

PARISH NEWS



JUNE 2020

You do not need to know
precisely what is happening,
or exactly where it is all going.
What you need is to recognize the
possibilities and challenges offered
by the present moment,
and to embrace them with
courage, faith and hope.

Thomas Merton [Father Louis], 1915 - 1968

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SAVIOUR, TYNEMOUTH
www.holysaviours.org.uk



Coronavirus COVID19

Following advice from the Archbishops

- **all public worship has been cancelled until further notice**
- **video services will be available on Sundays on the church website [www.holysaviours.org.uk]**
- **we are also holding social Zoom meetings from time to time – see the website for details**
- **the church is closed until further notice**
- **if you can, join together at noon each in private prayer at home – set your phone or tablet to remind you**
- **all meetings have been cancelled or postponed**
- **the Parish Office is closed until further notice and Stuart Crozier, Parish Administrator, is on furlough**
- **the Bible Study Group materials can be downloaded from www.holysaviours.org.uk to follow at home**
- **please check www.holysaviours.org.uk for further updates as the situation develops**
- **If you know of anyone who needs practical or social support, please contact the Vicar, Steve Dixon - 0191 697 4562 / 07729 393 580**
- **please observe all government advice on travel, visiting, social distancing and hygiene**



THE VICAR WRITES.....

With all the difficulties which we are facing during the pandemic, I thought, this month, that I would find a subject to lighten the mood a little. I've often been struck by the sombre tone in which the Bible is read in church. It is absolutely right that we should show the utmost respect and reverence to the living word of God, but we can easily fail to recognise some of the more humorous moments recorded in the scriptures. The pages of the Bible do not usually present us with 'laugh out loud' one-liners, but there is a subtle, ironic and

sometimes melancholic humour to be discovered. One might describe it as typical Jewish humour which draws us along a narrative to a punch-line where pompous attitudes are popped or unjust systems lambasted.

Over the last few days the readings for Morning Prayer have included the wonderful tale of Balaam and Balak (*Numbers chapter 22*). King Balak of Moab is worried by the presence of the Israelites who are about to end their exodus and march into his territory, so he calls on the prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites. When Balaam sets out to visit Balak his path is blocked by an angel. However, Balaam fails to see the angel and only his donkey sees it. The donkey refuses to go any further and Balaam becomes infuriated with it. Eventually, the donkey turns to his master and says, 'Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?' Rather than being astonished and silenced by an animal that can speak, Balaam replies to the donkey's question. Only then are Balaam's eyes opened and he can see the angel.

I also love the book of Jonah for its humour. Jonah, like so many of us, is reluctant to go outside his comfort zone and so he runs away from God and straight into trouble. Even though Jonah is thrown into the sea, he cannot escape from the assignment God has given him and he is rescued by a whale. Despite his life being spared, Jonah is incredibly grumpy throughout this saga and the discourse between him and God after Nineveh's reprieve is very amusing.

Some of the vilest characters in the Old Testament are portrayed in a satirical tone. Take King Ahab and the story of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21). Ahab is presented as a spoiled child, sulking when he doesn't get what he wants; 'He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and would not eat.' Not only that, but he comes across as hen pecked by the real power behind the throne, Queen Jezebel.

I am also convinced that some of Jesus' parables were also told by him almost as jokes with a punch-line. The parable of the widow and the judge where the judge is

eventually worn down by the widow's nagging must have been told as a humorous story (Luke 18:1-8). Perhaps the generations of Biblical translators thought it vulgar to suggest that Jesus was in any way a comedian? Yet it's difficult to miss in any translation the irony of the passage in John's Gospel where Jesus gifts sight to a man born blind (John 9). The subsequent interrogation by the Pharisees has a distinctly satirical edge where the simple common sense of the healed man and his parents reveals the ignorance of the 'wise' theologians.

These are just a few of many subtly humorous biblical texts. So what can we learn from them? I would suggest that if there is humour in the Bible, humour must be a Godly attribute, and is evidenced in our love of humour as creatures made in God's image. Humour, used with care and imagination, can really bring home the truth of a situation in a form which allows us to laugh at our own failings and move on. Provided that we are laughing with rather than at someone, humour is a gift of God to help us find relief from stressful situations and discover deeper meaning.

I hope that in the difficulties of our current situations we can find something to lighten our mood and to enjoy the wonderful act of laughter. I leave you with a non-coronavirus related one-liner by the Christian comic Milton Jones which you will realise appeals to me on two counts...'Some people see the church as a giant helicopter. They're scared to get too close in case they get sucked into the rotas.'

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve".

EDITORIAL

John Pearce writes: One of the problems which our media have, conspicuously, failed to solve during the past ten weeks has been to preserve the correctly rigid demarcation between fact and speculation, between reporting and opinion. It is easier to understand and hence forbear with the first failing than with the second. Broadcast and print journalism in our times is subject to its own version of C. Northcote Parkinson's Law, which stated that work expands to fill the time available in which to do it. News coverage, by the same token, fills air-time and column inches not necessarily because we need to know everything that is said and written, but rather because there is space to fill, air-time to occupy. Thus, if journalists have a hundred words' worth of facts, and a thousand words in which to write about them, they will fill the excess space with illustrations of the already obvious, with "case-studies" – often of dubious provenance – or, worse, with speculation. Quite apart from the fact that a news story padded out with speculation will lose most of its intended impact, this padding-out will also make room for inaccuracy or, in the worst cases, for downright falsehood. Thus it was that

early news stories about the possible origin of the coronavirus in a research laboratory in China moved from being mere suggestions, into grotesque and barmy fantasies about germ warfare, Bill Gates and international pharmaceuticals, or the spreading of COVID-19 through the agency of mobile telephone masts.

Worse than that, however, was the regularity with which journalists failed to observe the crucial distinction between fact and opinion. C P Scott, founder of the Manchester Guardian, said that *comment is free, but facts are sacred*, and it would have helped everyone a great deal if more news media had borne this crucial distinction in mind in recent months. As it was, one was led, more often, to reflect on the other truism about journalism, which is that in a war, the first casualty is often the truth.

Nowhere was this notion thrown into sharper focus than in the media feeding-frenzy prompted by the behaviour of the Prime Minister's special adviser, Mr Dominic Cummings. At a time when many people have undergone wrenchingly sad separations from their families in the most tragic of circumstances, his actions caused a national outrage rarely paralleled in my experience. Perhaps the most startling result of the controversy was this editorial comment: *"For the good of the government and the nation, Mr Cummings must resign. Or the Prime Minister must sack him. No ifs. No buts."* This, about the architect of Brexit, from perhaps Boris Johnson's biggest cheer-leader, the *Daily Mail*, was truly revolutionary stuff.

My own opinion of Mr Cummings's actions, like the opinion of the majority of the population, doesn't matter two straws. At the same time, it is worth looking into the sources of the indignation and anger they caused. Did he, in fact, break the rules? And, if he did, and large number of people thought that he did, why did the government feel able to ignore his doing so? Did they not see that his maintaining that he worked within the rules made people very angry? and that ministerial and prime ministerial support for him seems to have made them angrier? Has the intuitive understanding of the public mood on which he prides himself deserted him? Has he joined the ranks of the élite for whom he previously expressed such high-minded scorn? What does he make of the fury, contempt and anguish expressed by so many? Did he, does he, understand that he has made many people who kept the rules, often at great personal cost, feel as if he has made fools of them? What would he say to people who now feel that he has licensed them to flout the rules under which we are all supposed to be living? Along with these questions for Mr Cummings there is one which, many people may feel, our Prime Minister needs to answer. Knowing what we all know, aware of the disquiet and anger among his back-benchers, of the resignation of a minister who felt unable to justify Mr Cummings's actions to his constituents, and of a warning from the polls, why does Mr Johnson feel that his choice to ignore the matter is right?

And, before steam starts to come out of any readers' ears, perhaps I need to point out that the previous paragraph does not contain a single statement of opinion on my part, about either Mr Cummings or Mr Johnson. Rather, I have asked ten questions; and, as the late editor John Junor established many years ago, the asking of a question does not amount to the expression of an opinion.

What, though, has this to do with the point I made earlier about the confusion between fact and opinion which has bedevilled media coverage of recent events? Simply this: that the media have, in recent years, failed to persist in their duty to penetrate the thicket of public relations and spin which attends most areas of our political process, and to get at the truth. A politician sits in a tv studio and simply refuses to stop talking, so that in order to ask a question the interviewer has to interrupt. The politician can then claim that the interviewer's interruption implies media bias¹. When this simple lie is not called out, then the media lose credibility. It is obvious that in a democracy we get the governments we deserve; but equally, in a democracy, the media have a duty to hold those governments to account. Every time they fail to do so, the boundary between fact and opinion is blurred a little more, and our nation loses. The case of Dominic Cummings has thrown this process into sharp relief and, once this national emergency is over, it is a case which will need to be revisited at length and in detail.

A personal message from Chris and Linda Benneworth

"A caring church at the heart of its community".

These are the first words that you read when you log on to the Holy Saviour's website, and in the last few days we have discovered how true they are.

We have been moved, touched and given great support by all the messages, cards and practical expressions of care and Christian love that we have received from the congregation at Holy Saviour's since the sudden and unexplained death of our son Paul. Each act of love and support has meant a great deal to us and we want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their kindness and care.

The Newcastle Journal published an obituary of Paul on Saturday 23rd May. It can be found at <https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/tribute-paul-benneworth-expert-who-18297517>

¹ *Don't take my word for it. See, on YouTube, Boris Johnson interviewed by Andrew Marr, December 1st 2019. Andrew Marr should simply have walked out and left him to it.*

VE MEMORIES [IV]

Timothy Duff writes: I enjoyed reading the articles by Margaret Gibson's aunt Katherine Redpath, and Brian Rayner in the May issue of Parish News. They sparked various thoughts and memories for me.

Katherine speaks very warmly of two teachers, Miss Stephenson and Miss Priestley, who accompanied the evacuees on the train to Rothbury then stayed in Rothbury to teach them. I remember them both, because my mother Marjory Duff, whom longer-standing members of Holy Saviour's will recall, was very much involved in the 1950s and perhaps later with the North Shields Hard of Hearing Club, which met at the YMCA. Miss Stephenson and Miss Priestley attended the Club also, they were indeed kind and thoughtful ladies.

Katherine remembers the train going direct to Rothbury, so thinks there must then have been a station there. There was, though no trace of it can now be seen. Until 1952 there was a regular passenger service from Morpeth via Scotsgap to Rothbury, and goods trains continued until 1963. The Railway Hotel in Rothbury, very near the site of the station, is the closest visible reminder, and the line of the dismantled track can easily be followed in some of the countryside, at Forestburn Gate for example.

I was five years old on VE Day, and my one specific memory of the day is of having a strong disagreement with my parents. Having been born in the very early days of the War, the News - only of course on BBC Radio then - would no doubt have been dominated by the progress of the War all my then life. When that morning it was announced 'The War is over' I clearly recall insisting to my parents that there would be no more News. They naturally disagreed, but I wasn't having that, not at any price!

There is a sad parallel with our present situation, where Coronavirus has driven everything else off the front, and most of the other, pages. One could be forgiven for thinking that the appalling civil war in Syria, and so many other sources of human misery, had ceased to exist.

Katherine and Brian both write about their time as evacuees, and John our Editor comments that in these days of Health and Safety and the like it seems extraordinary for those evacuations to happen without so many of the considerations and precautions which would now be thought essential. For many it was however a positive experience, as John says. In recent years, I have conducted the funerals of a good number of former evacuees. Some had not had a very happy time, some had run away, but for most it had clearly been a very formative time. I have heard from their families how the person who had died had learnt about the

countryside and country ways, how many of them kept contact with their host family for years afterwards, and gone for holidays in the area to which they had been evacuated, mostly in Northumberland. Bellingham is a place-name often mentioned.



This photograph was taken on VE Day, in Saville Street, North Shields in front of the former Police Station and Town Hall. It shows my father, Alderman Timothy Duff, in his Mayoral robes, reading what looks like an official proclamation. It is interesting to see the anti-blast bricks in front of the ground floor windows. I have another photo, of a similar gathering on VJ Day, where the bricks have gone.

And finally, a word about railways, brought to mind by the mention of Rothbury Station. In common with a surprisingly large number of clergy, certainly Anglican clergy, I am a railway enthusiast. My knowledge of the line to Rothbury comes partly from walking in the area, but also from a delightful book 'Lost Railways of Northumberland' by Robert Kinghorn, published 2006. Second hand copies can be obtained on the internet through Abe Books.

Our Vicar Steve is as we know a helicopter enthusiast, but he has an interest in trains too. He is the proud possessor of a 5" gauge 0-2-0 working steam tank locomotive, which formerly belonged to his grandfather.

Why are so many clergy fans of the iron horse? The late Revd Wilbert Awdry, author of The Railway Series of books, featuring the Thomas the Tank Engine and many other engines, put it this way: "Railways and the Church are both regularly assailed by critics; and both are firmly convinced that they are the best means of getting humans to their ultimate destination." Well said, Mr. Awdry. I prefer a train to a car or a bus, still more to an aeroplane, any day. And the Church is indeed the best way of travelling to our ultimate destination.

BIBLICAL WORDS [II]: Consider the Lilies of the Field

Clive Harper writes: I have long been a keen solver of Jigsaw-puzzles, though a busy career has limited the number I have been able to put together. But with retirement comes more time for such things and also gives many more opportunities for family to answer the question 'what shall I buy Dad for Christmas?' with the thought: 'I know.....'

The Corona Virus also has had the effect of giving me more time indoors and when I came back from my recent sojourn in hospital I found that Valerie had bought me a homecoming present in the shape of a Jigsaw table in wood with green baize; a very smart job indeed. So I dug out of the cupboard last year's birthday present which happened to be a 1000-piece reproduction of Van Gogh's *'Wheatfield with a lark'* and set to, in between other things.

It was fiendishly difficult and took a number of weeks to complete, but the end result was an excellent reproduction of Van Gogh's magnificent masterpiece; the painting is sublime and I sat and wondered how anyone could reproduce such an intricate work so accurately.

But then I thought: 'who made the hand and the eye; who installed in man such artistry'; and indeed: 'who gave us the Creation in the first place' and I remembered Jesus words: 'consider the lilies of the field' for, in the midst of all the wheat so tightly packed and growing strong, so beautifully reconstructed by Van Gogh, were some lilies, blue and red, not really interfering with the wheat, but each flower beautifully formed and exquisite. Not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these.

And I asked myself: 'what does it mean: 'consider the lilies of the field'? I looked up the passage in St Matthew's Gospel: in the original language it is an imperative; perhaps not a command but, at the very least, a Divine invitation to step aside for a while and think about all of this we see around us, and wonder. The Corona virus has given us a reason, an excuse even, to stop for a while and ponder the mystery

and the glory of this world we inhabit; so remarkable and so wonderful. We can only attempt to copy the reality that the Maker gives to us every season; but we can marvel at the beauty of it all and ponder and give thanks and praise for all that has been made.

More Store Cupboard Cookery

One pot vegetable pasta: an easy supper to serve four:

325 grams dried pasta
1 bell pepper, sliced or diced (I used orange)
6 medium mushrooms, sliced
125 grams each of frozen peas and frozen sweetcorn
650 ml milk
350 ml vegetable stock
1 tsp dried mixed herbs
150 grams cheddar cheese, grated
Salt
Black pepper
Fresh chives, to serve (optional)

- 1 Add the pasta to a large saucepan, along with the vegetables, milk, stock, and dried herbs. Mix well to combine.
- 2 Bring to a gentle simmer, and cook for around 15 minutes, until the pasta is cooked and the sauce has thickened. You'll need to stir regularly, especially when the pasta is nearly cooked and most of the liquid has been absorbed.
- 3 Remove from the heat, and add the grated cheese and plenty of salt and pepper. Mix well until the cheese has melted to produce a thick, glossy sauce. Serve topped with fresh chives, if desired.

Cheesy bean bake: this hefty supper dish also serves four/six

1 tablespoonful of oil
1 onion, diced
2/3 cloves garlic, minced
110/160 g rice – Arborio, Basmati or any long grain
600 ml vegetable stock *[both for the 4 and 6 serving versions]*
2/3 x 400g tins of beans *[haricot and cannellini or black beans]*
1/2 x 400g tins of chopped tomatoes

3 tbsp tomato puree [both for the 4 and 6 serving versions]
150/200 grams cheddar cheese, grated
Black pepper

- 1 Heat a dash of oil in a large sauté pan, and add the onion and garlic. Cook over a medium heat for a few minutes, until soft and translucent. Add the arborio rice, and cook for another minute or two.
- 2 Next, add the vegetable stock a little at a time, stirring regularly and allowing most of the excess liquid to be absorbed by the rice before adding more - it should take around 20 minutes in total. The rice should be almost cooked.
- 3 When you've added all of the stock, add the drained beans, chopped tomatoes, and tomato puree. Mix well, and allow to simmer for another 10-15 minutes, until not too much excess liquid remains. Add about 3/4 of the grated cheese, and plenty of black pepper, and mix again to melt the cheese.
- 4 Transfer the mixture to a large baking dish, and top with the remaining grated cheese. Bake at 190°C (Gas Mark 5 / 375°F) for around 30-40 minutes, until cooked to your liking. For a slightly firmer bean bake, allow to stand for 10 minutes before serving.

And thinking of food, here are the answers to May's Food Quiz

- 1 **How much peanut butter is required to be peanuts in the UK?** 90%
- 2 **What was the first of H. J. Heinz's "57 Varieties"?** Horseradish [in 1869]
- 3 **What elaborate confection was inspired by St Bride's Church in London?**
The tiered wedding cake
- 4 **Which fictional character said "Never eat more than you can lift"?**
Miss Piggy
- 5 **Which is the only American State to produce coffee?** Hawai
- 6 **Which are the two top-selling spices in the whole world?**
Pepper and Mustard
- 7 **What pudding's name translates as "burnt cream"?** Crème brulee
- 8 **What fruit is used in an upside-down cake?** Pineapple
- 9 **What is the most widely eaten fish in the whole world?** Herring
- 10 **How many quarts of milk are needed to make a pound of butter?** 9.8
- 11 **In winemaking, what is must?**
The juice from crushed grape before it is fermented

- 12 Which was the first pizza restaurant chain in America? Pizza Hut
- 13 Which composer had a recipe for steak named after him?
Rossini [*tournedos Rossini*]
- 14 Which fruit contains more protein than any other? Avocado
- 15 Which culinary fusion dish was first sold in London in about 1860?
Fish and chips
- 16 When was the first Big Mac introduced? 1968
- 17 What is measured on the Scoville scale? The heat of peppers
- 18 What sticky sweetener is a traditional ointment for cuts and burns?
Honey
- 19 What are the two largest fruit crops in the world? Grapes and bananas
- 20 What is wine sold six months after the grape harvest called in Portugal?
Vinho Verde
- 21 What kind of fruit is a pearmain? An apple
- 22 If you order the Five B's for dinner in New England, what do you eat?
Boston Baked Beans and Brown Bread
- 23 Which fast food product was promoted with the slogan *Where's the beef*? Wendy's
- 24 What percentage of pork must a British pork sausage contain? 65%
- 25 Which opera singer gave her name to a pudding? *The Pêche Melba*

And finally, thanks to Karen Bilton for helping me to round off this edition as Steve began it, with some humour: this time from other Parish magazines:

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

The Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday. Please use the back door.

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: "I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours."

This being Easter Sunday, Mrs. Lewis will come forward to lay an egg on the altar.

This evening at 7 pm there will be a hymn sing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

If possible, the Parish News July/August double issue will be published both in print and online on Sunday July 5th 2020. If the magazine is printed, artwork will need to be sent to YPD Creative on Tuesday June 30th. Copy day in either case will be Thursday June 25th. Please email contributions to JCPrintmail@gmx.co.uk, or post them to me at 9 Selwyn Avenue, Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, NE25 9DH. If the Parish News mailbox is accessible by then I will clear it at 1000 on the morning of Friday June 26th. All contributions will be very gratefully received.

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From the letter to all Parishes sent by Justin Welby and John Sentamu, March 17th 2020:

"As the challenge of the corona virus grips the world, and as the Government asks every individual and every organisation to rethink its life, we are now asking the Church of England in all its parishes, chaplaincies and ministries to serve all people in a new way. Public worship will have to stop for a season; our churches will have to close. Our usual pattern of Sunday services and other mid-week gatherings must be put on hold. This does not mean that the Church has shut up shop – far from it." Holy Saviours will stream a weekly Sunday service on YouTube and the church's website – www.holy.saviours.org.uk – for further details telephone the Vicar or the Parish Administrator using the numbers below. Also see the Vicar's message on pages 6 – 8 of this issue. All the activities listed in the right-hand column of this page are currently suspended. For updates on these, please contact the individuals in charge using the contact details provided.

Vicar Revd. Steve Dixon
Email vicar@holysaviours.org.uk
Telephone 07729 393 580
0191 697 4562

Curate Revd. Malcolm Railton
Email curate@holysaviours.co.uk
Telephone 0191 262 3028

Parish Administrator Stuart Crozier
Church Office Tel. 0191 597 9815
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Church website: www.holysaviours.org.uk

Churchwardens:

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David Bilton,
19 Ashleigh Grove
Tel. 2580270

PCC Vice Chairman:
Chris Benneworth

PCC Treasurer:
Karen Bilton, 19 Ashleigh Grove
Tel. 2580270

Church Flowers:
Sheila Park, 15 Ashleigh Grove,
Tel. 257 5481
Barbara Walker, 2 Monkstone Crescent,
Tel. 257 4159

Activities

Mothers' Union

1st Monday 2.00pm Parish Centre
3rd Thursday 2.00pm Parish Centre
Cathy Duff Tel 0191 257 4811

W3 – Women's Group

1st Wednesday 7.30pm Parish Centre
Debbie Baird Tel. 296 1663

Rainbows

Lucy Skillen Tel. 07891101262

Brownies

Pat Corbett Tel. 0191 2800510

Guides

Grace Paul Tel. 07803371929

Rangers

Grace Paul Tel. 07803371929

Beavers

Gillian Smith Tel. 296 1426
tynemouthbeavers@gmail.com

Cub Scouts

Fiona Lydall Tel 257 3047

Scouts

David Littlefield Tel. 257 8740

Explorer Scouts

Lucy Mace Tel. 258 5948

Group Scout Leader

Michael Dyer Tel. 2596236

Asst. Group Leader

David Littlefield Tel. 257 8740

Scout Hut bookings:

Helen Preston Tel: 257 0574

Tynemouth Village Day Centre – Parish Hall
Tel. 259 5569

Mother & Toddler Group – Parish Hall
Friday 9.30am

ARTICLES FOR THE PARISH NEWS

These should be submitted to the editor, **John Pearce**, at JCPrintmail@gmx.co.uk – the deadline will be published each month. Post written contributions in the Parish News Mailbox outside the Parish Office or to 9 Selwyn Avenue, Monkseaton, NE25 9DH.

All queries to
0191 291 2742 or 07903 227 192.