St. Mary's Priory & Parish Church

Sundays (First and Third Sundays)

8.00.am. Holy Eucharist (1984 prayer book)

11.00.am. The Parish Eucharist (2004 prayer book)

(On the 4th Sunday of the month the Parish music group leads All-age Family Worship at the Parish Eucharist)

(When there is a 5th Sunday we use the 1984 Prayer Book)

6.30.pm. (2nd Sunday) A service of Taize Prayer & music

Weekdays

Wednesdays **10.00.am.** Holy Eucharist & address
Celebrations on Holy Days as announced in notice sheets

Services at St. Christopher's Church, Bulwark

Sundays (Second and fourth Sundays)

9.30. am. Morning Worship & Holy Communion

Weekdays

Fridays **10.00.am.** Holy Communion & address

Every Monday—Vicar's rest day

CARE HOME SERVICE—third Thursday of month at 11.15am at
Severn View Residential Home. Contact: Noreen Tel: 624 038.

House Groups

Contact: Noreen Tel: 624 038



WEEK OF GUIDED PRAYER 21st-27th March 2021

Would you like to make more time to pray, but aren't sure where to start? Or would you like to give your prayer a renewed focus for a week in Lent? Would you like a little help along the way? Then the ***Week of Guided Prayer*** online is for you.

Leading into Holy Week this ***Week of Guided Prayer*** is individually tailored to your experience. It is suitable for everybody - beginners in prayer, those who want to renew their prayer-life and those who are experienced in prayer. You will use Bible passages, and other material, as a basis for prayer and meditation, with a guide alongside you to suggest what you might pray with and to hear how it went.

The ***Week of Guided Prayer*** starts with an introductory meeting on Zoom for all the participants and guides. We will match you with a guide who will arrange to meet with you on Zoom each day, Monday to Friday, at a time that works for both of you. These sessions usually last 20-30 minutes and we suggest that you make 20-30 minutes available for the prayer itself. The retreat ends with a closing session online.

Register your place

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/137910888179>

Important: Please book as soon as possible so that we can match you with an appropriate guide.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Rev Jane Butler: jane.upperislwyn@yahoo.com (01495 231241).



LENT COURSE 2021

DYING TO LIVE

Introduction by The Rt Revd Cherry Vann

People are drawn to following Jesus in all manner of ways and at different

points in our lives. Each of us has a story to tell that is unique. What is common to all of us, however, is that we never stop learning what it means to be a disciple. When the first disciples responded to Jesus's call to 'follow me', it was only the beginning of their relationship with him. Over the years that followed, both before and perhaps particularly after his crucifixion and resurrection, they continued to grow in their understanding of who Jesus was and what the implications of that were for the way they lived their lives. It is no different for us today. Study groups are a wonderful way of exploring our faith and discipleship in the company of others. We learn and grow together as we discuss our thoughts and perspectives on the stories of Jesus and as we each share our experiences of the ways in which God has worked in our lives. Listening to others can be encouraging and inspiring. Telling our own story can be empowering and affirming. We can find hope and strength together as we realise that we are not alone. Others are journeying with us and God is drawing us all into a deeper relationship with him. The season of Lent calls us to reflect on Jesus's invitation to take up our cross and follow him. To do this in the company of other Christian pilgrims can be particularly enriching. It may require a degree of courage, even sacrifice, on our part as well as trust in the One who is drawing us ever deeper into his love. Learning to die to ourselves in order to find the new life that Jesus offers is never going to be easy. But my own experience of both leading such groups and participating in them is that they can change and transform us. I am delighted to commend this home-grown course, 'Dying to Live' as a diocesan resource for this Lent and am immensely grateful to the clergy who have written each of the weekly sessions. The themes of Lamentation, Forgiveness, Prayer, Generosity, Solidarity and Calling will help us to unpack and explore together six different aspects of being a disciple of Jesus and so, more faithfully, follow the One who calls us. My hope and prayer is that in engaging with these themes in the company of others we will, as a Church and as individuals, become more Christ-like, live out the gospel more faithfully and be heralds of the Kingdom of God in the communities of our diocese and beyond. For more information contact the Vicar or <https://monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk/>

FABRIC ISSUES—FEBRUARY 2021

Parishioners may be interested in ongoing fabric issues. The following is a quick summary of where we are with various issues.

Environment /energy conservation---Following a report from Sustainable Communities Wales, we are considering the installation of electricity generating solar panels on the flat roof areas at St Mary's and in addition the replacement of the present outdated and uneconomic boiler. We have been in touch with a Parish at Whittington, Gloucestershire who have just been awarded eco friendly status, to see what progress they have made and how, and reporting to the PCC.

Lighting in Church Walk - We have been approached by the Council about improvements to lighting in the Walk and have asked for their proposals so that we can be sure the plans meet with our approval, and indeed if possible, light up the north side of the church!!

Tower steps---the repairs to the spiral staircase have not yet been progressed. We will be seeking various means of financial support as the costs are in excess of £26,000,

Damage to Church railings---last November, as most parishioner will know, a lorry crashed into the cemetery boundary wall at the bottom of Church Walk. Although hazard tape has been put in place, we understand by the Council, we have been trying to find out who should undertake repairs especially to the railings. To date we still await news from the Diocese.

Car park at St Mary's---The PCC will be considering a plan to employ a local Architect to prepare proposals for the long awaited parking facility. The plans will need to be eco friendly and this will open the way for grant aid applications to be made. Covid 19 restrictions have reduced the traffic in the churchyard this winter so that the area has not been damaged as much as in recent years..

Memorial Garden. It is hoped that a local Supermarket can provide some financial support to enable improvements to be made to the memorial garden area. Watch this space!!

At present there are no fabric concerns at St Christopher's although we are keeping a watchful eye on the repairs to the roof at the rear of the church.

All projects will need to be supported with a financial plan due to reduced income over the last 12 months and the effect of the Covid restrictions.

John Gale for Fabric Group

Selfish Genes – in Practice

by Tony Utting

From time to time in the course of speaking or writing, I contrast the promptings of “our selfish genes” with the considered outlook of “our Spiritual Selves,” and suggest that we need to be aware of both these influential urgings if we are to lead basically decent lives. I usually follow this up with the 'Golden Commandment' – ie Matthew 22.37 – “ 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.' ” This essentially represents Christianity in a nutshell – or perhaps I should write 'Soundbite' in these tapparatussised days.

Unfortunately not everyone who hears a reference to 'selfish genes' understands what I am talking about. The Oxford English Dictionary explains, succinctly: - “**gene**. A unit of heredity which is transferred from a parent to offspring and is held to determine some characteristic of the offspring; in particular, a distinct sequence of DNA forming part of the chromosome.” In short my own genes required that, once born, I should be taller than average, with a fair skin, blond-brown hair, grey eyes which would develop to become short-sighted, and so on. Some of these characteristics I inherited from each parent and have, in turn, passed on to my children, mixed with various attributes from my wife's genes. This results in their being individuals in their own right, and not exact copies of one or other parent.

Basically this holds good for all humanity, although variations are known. These are held to occur in cell-division during gestation, and it is now also thought that 'epigenetics' – ie the degree of what is termed the 'expression' of a gene at this stage, can probably pass on a consciously chosen or socially developed parental characteristic to the child. Epigenetics are currently contentious territory, for reasons of ideology rather than properly-done science, because an (unproven) dogmatic idea that 'environment is all' was voiced by a certain Trofim Denisovich Lysenko, one of Stalin's political house-pets, who arranged the disgrace – or death – of all geneticists who denied that the practices of Communism would breed a race of superhumans in one generation flat. Hitler was busy along much the same lines at the time, and currently various dictators still justify social engineering by their regimes to attempt 'breeding' their ideal – by command – super-citizen.

Continued ...

Dogmas such as Lysenko's go against the whole evolutionary argument of Darwin, and the mechanics for its processes discovered and refined by (Abbot) Gregor Mendel. Genes are rightly viewed as individualistic, and therefore demonstrably selfish, because all life on Earth, both animal and vegetable, appears to arrange its reproductive methods to favour offspring with the highest chance of surviving, and thus passing on their parental genes, in any prevailing environment. Thus bind-weed will climb, smother, and choke a bean plant, in order to obtain the bean's share of sunlight and nutrients in addition to those available to it from its own roots and stem. Likewise the biggest, noisiest, fiercest stag will seek to collect a larger harem than any other stag on its hill, and in this way mate with as many hinds as possible, thereby ensuring that its own genes will be in the majority of fawns dropped that year. Amongst some carnivores an 'Alpha female' will seek to kill all juveniles born to her rivals, once she herself has gained the favour of the 'Alpha male'. These are straightforward examples of the 'Selfish Gene' in action. It seeks its own advantage, regardless! Our own make-up is predisposed to behave the same way, and the considered appraisal of our plans and actions by our uniquely large and super-complex brains is necessary for compromises in the interests of social harmony. Put simply, we know semi-instinctively that a 'team spirit' approach to life pays off better, long-term, than a free-for-all, or a tyranny. We are definitely conscious of a difference between what we want to do, and what we rationally know that we ought to do, however.

So was St. Paul. Throughout Chapter 7 of his letter to the Romans he grapples with 'sin' in contrast to 'the new way of the Spirit', as he termed these by his Judaic scholarly outlook. "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have a desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out... So I find this law at work: when I want to do good, evil is right there with me. Now, if I do what I do not want to do...it is the sin living in me that does it." And this is essentially our human predicament. St. Augustine of Hippo, who has just seen Rome fall and be sacked by the Goths (AD 410) views the moral climate in terms we instantly recognise as applicable our own cultural conditions;

"That which animates society is the love of self to the point of contempt for God. That which animates divine society is the love of God to the point of contempt for self. The one prides itself on itself, - the pride of the other is in the Lord. The one seeks for glory from men, the other counts its consciousness of God its greatest glory.....These desires may therefore respectively be described as 'love' and 'greed'. The one is holy, the other foul; the one social, the other selfish; the one thinks of the common advantage for the sake of higher association, the other reduces even the

common good to a possession of its own for the sake of selfish ascendancy; the one is subject to God, the other God's rival; the one is peaceful, the other turbulent; the one pacific, the other factious; the one prefers the truth to the praises of the foolish, the other is greedy for praise on any terms; the one is friendly, the other envious; the one desires the same for his neighbour as himself, the other subjects his neighbour to himself; the one governs his neighbour in his neighbour's interest, the other governs in his own." Is not Augustine describing demonstrable facets of human nature....**our** nature?

The past twelve months have seen us all threatened by an invisible assassin, Covid19. Death can come by direct person-to-person contact infection, by contact with our surroundings upon which the virus may be lodging, or by air-borne 'spores'. We cannot see it, smell it, taste it, hear it, or feel it – but it could be anywhere around us. One might have thought that common sense would have urged everyone to have taken all sensible precautions to clean up our surroundings to reduce risk of infection by contact, and to have protected our fellow creatures by our socially responsible behaviour ie “Hands, face, space.” However, the term “Covidiot” has been coined to encapsulate the selfish, heedless, and overall irresponsible behaviour of a significant number of us who have simply abandoned morality, both social and personal. The Selfish Genes have triumphed, reassured by the 'social safety net' spread by The Ubiquitous They – ie, those acting sensibly – whom Covidiot regard as the executors of 'rights' - e.g. THEY run the hospitals, THEY keep the water flowing and drains functioning, THEY deliver electricity / gas supplies, THEY work the IT without which we panic, THEY keep the shops stocked... and so on. And WE have a HUMAN RIGHT to do just as WE please, because THEY will clean up after us... Indeed?

What is worse, any assertive stance taken to speak plainly of these attitudes attracts a 'PC' chorus of “But you MUSTN'T call a spade a spade!!! People who live in high-rise flats probably don't have any garden, so to speak of spades might UPSET them!!! They will feel rejected, diminished, degraded, marginalised, stigmatised, TRAUMATISED, by any elitist references to spades. You must not be JUDGEMENTAL about spadeless VICTIMS who are misunderstood, DISADVANTAGED, ... and so on, value-less 'PC' in full cry. For 'PC' anything goes, and everything must be excused, provided the perpetrators of a social evil can be paraded by 'PC' as innocent PC-approved VICTIMS. ... Look back at St Augustine's reflection that, “That which animates secular society is the love of self to the point of contempt for God.”

So how often, where, and in what form does the Church speak out against the PC-backed Covidiot types among us? Would its utterances come as a relief to most people? If not, why not?

Logic from uncluttered minds



One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?' Her mother replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.' The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Mummy, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?'



The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture. 'Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer,' or 'That's Michael, He's a doctor.' A small voice at the back of the room rang out, 'And there's the teacher, she's dead.'



A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, 'Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face.' 'Yes,' the class said. 'Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary positions the blood doesn't run into my feet?'

A little fellow shouted, 'Cause your feet ain't empty.'



The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note and posted on the apple tray: 'Take only ONE. God is watching.'

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples....'

Five money saving tips for a pre-spring clean

With many of us continuing to work from home more often, it's important for our health, wellbeing and productivity that the space around us is both clean and clutter-free. While the days are short and the weather's still cool, February is a great time for a spot of pre-spring cleaning. Here are some easy and effective ways to cut costs.

Buy in bulk

Although it may seem more expensive at first, it's better to buy cleaning products in bulk rather than making smaller purchases every month. This should save you money in the long run and it's better for the environment too, which is more important than ever. When you're in the supermarket, remember to compare the 'price per kilogram/100g' to make sure you're getting the most product for your money.

Make your own spray cleaner

It's really easy to make your own multi-surface cleaner out of things you may already have in the cupboard at home. Simply mix together 60ml of white vinegar, one tablespoon of baking powder, one litre of hot water and the juice of half a lemon. Pour it into an empty spray bottle and away you go!

Fashion your own cleaning cloths

Swap paper towels and disposable wipes for homemade options. Cut up unwanted old t-shirts to create cleaning cloths, or go wild with the scissors and fashion your own makeshift mop. Better for your pocket; better for the environment!

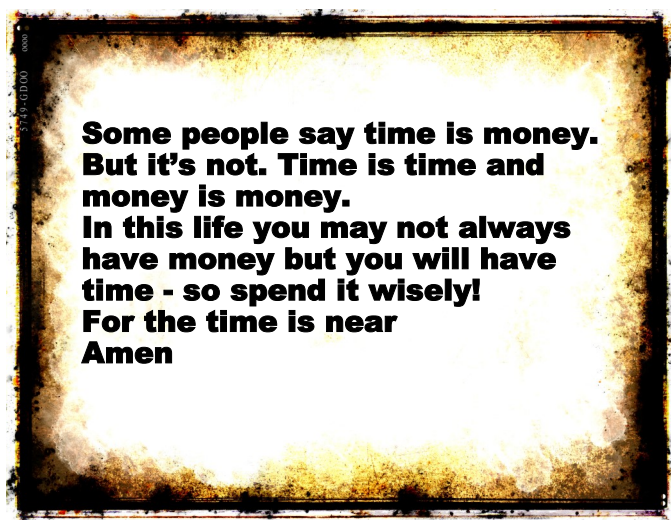
Clear out the clutter

A study from the Princeton Neuroscience Institute found that there's a link between the state of the space we live in and how productive we are. Our brains instinctively try to process everything around us, so the more clutter we see, the more our minds will be distracted. There are lots of local websites and apps for selling items you no longer need, so you might even make some money. You could also try your hand at upcycling old clothes or furniture for a refresh, which will save you spending money on new stuff too.

Spend less when redecorating

If you've got the urge to redecorate, first try rearranging the furniture. This could help to give your room a new lease of life for free. If you do decide to go full-on Laurence Llewellyn-Bowen (kudos if you're old enough to know who he is!) then it's better to opt for good quality paint. It may cost more up-front, but you're likely to need fewer coats, meaning it will go further. Squeeze everything you can out of one pot of paint by choosing a colour that will work in different rooms. Neutral colours such as white and grey are timeless, and it's more cost effective to change up your décor from time to time than to repaint the whole room.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a UK charity with over 580 services across the country delivering debt counselling, money management, job clubs, life skills groups, and support for people breaking life-controlling dependencies. Visit capuk.org to find out more.





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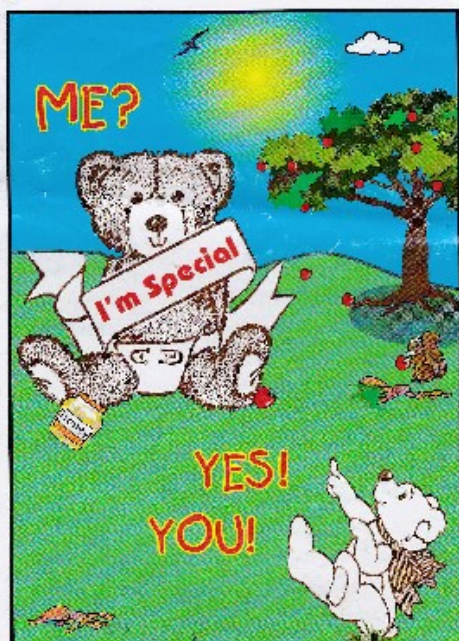
SEEN ON A FACE MASK



Many are those who, during this current crisis, are in fearful panic of the unknown, desperate for an answer. Many are they who fear death and so desperately need to know the hope that is found in Christ alone. Are we, the Church, giving the hopeless the hope of the Gospel of COVID?

Christ Our Victory In Death !





Regardless of how you feel, know that you have a God who loves you and who sees **you** as **special**. He as unique, you are, duplicate in the whole universe.



Sol!

Get out the trumpet!

Put on your ribbons and your bows!



God has proved His great love for you, by coming down to earth and dying for you on a cross. Jesus, the Son of God, did this to take away your sins, save you from a certain hell and give you the opportunity to spend eternity with Him in heaven.



After Jesus died for you on that cross, God Almighty raised Him from the dead, and now in heaven, Jesus is waiting for you to choose a wonderful eternity with Him.



This is not just some kind of pretty picture - this is part of God's supreme masterplan that **Jesus Christ** brought to fulfilment on a cross at Calvary.

In the Book of Romans in the Bible, it clearly states that if you **confess** with your mouth and **believe** in your heart that Jesus Christ died and that His Father, God Almighty, raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved**. (Romans 10.9)

I urge you to pray this prayer with all your heart:



Lord Jesus, I believe you died for me and that God Almighty raised you from the dead. Please forgive all my sins. I choose to turn away from them now and I ask you to come into my heart and life as my Lord and Saviour.



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The Gate of the Year – Minnie Louise Haskins (1875-1957)

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

“Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”

And he replied:

*“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”*

*So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the
night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the
lone East.*

Spoken by George VI in his Christmas 1939 broadcast to the Empire these words struck a chord with a country facing the uncertainty of war. They were the preamble to an obscure poem, *God Knows*, written in 1908, but nobody was able to identify the poet. Finally at midnight on Boxing Day the BBC announced that the author was Minnie Louise Haskins, a retired LSE academic. The poem was just a small part of a career which had encompassed working in India and the East End, industrial welfare and academia.

Minnie Haskins was born and educated near Bristol where she studied informally at University College, Bristol while undertaking voluntary work for the local Congregational Church. By 1903 she was working in Lambeth for the Springfield Hall Wesleyan Methodist mission and in 1907 she departed for Madras with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society to work in the Zenana mission to women.

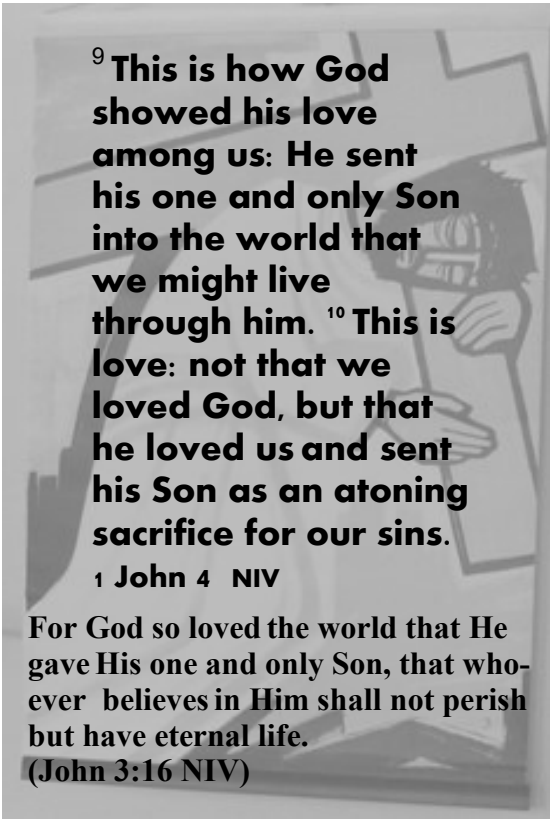
In 1912, to raise funds, Minnie Haskins published a small volume of poetry *The Desert* which included the poem *God Knows*, originally written in 1908, to which she added the famous preamble.

After her 1939 retirement Haskins returned to the School during the Second World War, finally retiring in 1944. She died in Kent and Sussex Hospital, Tunbridge Wells on 3 February 1957. Her words live on inscribed at the entrance to the George VI memorial chapel in St George's Chapel, Windsor, and in a window at the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy. The poem was read at the funeral of Elizabeth, the Queen Mother in 2002.

Author: Sue Donnelly is LSE's Archivist, specialising in the history of the School.

Posted In: Academic life | Hidden LSE | People | Women's history

Full story link: [The Gate of the Year by Minnie Louise Haskins | LSE History](#)



⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4 NIV

**For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
(John 3:16 NIV)**

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

³ The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” (MATTHEW 4:1-3 NIV version)

[NIV Notes: The devil, also called satan, tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden, and here he tempted Jesus in the desert. satan is a fallen angel. **he is real**, not symbolic, and is constantly fighting against those who follow and obey God. satan’s temptations are real and he is always trying to get us to live his way or our way rather than God’s way. Jesus will one day reign over all creation, but satan tried to force His hand and get Him to declare the Kingship prematurely. If Jesus had given in, His mission on earth—to die for our sins and give us the opportunity to have eternal life—would have been lost. When temptations seem especially strong or when you think you can rationalize giving in, consider whether satan may be trying to block God’s purposes for your life or for someone else’s life,}

on their web site.

Being in lockdown means that we have more time to stare out of the window or even venture into the garden weather allowing. Our wildlife need our help and the the Garden Centre have posted a few ideas



Wildlife World Butterfly & Insect Hotel

This stylish dew drop shaped Butterfly & Insect hotel provides a save haven for insects in your garden because invertebrates of all kinds for the basis of a healthy ecosystem so we should strive to protect them. The back of the insect house can be removed so you can easily add twigs or straw to encourage roosting. It is made from FSC timer with a woven

bamboo finish and the front and back are painted blue for a lovely finish along with a natural manila cord for hanging. Hang close to flowering plants in a sheltered location away from prevailing wind. £16.99



Wildlife World Dewdrop Bee & Bug Hotel

Our new Dewdrop Bee & Bug hotel provides nesting tubes for solitary bees & shelter for other beneficial insects in your garden. Solitary bees are wonderful pollinators of fruit, veg and flowers in your garden and as they don't live in colonies or make honey they are non-aggressive and safe around pets and children. The Dewdrop Bee & Bug Hotel is made from FSC certified timber with a decorative woven bamboo finish around the sides of the Dewdrop. The centre contains bamboo nesting tubes & a pretty aqua blue drilled log ideal for solitary bee nesting. The paint may be topped up with a water-based shade to maintain appearance. No chemicals have been used in the construction of this habitat.

The Dewdrop Butterfly/Insect habitat should be hung in a sheltered sunny position, preferably catching some early morning sun which will warm the emerging adult bees when they hatch out in Spring time .£17.99

Continued ...



Wildlife World Brushwood Robin Nester

Developed in conjunction with TV's naturalist and wildlife cameraman Simon King, using his many years of knowledge watching and photographing wildlife.

The design principle is that Robins prefer an open style nest box with easy access, but also like to be concealed from the prying eyes of predators. The entrance is open, but the nest

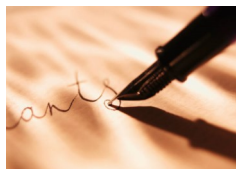
space is both concealed behind the side wall and covered by the roof.

Robins love to nest in sheds with 24/7 access or in a porches or on shelves in outbuildings or similar. The nester is lightweight and be wired into a hedge or ivy or attached to a wall using the supplied spare loop of fixing wire. The base of the brushwood nester has a rattan landing platform with a low dividing wall separating the nesting or roosting space.

The nester is also suitable for other bird species such as wagtails and spotted flycatchers which prefer the same style of open-fronted nester.

£9.49





From the Editor's Desk

I hope you were able to have some form of family Christmas despite the lockdown. I was fortunate to be with my daughter and family. However, I know of people who were going to visit family many miles away, only to have their plans cancelled at the last moment. This just added even more misery to the lockdown, having to spend Christmas on their own. My heart goes out to you if you were one of those unfortunate people.

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the deaths of two of our loyal parishioners during January. Edgar Jones who died on Saturday 30 January and Sylvia Andrews who died Sunday 31 January. Edgar was our faithful organist at St Christopher's Church for many years. They both will be greatly missed by their families, and by their Church family.

The funeral of Ken Hill, took place on Monday 1 February. Ken was the husband of Nora Hill, who was the vicar of St Michael and all Angels at Tintern. A procession of family and friends walked from his home at Warwick Close behind the hearse to Ken's final resting place in the Chepstow Cemetery. Ken was at one time in the Grenadier Guards. Our sincere sympathy goes to Nora and family. He will be greatly missed.

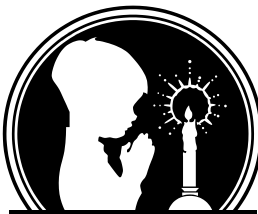


So a very sad start to the New Year. Hopefully the vaccines will give us all a ray of hope. Let us give thanks to our Heavenly Father for giving knowledge to the scientists for developing the vaccines, and pray they also will be effective for all strains of the virus. .Amen.

I have been blessed that I have access to Zoom on the internet. This has meant I am able to join in with Church services and meetings all over the World. How wonderful. I currently join to Zoom Prayer and Bible study meetings on which people from New Zealand, Kenya and Canada join in. The gentleman from Kenya is a pastor who runs an orphanage for 23 children on a very limited income in a remote area. His prayers are so meaningful, bearing in mind that his culture is very different to our comfortable western style of living. I feel quite humble, especially at Christmas when I compared all the presents my grandchildren had to what the orphanage children had. Bu they looked so happy.

I was rather touched that this year Holocaust Memorial Day was remembered in this nation, and I guess in many other nations, with a candle being lit by people in their homes, to honour those who horrendously lost their lives during the second world war. It was also an opportunity - for Christians, especially - to show their love and appreciation to God for the Nation who gave us the glorious Gospel, and our most precious Jesus. I was also shocked to learn that anti-Semitism is as rife today as it was in the 1930s!

I am looking forward to the day when we can meet our friends and loved ones again for meals and coffees and to have our hair cut. I expect you all are. But patience is the name of the game at the moment. So take care, and I will leave you with the beautiful prayer sent to me by the Pastor in Kissi, Kenya.



Our dear Lord God,
We come to you today for Your love overcomes all spiritual, physical and emotional attacks.
We fall at Your feet Lord, weary from the battles we are facing now.

Please forgive us for trying to get through our days on our own strength.

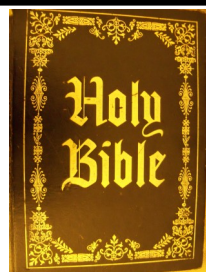
We lift our burdens up to You, knowing that we can not face them on our own.

Please fill us with Your strength and courage now and forever.

Thank you for loving us Great Lord.

In Your Name we believe.

Amen.



Jesus said "I will build my church and the gates of hades will not prevail against it " They can ban the Bible in book stores, hotels, in the churches, in the schools and colleges and even in the home but they can't ban it in the heart of believers where it dwells richly!

The Word of God - Learn it - Love it - Live it!!
To God be the glory

Dear God,

**Please untie the knots that are in our minds,
hearts and our lives.**

**Remove the have nots, cannots and the do
nots.**

**Erase the will nots, may nots, might nots that
may find a home in our hearts.**

**Release us from the could nots, would nots
and should nots that could obstruct our lives.**

**And most of all, Dear God, we ask that you
remove from our minds, our hearts and our
lives all of the "Am nots" that we have allowed
to hold us back.**

**Especially the thought that we are not good
enough. Amen.**



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