

ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

August 2018

50p



St Martin's Church, Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

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Magazine Editor Lizzy Edgington

The Vicar is available for consultation and enquiries by appointment.
Please ring the Parish Office.

Articles for the next month's magazine should be sent to
The Parish Office (email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com)
Please title the email "magazine item"

They should reach the Editor by 20th August.

The September magazine will be on sale by 2nd September.

Note from Lynne

I don't know if you agree with me, but I have found that as I age my opinion of months changes.

It's a bit like that old joke about making time longer - just sit on an uncomfortable chair and your minutes will seem like hours. It's much the same with school holidays - for a child the holidays are a mix of everlasting and over far too quick, for the parent they stretch on forever, and the children can get bored and tetchy towards the end.

August was always when we took our family holiday, normally going with my parents to the seaside.

I remember the train journeys, big British Rail trains, sometimes with a corridor which we were forbidden to run up and down, from Victoria Station. There was also the excitement of getting a taxi to the station, and then another one on to the place we were staying.

We often went to Bognor Regis, as we had relatives there, and they knew all the best places to go. There was a magic wood there, at a place called Slindon, where you could find seashells in the soil round the trees. It really made the stories of how the earth has changed over millennia make more sense to us - after all, seashells must mean it had been under water at some time.

Another favourite outing was to Arundel Castle. The castle is wonderful, it was established on Christmas Day 1067, and is going strong today. The history of the place is really interesting - I remember one of the legends was that one of the early owners of the castle knew he was dying, and went to the top of the tower then hurled his broadsword from the tower, saying he wanted to be buried where it landed. As children my sister and I used to say

things like “it could have fallen in the lake, or in the car park” and many other impossible places. The place the person concerned was buried was a good 250 yards from the castle, so he was incredibly strong for someone who was dying.

Arundel Castle is the seat of the Dukes of Norfolk, despite it being in Sussex. The family name is FitzAlan, and they are Roman Catholic. Their faith has caused all sorts of problems in their history, people have been executed and others imprisoned. I expect the present moment is about the easiest for them as far as their religion goes.

The question of a person’s religion, and the “sort” of it is less contentious these days - unless you are a Muslim. It is not that long ago that Roman Catholics and Protestants were as fiercely antagonistic towards each other as some people are towards Muslims - and for as little reason. Most people in the UK who are not Muslim are not aware that there are several different sorts of Muslim faith - just like there are many different sorts of Christian faith.

All Christians have the same opportunity to read the Bible, and look at Matthew 22:37-39 “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 neighbor as yourself.” or John 13:34-35 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Jesus said “On these **two** commandments hang all the law and the prophets”. So you don’t even have to bother with counting to ten!

This is crystal clear. It means that no Christian has any excuse not to show respect and good behaviour to anyone else. When you read the things that happen over the rest of the country and over the rest of the world, then you wonder if that bit wasn't in the Bibles of the people that do the awful things. It is not an excuse to be a "freedom fighter" or any other phrase that means you are fighting for good. If you do anything against other people - your neighbour, in other words, no matter what their religion, you are breaking the commandments of Jesus.

So, this August, as you enjoy your holiday or look forward to a break in another month, remember the two commandments, **love God first and foremost, then other people as yourself.**

Lynne Armstrong

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Editorial

Hello everyone and welcome to my first issue of St. Martin's Magazine as editor. So many of you have offered your support and encouragement in the past weeks, and I really appreciate it.



For those of you who don't know me, here's a picture so that you can recognise me. If you want to contribute to the magazine, write an article, share a photo, advertise a future event or just say hello, please don't hesitate.

I'm sure that everyone would agree that our outgoing editor Alex Chan has done a brilliant job. I'd like to thank Alex for all his hard work and to wish him the best for his exam results at the end of the month.

I hope that everyone is coping in the midst of the heatwave and managing to keep cool. So far the temperature has peaked at 35C and the weather is set to continue throughout August. Please spare a thought for those who are suffering particularly badly, such as the homeless, the elderly, the very young and those who are dealing with illness.

Aside from the extreme weather, I have always thought of August as an exciting time of year. Time to head outdoors, away from the classroom or office and do something completely different. Maybe a new water sport whilst on holiday, visiting a museum for the first time or joining a

new group. Quite possibly this is a hangover from my school days, however I like the idea of setting myself the challenge this month to do something new. If I'm successful (with two small children in tow), I'll report back to you next month. If anyone else fancies taking up this challenge too I'd love to hear what you get up to.

Lizzy Edgington



John Bunyan

(c.30th November 1628 - 31st August 1688)

John Bunyan was an English author and Puritan preacher who is remembered by the Church of England with the Lesser Festival on 30th August. Born in 1628, Bunyan lived through the turbulent years of the English Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Protectorate and the Restoration of the monarchy. Serving as a Parliamentary soldier in his teenage years, he began preaching as a non-conformist in his late twenties. The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 created a state that was less tolerant of religious freedom and preachers like Bunyan. However, Bunyan refused to stop preaching and as a result was imprisoned for 12 years. When he was released in 1672, Bunyan obtained his licence to preach and focused on his writing. His best-known work, the Christian allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*, was written during his imprisonment and published in 1678. It is estimated that by 1692 100,000 copies had been printed in England alone, whilst translations were printed across Europe.

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The Great War – 100 years on Army Chaplains

During the Great War Britain mobilised six million men for military duty and over 5,000 Army Chaplains served Britain and the Commonwealth. On 11th November 1918 there were 878 Anglican chaplains deployed on the Western Front alone, alongside a similar total from other denominations.

The Army Chaplains' Department was formed in 1796. Over the course of 19th century, the role of the Chaplains became synonymous with providing comfort, care and compassion to those caught up in conflict. During the Great War the Chaplains (who held no command) offered Holy Communion and conducted burial services. The Chaplains serving away from the front led church parades and oversaw the men's welfare whilst those at the front ministered to the wounded and dying, and sometimes worked as stretcher bearers. Ninety-eight Anglican chaplains died as a result of the conflict, with 120 receiving the Military Cross and two were awarded the Victoria Cross.

In general the clergy were discouraged from enlisting as combatants as it was seen to conflict with their vocation and in 1916 they were exempted from conscription. However approximately 500 Anglican clergy did enlist in combatant roles.

In recognition of their gallantry during the war, King George V bestowed the Army chaplain's Department with the Royal prefix in February 1919.

100 years after their sacrifice:
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Beer, theology and wholeness

When you were last enjoying a refreshing beer, you probably didn't think about whether there might be a patron saint of brewers. But just as there is a patron saint of travellers (Saint Christopher) and animal welfare (Saint Francis of Assisi), there is indeed a saint of brewers - Saint Augustine of Hippo. So who was he, why is he the patron saint of beer, and why is he relevant today?

Saint Augustine was born Aurelius Augustinus in 354 AD, in Roman North Africa. He didn't start out that saintly – his early life was dominated by ambition, parties, fighting and loose living. Clearly searching for something, he explored different philosophies and religions before converting to Christianity aged 31 following a spiritual experience in a garden in Milan. His writings describe hearing a voice repeatedly saying, "pick up and read". He picked up a scroll, the biblical book of Romans, and his eyes fell on chapter 13 advising reliance on Jesus rather than fast living, drunkenness, or fighting. Struck by the personal relevance of this, Augustine reports being left in no

doubt of the existence and presence of God and that he had found what he had been looking for.

In his forties, Augustine wrote probably the first modern-style autobiography, called *Confessions*, describing his early life and conversion. Although written over 1600 years ago, much of *Confessions* is surprisingly readable, recounting childhood pranks as well as later frustrations with his students as a philosophy teacher. He also describes regret for his earlier immoral life, when he “ran wild in the shadowy jungle of erotic adventures”. Candid autobiographies are now common, but the level of honesty in *Confessions* was very unusual for his time. *Confessions* also includes an infamous prayer from before his conversion in which he asks God to “give me chastity...but not yet!” Augustine went on to become bishop of Hippo, in what is now Algeria, becoming one of the most prolific Christian writers ever.

Augustine is considered the patron saint of brewers because of his earlier love of raucous living. He is also the patron saint of theologians as he was one of the first to apply a more intellectual approach to questions of faith.

Other than being the patron saint of brewers, why is someone who lived more than 1600 years ago still relevant? Augustine’s influence on how we think about humanity, as well as the understanding and practice of the Christian faith, is massive. He brought together his faith, his intellect and his background in philosophy to wrestle with many controversial issues of his day, many of which still have implications today.

Augustine emphasised the ‘wholeness’ of human beings, which has shaped how we view humanity today. Most earlier philosophies, together with Manichaeism, the popular cult of the time, viewed human spirituality as being entirely separate from our bodies. Manichaeans subjected themselves to severe self-discipline, repressing all human needs and focusing only a spiritual life. They regarded the lower half of the body as being the work of the devil and were both teetotal and vegetarian.

However, having discredited various Manichaean views using logic and scientific knowledge, Augustine concluded that it was neither healthy nor possible to split human nature into two, and perhaps more importantly, God did not require it. He highlighted the importance of having a sense of self, in what might today be regarded as 'emotional intelligence'. His influence on how we think about humanity as incorporating heart, mind, soul and body was so great that it is now almost impossible to imagine life otherwise.

In contrast to many people of his time, he also saw sins or wrongdoings as a normal part of being human. In Augustine's day, many Christians adopted the views of a monk called Pelagius who believed it should be possible to live without any sin at all, and that God required this level of perfection. However, following study of the bible, Augustine concluded that perfection was neither possible nor necessary, that sin is inevitable, and yet God still loves us and saves those who trust in him. This is based on God's own goodness, through sending Jesus to die for humankind, rather than on our lack of sin. Thankfully for Christians today, his views prevailed and Christians see God as a loving and forgiving God rather than one who demands unattainable perfection.

Another controversy of Augustine's time was whether the validity of Holy Communion and other important Christian traditions depended on the righteousness of the priest. In three of the four New Testament gospels, Jesus asks his followers to share bread and wine in remembrance that he died for them, with the bread representing his body and the wine his blood. At Holy Communion, a priest blesses the bread and wine, which are then shared as the gospels describe. At the time of Augustine, the majority Donatist church in Africa believed that this must be done by a priest who was faultless. Furthermore, if the bishop had sinned, then anyone he ordained as a priest 'didn't count'. In contrast, Augustine believed that the priest's sins would be forgiven following confession and repentance. Augustine emphasised that sin was part of being human, and that while priests should be striving for godly lives, it was God's

holiness and not the priest's holiness that determined the validity of Holy Communion. Augustine's views prevailed and are widely accepted by Christians today, and in what must have seemed an impossible task at the time, he also managed to reunite the opposing factions.

Augustine's life has been a personal inspiration to many people. However chaotic, restless and seemingly irrevocable our lives may be, he illustrates that there is a place for us with God, a place where we are welcomed, loved, forgiven and can be made whole.

So next time you are enjoying a beer, raise your glass to Saint Augustine of Hippo who changed the way we view humanity as well as refocusing Christian perspectives on God's love and forgiveness rather than on unattainable perfection.

Bryony Franklin

Saint Augustine's feast day is 28th August



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Support and dignity



The beauty of creation **- how you can support our wildlife this summer:**

Last month a report on British mammals found that one in five species face extinction. This is not new. The 2016 State of Nature report highlighted that 60% of UK species have declined in the last 50 years. You may have noticed fewer butterflies, the disappearance of sparrows from your garden, or the absence of wildflowers in the local park. Faced with statistics such as these it is easy to lose hope. But hope is still to be found. These reports also show how organisations and individuals across the country are working to stop the loss and bring back nature. Each of us can play our part in safeguarding God's creation, start now and take action for our natural world. Here are some simple ideas:

- Join the big Butterfly Count (20th July - 12th August)
 this nationwide survey will help assess the health of our

environment <https://www.bigbutterflycount.org>

- In this hot weather help out your local wildlife by providing a shallow dish of water for thirsty birds, animals and insects.
- Is there somewhere you could grow some wildflowers and help pollinators like bees? Take a look at the GrowWild programme for advice on autumn seed sowing and sign up for a chance to get some free wildflower seeds. <https://www.growwilduk.com/>
- Use less plastic - the effect of plastic on the natural world has been big news recently. Don't forget to take a bag when you go shopping, use your re-usable water bottle and/or coffee cup, refuse plastic straws and generally try and reduce your use single-use plastic wherever you can.
- Whether you have a garden or not there are ways you can help wildlife, from bee hotels to vertical wall gardens, take a look at the Wildlife Trusts site for more ideas. <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions>
- Looking for a way to keep kids entertained for the long school holidays? RSPB, Woodland trust and the Wildlife Trusts website all have some great activities and there are plenty of sites around London to visit.

Or you can just enjoy nature sitting in the churchyard. However you do it take a moment to celebrate the beauty of creation this month.



Junior Church

Summer music

The sweet song of the birds pours into my ear,
The beautiful song is so very pleasant to hear,
Blackbirds tweet, tweet, tweet,
It's Oh! So sweet.

The sound of the trumpet fills my heart,
The wonderful music fills every part,
Every part of a blank piece of paper waiting to be filled,
The music into the paper was drilled.

The strum of the guitar brings me up on my feet,
I love every rhythm, and love every beat,
The sound of the music is my only desire,
The lively song fills me with fire.

Music, music, everywhere,
Music notes fill the air,
The sound of the birds, the trumpet trumping,
The sound of the guitar brings my heart thumping.

By Katie Franklin



Dates for the diary:

- The Informal Eucharist and Coffee Club is taking a break over August. It will reconvene on Wednesday 5th September.
- On Sunday 12th August, the Revd David Brammer will take the 10am service.
- On Sunday 2nd September there will be a Bring and Share Lunch after the 10am service to raise money towards our church funds.
- Sunday 7th October will be the Confirmation Service, for those interested in confirmation, please speak to Brandy or Jackie.



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Quiz Page - Answers in September issue

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Difficult



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Usual Sunday Services

8am: Holy Communion
10am: Parish Communion
6.30pm: Evensong

Our Junior Church meets in the Church Hall at 10am
except when there is an All-Age or Parade Service.

Japanese Anglican Church UK
meets every third Sunday of the month:
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3pm Bible Study and Evening Worship in Japanese

Every **Wednesday** at 25 Birch Grove, W3
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