



Bishop of Tonbridge retires

The Right Reverend Dr Brian Castle, Bishop of Tonbridge has informed the Crown of his intention to retire later this year.

Bishop Brian has served as Bishop of Tonbridge since 2002 during which time he has carried significant responsibilities within the life of the Diocese of Rochester.

The Right Reverend James Langstaff, Bishop of Rochester said, "Bishop Brian has had particular responsibilities for clergy in the early years of ministry, has supported the ministries of many chaplains and has put significant effort into fostering links with partner dioceses overseas. He has also carried a full share in the pastoral care of our lay and ordained ministers and has been constant in visiting parishes, schools and chaplaincies. In the period immediately before my arrival as Bishop of Rochester, he carried the oversight of the Diocese as a whole. Meanwhile, Jane Castle has supported Bishop Brian in his ministry primarily through her work as his Personal Assistant. In this capacity, she has had contact with people all over the Diocese and more widely, arranging many matters with quiet efficiency. I would like to publicly thank them both for their dedication to their work and ministry and wish them well as they prepare for their retirement."

Bishop Brian said, "It has been a privilege to have been in full-time, ordained ministry for thirty-eight years, with the last thirteen as Bishop of Tonbridge. Having served in parishes in the UK and Zambia, and having taught in Geneva and Oxford, I thank God that the Church provides such a wide and rich canvas on which to exercise ministry.

Being Bishop of Tonbridge has been, for me, a time of many blessings deepened by the challenges I have encountered. I will always be grateful for the love and support of my family and colleagues in ministry and for the joy of meeting and working with so many people throughout the Diocese and in our link Dioceses across the world.

While Jane and I look forward to the next chapter in our life and ministry, we thank God for this one."

A farewell service for Bishop Brian will be held at Rochester Cathedral on Saturday 31 October 2015.



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FOREWORD BY CLIFF BARROWS



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Deadline for entries is 16 April 2015. There are three books on offer. Please note that only one entry per household will be counted towards the draw.

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PLEASE NOTE: Copy deadline for the May issue of Rochester Link is 17 April 2015 at 4pm.
Copy to linknews@rochester.anglican.org

The Bishop of Tonbridge's Diary The Rt Rev Dr Brian Castle April 2015

1 Apr	1100	Chair Faith & Order Committee sub group on Safeguarding - Westminster
2 Apr	1030	Chrism Eucharist – Rochester Cathedral
3 Apr	1200	Lead Good Friday Service: Reconciliation – the point of the Cross - Rochester Cathedral
5 Apr	1030	Preside and Preach – Rochester Cathedral
15 Apr	0930	Bishop's Staff Meeting – Bishops Court, Rochester
16 Apr	1315	Attend AGM of the Guild of Church Braillists London
17-19 Apr		Speak at Curates' Residential – Condette, France
20-21 Apr		Attend Area/Rural Deans' Residential – Condette, France
23 Apr		Attend consecration of two Bishops – Tallinn, Estonia
25 Apr	All Day	Speak at Clergy Spouses' Group Away/Quiet Day - St Edmund, West Kingsdown
26 Apr - 3 May		Visit to Tonbridge Deanery
29 Apr	1100	Preach at 150th anniversary service, Huggens College, Northfleet, Gravesend

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What's on

April 2015

Friday 3

RAINHAM Passion Play will be performed on Parkwood Green, Deanwood Drive, Rainham, Gillingham, ME8 9PP. Entry is free and the Play commences at 2:00pm and will last for about 75 minutes. The site will be open from 1:30pm when audience members can meet and mingle with the actors. Further information can be obtained from Claire Schofield, the Play Administrator Tel: 01634 230423 or e-mail passionplay15@outlook.com

Saturday 11

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, at St Paul's Church Centre, 23 Rusthall Road, Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8RE at 7.30 pm. A Musical Meditation for Easter in aid of Canon Andrew White's projects with music, including from the Iona and Taize Communities, readings for Easter and visual presentations of Canon White's work. Refreshments, Bring and Buy and Canon White's books for sale. Further details: phone 01892 539549.

Sunday 12

MAIDSTONE Duck Race on the River Medway in Maidstone. Think thousands of ducks to paint the river yellow! You can sponsor a duck or two for £2 each and the first 10 ducks past the finish line will win their sponsor a prize (with a first prize of £1000). Please contact Nick White on Nick.White@rochester.anglican.org if you would like to sponsor a duck.

Saturday 18

ORPINGTON Bromley Philharmonic Choir spring concert at Christ Church URC, Tudor Way, Petts Wood, BR5 1LH at 7.30pm. Handel's Coronation Anthems and Ode for St Cecilia's Day. Tickets: £8.00 in advance, £10.00 on the door. Box Office: 01689 862941

TONBRIDGE A training day for worship bands run by the RSCM and Musicacademy with singer/songwriter Sue Rinaldi at St Stephen, Tonbridge, TN9 2SW. The day will include a blend of practical workshops and discussion. Why aren't people singing? We're not Worship Central so how do we do those big songs? Cost £22.50. Further details phone 07985 070734 or email chair.rscmrochester@gmail.com

Friday 24

LAMBERHURST Lamberhurst Music Festival. The London Baroque will be performing at Finchcocks at 7.30 pm. The London Baroque was formed in 1978 and is regarded world – wide as one of the foremost exponents of baroque chamber music. The programme will include works from the 17th century by Corelli and Purcell and from the 18th century by Handel, Bach and Mozart. Tickets cost £20 and doors open at 7:45pm. A 2 course buffet supper will be served from 6pm at £16 per person which must be reserved in advance. Bar and coffee also at 6pm and in the interval. Telephone for tickets 07812 192338. Address: LMF, The Down House, Lamberhurst, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 8ET

Saturday 25

LUDESLOWNE 'Art and the Great War' will be coming to Luddesdowne Church DA13 0XE at 7.30pm with the

Your parish in the Rochester Link – 3 easy steps.

People do like to see their parish or their vicar in the Rochester Link, celebrating the good news and sharing it with the rest of the diocese. We know that there are plenty of good news stories around the diocese that never make it to our offices, which is a shame. By sharing our stories, we can inspire and motivate others. We want to help you share your good news. Just follow these easy steps and you should be seeing your parish in print soon!

1. Check the copy deadline on the front page of Link. Submit your story before this date.
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3. Check the diocesan website for copy writing and photography guidance at: www.rochester.anglican.org -> Communications -> Guidance -> Photography Tips

well-known lecturer from NADFAS, the Tate Britain and Tate Modern, Val Woodgate. Val is a lecturer in Art History and particularly art, artists and World War 1. She will be telling us how in the face of strict official censorship, artists with dire experience of war depicted the conflict in powerful and often deeply moving works of art. Tickets £10 each including light refreshments from Dai and Veronica Rees 01474 812952 or more details on the website www.cobham-luddesdowne.org

TUNBRIDGE WELLS Mayor's Charity Concert at St John's Church, Tunbridge Wells at 7.30pm. A wonderful evening of music featuring pupils from Bennett Memorial School, Jubilee Singers and the Police Band. Tickets £10

Sunday 26

TUNBRIDGE WELLS Sponsored Dog Walk at 1pm. In conjunction with Pets as Therapy. A fun family event for dogs of all shapes and sizes and their owners. Walk through Burrswood's grounds and surrounding countryside. £5 registration fee.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS Bach – Up Close. RTWCS presents a dramatic, up close staging of JS Bach's St Matthew's Passion, with period orchestra at 3 pm Assembly Hall Theatre, Crescent Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2LU. Tickets: Rear circle £10, Front stalls £14, Front circle £18, Tiered stalls £22. Children - half price. Tickets can be purchased with cash or cheque through RTWCS choir members, or by telephoning 07506 557142 before Sunday 19 April 2015.

Wednesday 29

ASH FACE to FACE. An informal cafe style service in New Ash Green VA Meeting Room at St Peter and St Paul, Ash at 8.00pm. All welcome, just turn up or, for further details, contact Jan Tyson on janbar59@live.co.uk

May 2015

Friday 8

TUNBRIDGE WELLS Changed: New Life in Christ, 1WON Youth Event at St Matthew's Church, High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9BN from 7.00pm – 9.00pm. Including: Games, Music, Tuck Shop, Challenge. Cost: £1.50 pre booked £2.00 on the door.

Please contact Sarah Cabella 01634 560024, sarah.cabella@rochester.anglican.org

Saturday 30

DARTFORD Charity Concert by Afterparty A-Cappella on behalf of Kent Workplace Mission and The Teenage Cancer Trust at the Mick Jagger Centre, Dartford at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £15 and are available from the Mick Jagger Centre. The Box Office telephone number is 01322 291100, and lines are open from noon on weekdays and 9am on Saturday. Afterparty A-Cappella is a London-based vocal group which perform a range of musical styles. It won the Shard Choir of the Year 2013. Ken Burton (BBC The Choir) has described it as "Out of this world" and Carrie Grant (Pop Idol) as "Really fantastic, really entertaining, the whole package." Go to www.after-party.org.uk to find out more about the group and hear them.

AYLESFORD St Peter and St Paul, Aylesford. This December a summit meeting will take place in Paris to consider steps to be taken to keep global temperatures increase below 2 C. On each FIRST MONDAY of the month, we are holding an hour of prayer in the church from 10 to 11 am (with a break for tea/coffee in the middle). Please join us if you can, for some or all of the time.

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APRIL

- 1 Fauré's Requiem – New Benedict Singers
- 8 Harry Cooper – Jazz Pianist
- 15 Duo Mühlfeld – Clarinet and Piano
- 22 Georgina Roberts – Flute and David Elwin – Piano
- 29 Michele Roszak – Mezzo Soprano

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60 Years of Stories

On 4 November 1940 a German bomber flew over Paddock Wood and emptied its remaining bombs on the Kent countryside below. Sadly for the people of Paddock Wood it left a large hole in the cricket ground, and an even larger hole in the chancel roof, which meant the church had to be demolished. Fifteen years later St Andrew Paddock Wood, held its inaugural service in the new church building, and so this year we celebrate 60 years of ministry and mission in this church.



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Come dine with Us

By the Rev Bryan Knapp

The Feeding of the 5000, the Last Supper and the Emmaus Road are well known stories that centre around meals. Each year on Maundy Thursday St Andrew's Church, Paddock Wood hosts a Maundy supper during which we record the events of the last supper, and people have often commented on how moving an experience this is. So a seed was sown.

This year as part of our 60th celebrations we are asking the congregation to invite friends and family to 'Come dine with Us' during Holy and Easter week. Very loosely based on the Channel 4 programme, it is an opportunity for regular members to offer hospitality in their homes, that maybe they wouldn't otherwise think to do. The second part of the evening, is based around a table top quiz which will allow people to share points of view about everyday issues or questions, such as: What would you do if you won the lottery? When have you experienced a sense of God being with you?

Having spent Lent with the Rev Canon Jean Kerr and her course 'Talk the Good News', which our church is really enjoying and getting a great deal from, we hope this initiative will allow us to put into practice what we have learnt, and make the invitation to "come dine with us" a regular part of our church family life.



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New C of E primary school for Tonbridge

Secretary of State for Education Nicky Morgan has approved Bennett C of E secondary school's proposal to sponsor and open a new Church of England primary free school in South Tonbridge. The target opening date is September 2016. The new school will be an inclusive school admitting up to 60 children each year from reception and will provide a high quality, traditional primary education with a Church of England ethos.

Today's approval is a significant achievement. Only a minority of free school proposals have been approved, and there were more proposals both in this region and nationally than ever before. The success of this project is indicative therefore of the high standard of the bid and of the strong level of support from local parents for the school.

A precise site for the school is still being identified at this stage, and there is much work still to do on this and other pre-opening planning before the school's target opening in September 2016. However today is a very important milestone in delivering a new Church of England primary school for the people and children of Tonbridge.

Headteacher of Bennett, Ian Bauckham, the lead proposer for the new school said, "We would like to thank all those who have offered such overwhelming support for the project so far, in particular members of the local and Church communities in South Tonbridge. We very much hope that the new Bennett-sponsored primary school will add diversity

and choice to the range of schools available in Tonbridge. We have had a hugely warm welcome from local parents for the proposal and are delighted to have won the approval of the Department for Education to move to the next stage."

A 'free school' is a state funded school which, like academies, is not run by a local authority, but by its own sponsors, in this case Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, an outstanding Church of England secondary school with an established reputation and record of success and a designated Teaching School.

This positive news for Bennett is part of a wider trend. Research by the New Schools Network, which explored what parents value in a good school and how they think their own school measures up, showed that 8 in 10 parents in the South East would welcome the chance to have a free school in their area and almost three quarters said they would consider sending their child to a free school if one opened locally.

Natalie Evans, Director of New Schools Network, said: "The application process to set up a free school is incredibly rigorous – as it should be – so it is a testament to Bennett Memorial's hard work that their new school been approved to open.

"This latest announcement means the total number of free schools open or approved to open has now exceeded 400 marking an incredible milestone. Free schools are proving increasingly popular with parents and are providing good new schools places to their local communities."

For more information please go to: www.anewschoolfortonbridge.com



Ian Bauckham

Anglican Schools' Partnership – Bexley

The theme for the Trinity School Showcasing RE event held on 10 March was Celebrating School Christian Values.

Over 100 pupils from Years 3 and 4 took part from 7 local primary schools with older

students from Year 7 and Year 9 from Trinity Secondary School and made this a very enjoyable and action-packed day for schools within the Anglican Schools Partnership in Bexley.

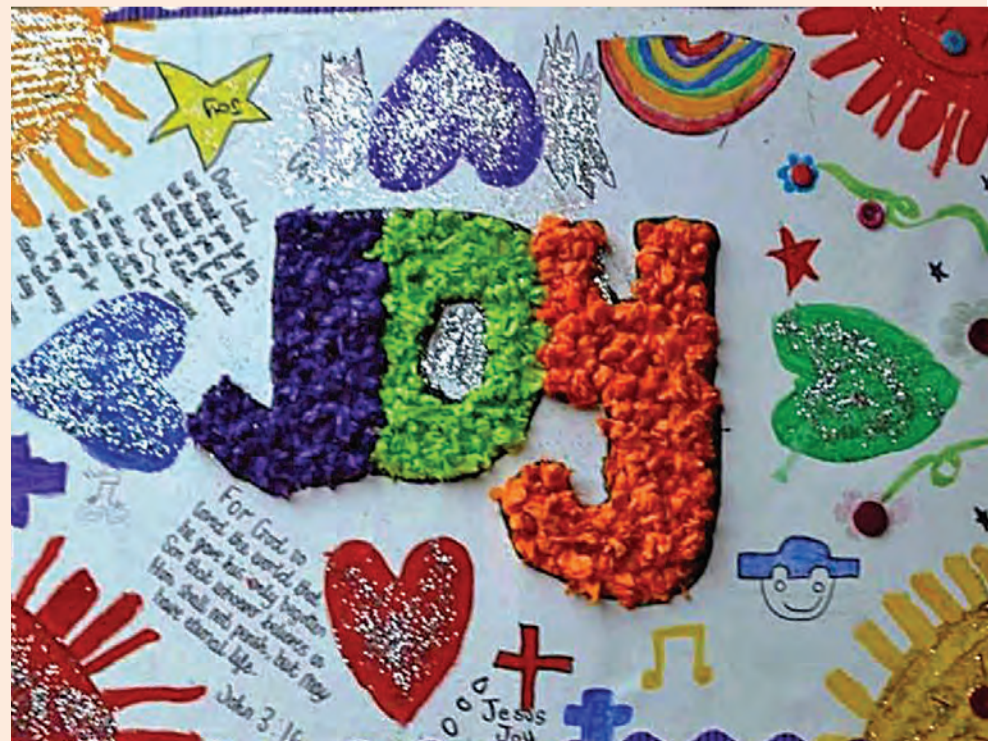
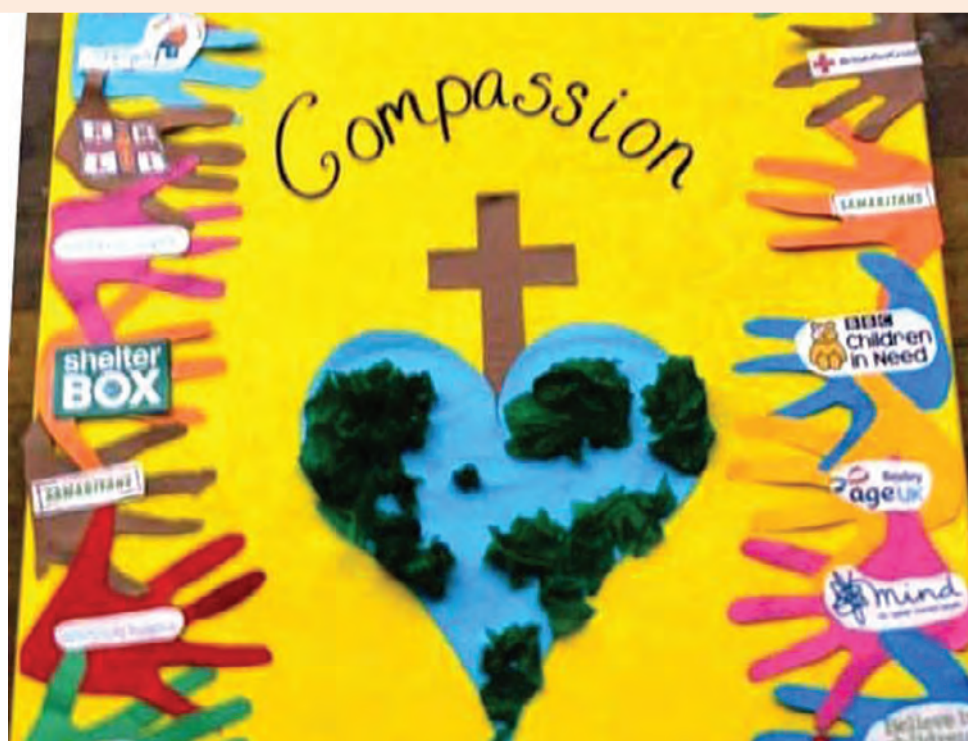
Pupils used song, drama and creative artwork to illustrate the themes for the day which

included joy, friendship, love, family, compassion, self control, endurance, forgiveness and hope.

It was a great opportunity to bring all our schools together, to see them mix so well and explore their faith and school values.

Ian Collins, Head Teacher at Trinity School,

said, "We were delighted to host this event again, which was a wonderful celebration of religious education. Many thanks to all the pupils and staff who were involved and making this such an enjoyable afternoon. The enthusiastic performances by all the schools really captured the spirit of the day."



Rising to the Challenge

By Cheryl Trice

Rochester Diocesan Youth Council is taking the opportunity to become involved in various projects and events throughout the Diocese this year.

We have been involved with Bishop Brian and the planning committee for the "Challenging Poverty Conference" to be held at Trinity Secondary School, Belvedere on 9 May. This will enable adults and young people from across the Diocese to participate and engage with the effects of poverty and how to demonstrate social action against world poverty. As young people, the youth council think it is vital to be able to serve as stewards on the day and fully participate in recognising what social actions means for them in age appropriate workshops. For more information, please visit www.rochester.anglican.org

As part of the Youth Council's development, the annual residential camp theme this year will be "Growing Young Leaders". The series of teaching sessions will enable young people to recognise their gifts and skills and the qualities needed to be assistant leaders within their own parish. This will be the third year the group returns to Kingswood Residential Centre, Ashford, for a weekend of activities, teaching and worship.

The Diocesan Big Day Out will be the

highlight of the diocesan calendar on Sunday 19 July.

This will once again give the Youth Council an opportunity to act as ambassadors for young people of the Diocese. The day will bring the diocesan church family together for worship, workshops and activities for children and young people. As people of all ages gather to celebrate the family & community of God, the Youth Council will assist in the operational side whilst also taking an active part in all that is on offer throughout the day with the other youngsters.

The Youth Council aids in the preparation, delivery and evaluation of the diocesan 1Won events that occur across the Diocese 4 times a year.

Following the success of February's midnight ice skating, the next event will take place at St Matthew's Church, High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells on Friday 8 May.

The Rochester Diocesan Youth Council is representative across the 3 Archdeaconries of the Diocese and meets regularly throughout the year. If you have young people of secondary school age and above who would like to represent the young people of the wider Diocese or require any further information on any of the above please contact Cheryl Trice, Diocesan Children & Young People Adviser on 01634560021 or email: cheryl.trice@rochesterdiocese.org.uk



Challenging Poverty

By Kay Mason

This year at St Mary's Primary School, Laddingford, our reflective theme for Lent has been inspired by Bishop James Langstaff and Bishop Brain Castle to look at Challenging Poverty. The Bishops encouraged communities and parishes to explore this theme in creative, innovative and eye-catching ways.

Inspired by this challenge 'Challenging Poverty' St Mary's primary school came up with some creative ideas. We had an installation of a cardboard box and empty food and drink containers in our church. This represented the home of someone living on the streets and helped us reflect on the plight of the hungry and homeless. In literacy time, we wrote stories and poems on what it must be like to be hungry and not to have a home.

We also wanted to do something practical

to help 'Challenging Poverty', so we decided to each bring to school a can of food and have a "Wear Your Old Clothes Day" with the cost to be paid in tins of food.

The best poems and stories written on the theme were shared.

The choir sang the song 'The Streets of London' by Ralph Mac Tell and our dance group performed movement to a song by Phil Collins 'Another Day in Paradise'.

Our Easter service was based on the theme of Challenging Poverty, where we gave thanks for all the tins of food collected to give to the Maidstone Day Centre.

Challenging Poverty also reminded us that Jesus too was homeless and relied on others for shelter and food.

Challenging Poverty

Poor people in poverty are regularly homeless or having to decide whether to have food to eat or heating to keep warm.

Older people are extremely unfortunate as they choose to keep their children safe, this causes them to starve more than normal.

Viewing these people day by day, walking past not making our move to help and change their lives. Helping them will be important!

Everywhere we go, every time we go, we are just ignoring them laying on the floor begging for spare change.

Rumours are getting spread, about people coming out of poverty, but lets turn our feelings into actions.

Though they are stuck in poverty and looking disgusting they are still good people.

You need to try and make a huge impact in life. We all need to be equal and they need a money difference!

Sam Malins, Tigers Class Year 5-6

Have you ever?

- Have you ever had no money for food?
- Have you ever not had Christmas presents?
- Have you ever slept out in the rain?
- Have you ever had hunger pain?
- Have you ever been so poor?
- Have you ever slept in a door way?
- Have you ever been so cold?
- Have you ever had no clothes to keep warm?
- Have you ever had no friends?
- Have you ever played?

Bradley Leopards, Class Year 3-4

POVERTY

- P**eople beg for food
- O**n the streets gazing at the stars
- V**ery many people are in poverty
- E**veryone can help
- R**espect poor people
- T**here's always hope
- Y**ou've got to stop it!

Libby Leopards, Class Year 3-4





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Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life

By the Rev Trevor Gerhardt

Where do you go when needing to prepare a bible study, sermon or article? How do you ensure that what you produce echoes words of eternal life?

I have always found it a privilege and a challenge to teach, preach and write about the Bible and God. I want to be true to the text and the message, but at the same time I want to make the text come alive. In the past five years as curacy programme director, teaching modules, preaching and writing articles, I have sometimes succeeded. Sometimes I have been successful in getting the facts across at the expense of making the lecture or writing interesting and other times I have succeeded in making the lecture or writing interesting at the expense of getting the correct facts to stick or make sense. On rare occasions, I manage to get the balance just right!

When I am writing, I know what I want to say and how I want to say it with the appropriate emotion and hand gestures. Somehow, once it is on paper, it is as if an ant has crawled all over the page after having had a swim in an ink pot. The ideas seem scabbled and incoherent.

Jesus of course was a really good communicator. What he said not only made sense, but the meaning of those words impacted the life of those listening.

This is reflected in the title of this article, where the disciples admit that the words of Jesus are life to them. What Jesus said, he lived and brought to life.

When people come to us with the expectation of saying something that reflects words of eternal life, be it preaching or teaching or even in writing, how can we ensure they are not disappointed?

For me, the starting point is to ensure I live the principle myself. Unless the word is living and alive for me, unless it resonates with me, it will be very difficult to communicate it to others without it feeling dry and staid. So how do I make my engagement with the Bible come alive in my preparation for teaching, preaching or writing?

First, I read the passage and then allow it to dwell within me for a few days while I reflect upon it and mull it over in my head. It is like a cow chewing the cud. As I do this, actual experience begins to resonate with the passage or theme. Ideas begin to emerge and I begin play with them.

A helpful exercise to enhance this process of imagination is to play with different metaphors. How best can I illustrate this process?

The best and easiest way to illustrate this process I have described is to share with you some writing I am working on at the moment. The following example is from content I am contributing to a book. Some of this content is also reflected in the work I am doing for my on-going doctoral dissertation. I want to share this example of the process of my writing with you.

The main verse I use in this writing is Hebrews 5:14:

But solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil (NRSV).

I train people for ministry. It is important that this training involves character development, evident in mature dispositions. This kind of development will enable sound judgement and is self-directed through constant use and practice.

As I read this verse and reflect upon my thinking and the connections I am making with it, I begin to list further ideas to explore. I then add these to the other questions I have which I seek to explore.

For example, how does this sound judgement resonate with phronesis (practical wisdom)? Does the Greek enlighten me further? How does the reading in other versions add to my exploration? What image or metaphor helps to further broaden my understanding, especially in the contrast between infants and the mature? What other biblical passages resonate with my thinking? Are there actual experiences or stories that illustrate my thinking thus far?

Asking these questions allows me a wealth of material from which I can choose in the construction of the study, talk or writing.

My study of commentaries of the original Greek text revealed that the use of 'full age' or 'mature' in verse 14 is about the growth of mental and moral character. This is in contrast to the 'dull' as used in verse 11, who are "slow-moving in mind, torpid in understanding" like the numbed limbs of an animal which is ill. This image here by Barclay provides me with a picture that illustrates the point. When I structure the study or talk later, I may want to consider finding an image or film to enhance the content and bring it alive.

I also discovered that 'babes' or 'infants' represent those new to learning (especially in moral philosophy) in contrast to the adjective 'mature' who are those 'trained' or 'practised'. These biblical versions all indicate a distinction. This is helpful when I am writing about training. Clergy under training have an expectation of a progression in theological education and that this progression as it relates to curates specifically, includes knowledge as well as character (formation) so as to attain 'full age' or maturity and not be 'dull'.

I also discovered that the writer of Hebrews uses the phrase 'ought to be teachers' to indicate a person who has a "mature grasp of a subject" in contrast to those unable to teach because they "refuse to grow up in knowledge" and "never grow up in behaviour".

This is helpful when writing about curacy because curacy resonates with this interpretation by Barclay in the sense that there is not just an expected progression in knowledge and in character but also the mastery of a subject. The subject in the case of curacy is practical theology and its application and implication in and on ministry appropriate within changing contexts. This is what is understood by theological reflection. According to the passage, this is achieved through 'exercise' or 'practice' (dia ten hexin) which, in its unique use only here in the entire New Testament, can be understood as the "building up of experience through continued process in the past"; a "steady application" developed as a "skill."

The result of this process is mature judgement. According to a commentary by Ellingworth, this type of understanding has resonance with the Latin habitus which is why the training is more than just knowledge; it affects the sense organs of spiritual perception, which are trained through habit, a



common idea in philosophical Greek and used by Plato and Aristotle.

Just by using a commentary to explore the original language, I have discovered other avenues for exploration. I have found further themes such as habitus, philosophical Greek, theological reflection and moral philosophy. I have also discovered some new people such as Plato, Aristotle and Philo. These could add further material to explore in order to find more breadth and depth within the text.

Having considered and illustrated ways in which to create content, I again take some time to mull over what I have found. Once again, I want to find themes and topics that resonate with my experience.

I want a thread of meaning to emerge. I want to provide space and time for the voice of the Spirit.

Once I have decided on the contents and the thread or focus of the talk, study or writing, I will now consider my audience or reader. If I am writing, my style and structure will be influenced by who I anticipate will be reading my work. If it is a Bible study, the allocated time, as well as the audience, will influence the structure of what I create.

For example, I will consider what will influence me preparing a Sunday sermon. How long will I have? Who will be present? What knowledge will they have? I want to ensure I have a good introduction providing context, a good middle providing detail and a good conclusion providing a challenge.

I find starting with an appropriate joke sets the audience at ease. An introduction using an example from my own life enables a personal connection from the start.

Once the context of the theme or text is established, I can set off providing the detail. A good middle has one good key focus that all other points illuminate. I then conclude by inviting my audience to join me in a response to the message. In other words, I am not preaching to you, but with you.

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Praying the way

Nation
For wisdom and responsible voting at General Election. APCMs that the right people are appointed.

Bromley & Bexley

Beckenham Deanery
Beckenham, Holy Trinity Our work in the community.

Beckenham, St Paul Monthly contemporary worship service 4 o'clock.

Penge, St John Future development plans. CAP debt counselling.

Bromley Deanery

Bromley, Christ Church "Give it Some Thought" service.

Bromley, St John the Evangelist Easter Family service.

Bromley, St Mark Local Christians involved in politics.

Bromley, St Mary Easter Day Service.

Bromley, Common St Augustine "Experience Easter" for school children.

Erith Deanery

Belvedere, All Saints Holy Week services. APCM on 19.

Bexleyheath, Christ Church Monthly Wednesday lunches.

Bostall Heath Bible Studies.

Falconwood Challenging Poverty Course.

Orpington Deanery

Chelsfield The bereaved

Orpington, All Saints The bereaved

Ramsden, Unity Church Befriending and Youth mentoring scheme

Sidcup Deanery

Foots Cray with North Cray Thanks

for the reordering of the Lady Chapel. Our new incumbent the Rev Paul Keown. WW1 Commemoration on 25

Sidcup, Christ Church Growth of our evening service.

Sidcup, St John the Evangelist Parish development plan.

Rochester

Cobham Deanery

Ash with Ridley Friends of Ash Church concert 26. Pulpit swaps within Cluster during April.

Cobham with Luddesdowne and Dode Growth from mission, Art and Great War Talk.

Fawkham and Hartley Pulpit swaps within Cluster during April.

Istead Rise Car Cleaning. New Church Newsletter editor.

Longfield Pulpit swaps within Cluster during April.

Southfleet Outreach concert 18.

Dartford Deanery

Thanks for the Dartford Winter Shelter. All services over Easter.

Darent Valley People committed to pray for each road in Benefice.

Dartford, St Alban Solution to parking problems

Dartford, St Edmund Development on old Glaxosmithkline site.

Gillingham Deanery

Gillingham, Holy Trinity Those standing at APCM.

Gillingham, St Augustine For new Musical Director. Thanks for Norman Carey.

South Gillingham For Passion Play and follow-ups. For those with dementia and carers. Our interregnum.

Gravesend Deanery

For all services in Holy Week, that the joy of Easter will be known. Thanks for contact with

local schools, nurseries and playgroups to tell of Easter message. Praise God for all Lent groups. For God's guidance on finances in our parishes.

Rochester Deanery

Princes Park Sunday School

Rochester, St Justus 'Going Deeper' Parish weekend.

Tonbridge

Malling Deanery

Snodland with Lower Birting Breakfast club for 10-14yrs.

West Malling with Offham Quinquennial.

Paddock Wood Deanery

Horsmorden Good Friday re-enactment.

Pembury Those confirmed

Sevenoaks Deanery

Sevenoaks, St Luke Reporting back 'The Way Ahead'.

Sevenoaks, St Nicholas All Easter services.

Weald Interregnum

Westerham Interregnum

Tonbridge Deanery

26 April - 3 May Bishop Brian's visitation

Crockham Hill Guidance for encouraging those on fringe.

Edenbridge Re-build Mexico: youth team working there.

Hildenborough Discipleship course.

Tonbridge, St Stephen Refresh café.

Tunbridge Wells Deanery

Rusthall Link parish Zimbabwe

Tunbridge Wells, King Charles the Martyr Visit from Haapsalu Estonia.

Tunbridge Wells, St James 'Who Let the Dads Out.'

Prayer topics for May should be sent to Jenny Smith, Flat 1, 52 High Street, Chislehurst BR7 5AQ 020 8467 6499 jenny_mary@btinternet.com by 3 April.

Intercession during April 2015

1 April
Wednesday of Holy Week

For those struggling with faith: for those who cannot believe, or who wish they did not, and for those who rage against the faith of others.

2 April
Maundy Thursday

For all Bishops, priests and deacons renewing their vows in the Cathedral today.

3 April
Good Friday

For those who feel abandoned by God or who cannot see his face, for the despairing and the broken hearted.

4 April
Holy Saturday

For the bereaved, for all waiting for new life.

5 April
Easter Day

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! our triumphant holy day, Alleluia! who did once upon the cross, Alleluia! suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

6 April
Easter Monday

Falconwood, Bishop Ridley Church
Vicar, the Rev Tim Hatwell

7 April
Easter Tuesday

Northumberland Heath, St Paul
Vicar, the Rev Clive Beazley-Long

8 April
Easter Wednesday

Slade Green, St Augustine
Vicar, the Rev Ann Tarper

9 April
Easter Thursday

Welling, St John the Evangelist
Vicar, the Rev Adam Foot

10 April
Easter Friday

Chelsfield, St Martin of Tours
Rector, the Rev John Tranter

11 April
Easter Saturday

Cray St Barnabas
Vicar designate, the Rev Neil Coleman

12 April
Easter 2

Bromley Deanery: The Rev Canon Katrina Barnes, Area Dean, and Richard Latteman, Lay Chair.

13 April

Pray for our brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic Church.

14 April

Crofton, St Paul
Vicar, the Rev Bimbi Abayomi-Cole

15 April

Cudham, St Peter and St Paul and Downe, St Mary Magdalene
Vicar, the Rev John Musson

16 April
Isabella Gilmore, Deaconess

Farnborough, St Giles the Abbot and St Nicholas
Rector, the Rev Matthew Hughes

17 April

For the curates of the Diocese and those who train them.

18 April

Green Street Green and Pratts Bottom, St Mary and All Souls
Vicar, the Rev Karl Carpani

19 April
Easter 3

Gillingham Deanery: the Rev Ann Richardson, Area Dean; Linda Bailey, Lay Chair.

20 April

Orpington, All Saints
Vicar, the Rev Brian McHenry

21 April
Anselm, Teacher of the Faith

For those whose vocation is seen more clearly by others, or who come reluctantly to their call.

22 April

Orpington, Christ Church
Vicar, the Rev Jay Colwill

23 April
George, Martyr

For psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors and all who fight the dragons of the mind.

24 April
Mellitus, Bishop of London

For the parish of St Peter with St Margaret, Rochester and for the Rev Joel Love, licensed today.

25 April
Mark, Evangelist

For the vocations day, for all exploring what the Gospel means for them today.

26 April
Easter 4

Archdeaconry of Rochester - The Ven Simon Burton-Jones

27 April
Christina Rossetti, Poet

Petts Wood, St Francis
Vicar, the Rev Robert Lane

28 April
Peter Chanel, Missionary

Bexley, St John and St Mary
Team Rector, the Rev Scott Lamb

29 April
Catherine of Siena, Teacher of the Faith

Blendon, St James the Great
Vicar, the Rev Andrea Ward

30 April
Pandita Mary Ramabai, Bible Translator

Footscray, All Saints, with North Cray, St James
Priest in Charge designate, the Rev Paul Keown

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Licensed Lay Ministers

by the Rev Lindsay Llewellyn-McDuff
Next month, a new creature will be licensed to the Diocese of Rochester. S/he may go about his/her business robed, or not. You may find him/her leading worship, visiting the sick, initiating mission programmes, taking funerals, leading youth and children's groups ... many and varied, in fact will be his/her ministries.

On 16 May, thirteen Licensed Lay Ministers will be created and sent out into the Diocese. These people will be acknowledged as Readers across the Church Of England, but here in Rochester their remit will be much more varied. The Lay Minister brings together the roles of Reader, Evangelist, Pastoral Assistant, Youth Minister ... and those other ministries that don't fit tidily in one box or another.

It's not that we've created some indeterminate minister chimera - no, each will have their own

role, under the incumbent, by which they fulfil their vocation. What we've done is up our game. We believe that all the Baptised people of God have a vocation to serve God's children, and that some are called out, without being ordained, to be visible examples of the ministry of the Baptised.

These people have been trained to a high standard, scrutinised, and tested to be sure they are on the path God has set them on. Their training will have been tailored to their vocation, to make them the best we can equip them to be as worship leaders, evangelists, pastors. Not some grey generic 'minister' but the full technicolour glory of the wonderful variety God has set before us - all that the people of God can be.

Do come and celebrate with us on the 16, and hold them in your prayers as they take this last stage in their journey.

Come, see what the Spirit is doing in our Churches.

Let us rejoice, and be glad in it.



Birthing from within Kent

by Aileen White

Community group Birthing From Within Kent, part of the outreach of the Rochester and Borstal Cluster of churches, has served fifty-seven families in its first year. It was set up to support families on their journey through pregnancy, birth and early postnatal years.

On its first birthday, as part of Mother's Day weekend, we offered a special day of rest, rediscovery and celebration to mums at this early stage in their mothering journey.

Through a variety of hands-on activities

mums were given the space to listen to themselves and each other. The day explored what it meant to be a mum as well as considering what children see when they look at mummy.

As with all Birthing From Within Kent's sessions the day encouraged creativity as well as providing time for reflection and listening. The aim was to provide quality time for mums to rest, recharge and find renewed hope

This was a unique opportunity for mums to delve deeper and explore the highs and lows of motherhood in a supportive and safe environment.

Find us at: St Justus Church Hall, The Fairway, Rochester, Kent. ME1 2LT.



Something in the Air?

By John Hougham

I wonder how many churches can number two centenarians among their regular worshippers? At Christ Church, Milton-next-Gravesend, we have recently celebrated significant birthdays of two such faithful members of our church family.

Mrs Joan Jarvis was one hundred and one on 19 February and Mrs Ivy Woolcock was one hundred and four on 5 March. Both are lifelong worshippers at Christ Church, and their birthdays were marked by gifts of flowers, rousing choruses of

"Happy Birthday to You" from the congregation and cake and wine after our service.

These remarkable milestones led us to tot up the ages of some of our "younger" members, to find that we have three over-nineties and no fewer than twenty four over-eighties in our congregation.

And please do not think that we are simply an ageing church. The real joy is that alongside this remarkable older generation we welcome, Sunday by Sunday, an increasing number of young families and both old and young gain a great deal from worshipping together. Perhaps there is something in the air?



Mrs Ivy Woolcock