



WEEKLY UPDATE

Trinity 14, Sunday 13th September 2020

From the clergy...

Dear all,

This Thursday marks the feast of St Hildegard of Bingen, a twelfth-century nun who knew all about rediscovering new ways of worship. In defiance of the male bishops who tried to rein her in, she established a unique monastic house of women who redefined music, poetry, art, liturgy, and drama, inspired by the life of God which Hildegard saw greening through all things. Her creativity in the face of uncertain times and adverse restrictions is no bad example for us this year; her love of gardening has certainly inspired the curate!



Luckily for us, it seems that last week's shift in restrictions around social gatherings has left church services untouched. We are still able to gather for worship, and life events such as funerals, weddings, and ordinations are thankfully still able to take place. If this changes, we will let you know; and like Hildegard we will find creative ways of working within any limits.

In the meantime, we are excited to continue welcoming everyone to church, especially those who are returning for the first time in September. Slowly, it feels like the family is gathering again, and it is a joy. At the same time, as you will see below, we are already putting together the October rotas, and looking forward to seeing yet more people soon.

This week also sees the return of Revd Helen, who will be working again from Wednesday, as well as our September PCC meeting, and the chance to think a little about what some of the next steps might look like for St John's this year. Everyone's prayers for that meeting will of course be very welcome.

For now, a good week to one and all –
With love and prayers,

Rev Lyndon

THIS SUNDAY'S READING:

Matthew 18.21-35

THE COLLECT FOR TRINITY 14

Merciful God,
your Son came to save us and bore our sins on the cross:
may we trust in your mercy and know your love,
rejoicing in the righteousness that is ours
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A prayer from St John's on behalf of Broadstone Churches Together:

O Great Compassion, we pray this week for all community leaders in Broadstone: for our local MP, for our local councillors, for our ministers, our youth leaders, and the many volunteers who run community groups throughout this place. We give especial thanks for all who have kept our community alive this year, and pray that our leaders would be blessed with wisdom, compassion, and vision. Amen.

Special prayers for the sick: June, Philp, Robert, Bill, Dorothy, David, Joan, Joy, Marjorie, Jim, Roger



RIP Alison Pope

We also remember Shirley Bailey, whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

News

✚ **Revd Helen** will be back at work from Wednesday this week. Rev Lyndon is available on Tuesday if you need a member of clergy for anything.

✚ **Wednesday 30th September:** There are still spaces available to attend Rev Lyndon's first mid-week Eucharist at 10.30am on Weds 30th September. If you would like to attend, please call Rev Lyndon on 07872 651 981 or send an email to revlyndonwebb@gmail.com

✚ **Church In October:** October's Sunday rotas are now out. Now that most people are coming back, there is only space for people to come to one Sunday in October, but everyone is very welcome to simply turn up on Wednesdays. Do cast an eye over the dates which people have been allotted, and get in touch with Rev Lyndon or the office if something looks wrong. If you have a clash of dates, we can arrange a swap; similarly, if you aren't on the list but would like to be, we can add you.

✚ **Evening Prayer on Fridays at 4.30pm.** We are offering a virtual Evening Prayer online. It is a lovely way to 'end the day' and the week together and we will guide you through this simple service of prayer. All are welcome, and you will find the Zoom link and readings in the weekly email.

+ **Housegroup** takes place again online this Wednesday at 7.30pm. If you have signed up for this, you will receive a Zoom link before then. If you haven't signed up but would like to come and see what a session feels like, do let Rev Lyndon know, and he will send you the link.

+ **A Message from The Dean Of Salisbury Cathedral**

Salisbury Cathedral is, due to Covid-19, operating a strict booking-in system for both worship and visitors to the cathedral. From 1st September, the Cathedral has had to make the difficult decision to charge for entry for visits (not for worship services). Parishioners in the Diocese will be able to book up to two free visitor tickets however. We ask that this is done through the parish administrator of each church. **You will need to email your administrator with your preferred date and time of visit, along with your email or phone number and we will arrange it.** Those without access to the internet may call the Cathedral's phone helpline on [01722 512156](tel:01722512156). We look forward to welcoming you to your cathedral.

And a PS from your Parish Administrator – if you send me an email, please can you make sure it contains all of the information asked for above so that I can simply forward it on to the Cathedral. It comes via me to that I can check that you are a bona fide member of the church.

A note from Barbara re Face Coverings

The latest findings regarding face coverings is that polypropylene is the best material for blocking air-borne respiratory droplets (data from modelling by a government backed research institute in Japan). This is the material that I use as the filter in the face coverings that I am making. I am now making three designs:

Shaped (£5)



Rectangular £4 (3 for £10)



Medical style pleated (£7)

Barbara can be contacted on 07981 813446.

Puzzle Corner

The answers to last week's quiz – Young Ones:

1	Hoglet	11	Elver
2	Pea chick	12	Kit
3	Eft	13	Leveret
4	Spiderling	14	Poult
5	Maggot	15	Pup
6	Squab	16	Fry
7	Calf	17	Meerkitten
8	Nymph	18	Puggle
9	Kitten	19	Joey
10	Parr (Smolt)	20	Codling

The solution to the Code:

Dartmoor proper consists of an upland region of granite, rising to nearly two thousand feet above the sea, and is the nursery of many of the rivers of Devon.

And the bee puzzle:

The Leafcutter Bee pollinated 6 flowers and the Red-tailed Bumblebee 5 flowers.

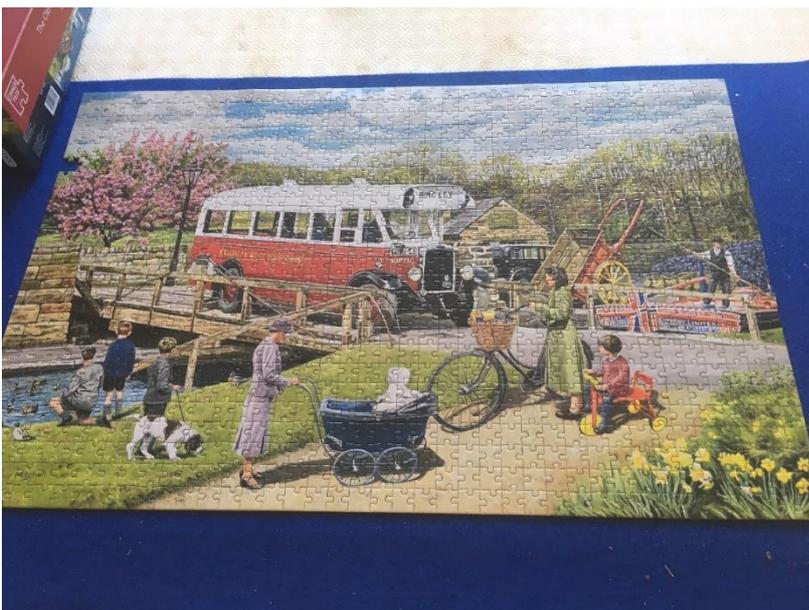
This week's quiz from Valerie and Paul:

More British Towns and Cities

1.	Swap a human joint
2.	Ghost
3.	Heavily illuminated
4.	Serene harbour
5.	Well behaved trees
6.	Go from north to finish
7.	Donkey call

8.	From where you can get water
9.	Which crossing?
10.	Give it to me
11.	A boot
12.	From where we get health salts
13.	Creepy
14.	Go by bike?
15.	Modern fortress beneath a tree
16.	Entrance for a male sheep
17.	Agreement
18.	Wide steps
19.	Slope of primary colour
20.	Alternative to a shower

Our lives at home



Margaret sent in a photo of David's hard work doing this jigsaw *The Old Swing Bridge*.



Early autumn colour from Mike's garden.
Cool cleomes and vibrant orange tithonia



Please send any contributions for future updates to Geraldine in the Parish Office at the email address given below.

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**SERMON FOR SUNDAY 13th SEPTEMBER,
TRINITY 14 – Rev Patrick Hastings**

We have all experienced in the media that when reporting on a serious or violent crime the victims or their families are often interviewed for their reaction. A common response is for justice, that the perpetrator should be punished for their crime, a long-term imprisonment, or even life-imprisonment. This is a very understandable reaction and we sympathise deeply with the victims and their families. Less often a victim, or a member of their family, may say they forgive the perpetrator.

Luke records Jesus on the cross saying, “Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing,” and Stephen at his stoning, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” The crucifixion of Jesus is central to the Christian faith, symbolised in the Cross. He died for our sins. Explanations of why Jesus died on the cross and what it achieved requires our deepest reflection but, in the light of the parable of the unforgiving slave-debtor, it may draw our attention to the undue emphasis we may sometimes place in our explanations on notions of justice, satisfaction and punishment rather than love, mercy and forgiveness. It seems both sets of ideas are to be held in tension bearing in mind Bonhoeffer’s warning of modern Christianity’s tendency for treating God’s grace too cheaply.

As Christians we know that we ought to forgive those who have hurt us and we are reminded of this every time we pray the Lord’s Prayer, as Matthew records it, “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” We know we ought to forgive, we see positive value in letting go of hurts, but we quite often find it difficult to do so. Hurtful experiences may give rise to anger and shame, accompanied by feelings of inadequacy or defectiveness. Knowing we ought to forgive and let go of hurts does not in itself effect change and may increase guilt leading to further anger and shame. What can we learn from the brief exchange between Jesus and Peter about the extent and nature of forgiveness and the parable of the unforgiving slave-debtor? Firstly, Jesus tells Peter that forgiveness is limitless and unquantifiable. Secondly, the point is reinforced by the parable with the absurdity of the unforgiving slave-debtor.

Peter believed generosity was important but surely forgiveness must have limits. Repeated forgiveness is alright for a while but enough is enough and the sinner must face the consequences of his sin. “As many as seven times?” says Peter. But Jesus goes beyond this and says, “seventy-seven times” or ‘seventy times seven’. Jesus means without limit for there can be no limit to love and forgiveness.

The parable tells us about a king who forgives a slave whose indebtedness is impossible to quantify. This slave is then unable to forgive a fellow slave a reasonable debt. Why does the slave who has been treated so generously by the king act so heartlessly towards his fellow slave? The king responds harshly: torture and imprisonment.

The point of the parable is that human forgiveness is rooted in divine forgiveness. The king forgives the slave an incalculable amount of indebtedness. There is no way we can measure the extent of divine forgiveness. God is so generous, more than we can imagine. The slave-debtor on hearing of his release from an incalculable debt shows no appropriate response: no rejoicing, no gratitude. Forgiveness does not seem to have registered in his heart and mind. His problem seems to be that he imagines he is dealing with the king on the basis of justice. Though his debt is incalculable, and payment is impossible, he makes the case, "I will pay you everything." He doesn't grasp the generosity of the king's mercy or grace, "Out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt." Forgiveness has to do with something different from justice. The slave-debtor does not see himself as the recipient of gracious mercy. He is unable to see himself in a similar situation to that of his fellow slave-debtor and is unable to show him the mercy he has been shown by the king. Forgiveness is a matter of the heart, a transformation of the heart, something the slave-debtor has not grasped.

How does this parable address seriously hurt persons, battling with anger and shame, even a sense of justice? The parable illustrates the incredible generous kindness of God who surprises us by not dealing with us on the basis of justice, even though we may seek it, but by showing such gracious mercy. As Christians we are forgiven debtors living with and among fellow debtors. To be forgiven means giving up playing innocent versus guilty and joining a fellowship of forgiven debtors.

The unforgiving heart, hatred, vengeance, resentment can poison our lives. Are we among the unforgiving? Forgiveness, it seems, cannot be poured in if forgiveness is not given out. As we receive, so we must give. Forgiveness, like love, grows only by our giving out. We cannot claim forgiveness if we are unwilling to forgive others.

Father forgive us, as we forgive others.