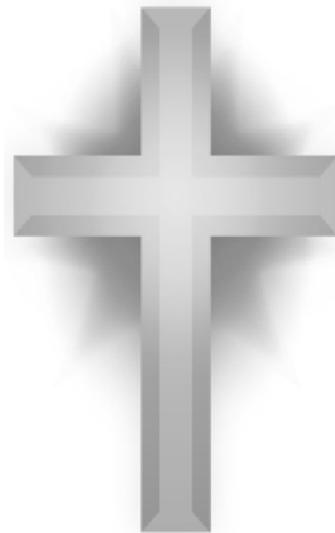
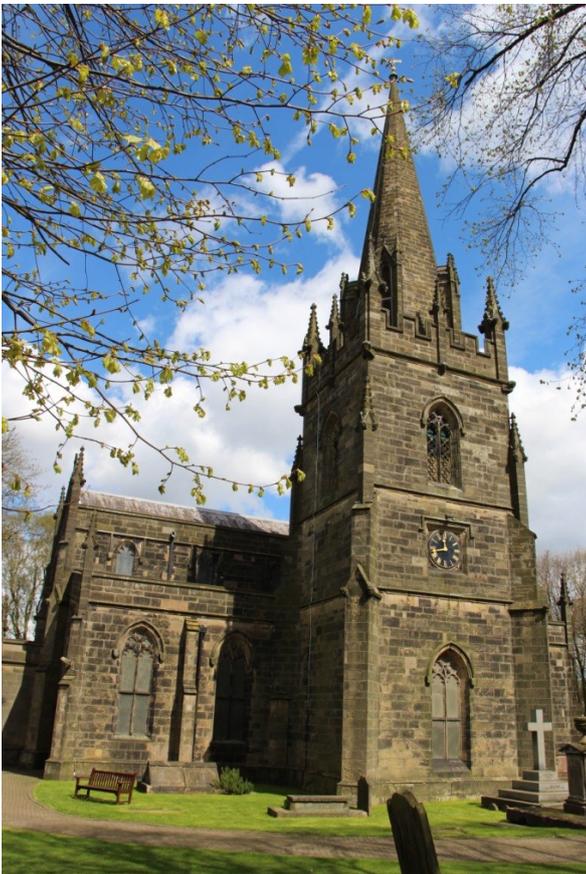
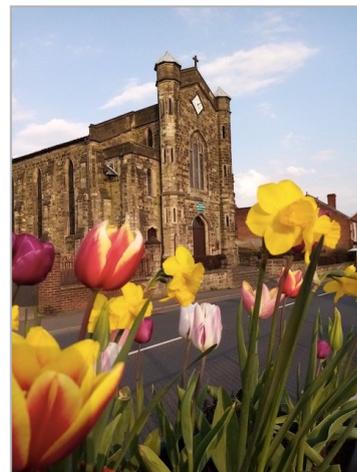


THE BEACON

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ALL SAINTS, SEDGLEY
ST. ANDREW'S THE STRAITS & ST. PETERS UPPER GORNAL

Registered Charity Number 1179471



Kingdom People
love • compassion • justice • freedom

50p

June 2020

PARISH WIDE WHO'S WHO

Team Rector	Revd Guy Hewlett	01902 295164
Team Vicar	Rev Catherine Mitchell	01902 677897
Licensed Lay Minister	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Ordinand and ALM	Claire Cox	07812 010108
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Barbara Baker	01902 882847
Pastoral Care	Tracey Bate	01902 680727
	Jackie Hewlett	01902 295164
	Sarah Parker	01902 885570
Worship Leader	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
Youth Leader and Youth Group	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
Singing Angels		07812 010108
	Claire Cox	
PCC Secretary	Kath Apperley	01902 663253
PCC Treasurer	Sheila Moss	01902 893570
Parish Office	Gail Griffiths	01902 540289
Web Editor	Martin Jones	01902 884461

St Peters

Who's Who

Parish Warden	David Moss	01902 893570
Parish Warden	Edward Grist	01902 682786
Treasurer	Sheila Moss	01902 893570
Children's Advocate	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
DCC Secretary	John Powell	
Uniformed Organisations	Please Contact David Moss	01902 893570

St Andrew's

Who's Who

Warden	Paul Cox	
Children's Advocate	Carol Haynes	
Treasurer	Alan Turner	01902 670938
DCC Secretary	Rosemary Reed	01902 679007
Little Angels Baby & Toddler Group	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Singing Angels	Claire Cox	07812 010108

All Saints Who's Who

Vestry Clerk	Chris Williams	01902 672880
Parish Wardens	Keith Tomlinson	01902 673366
	John Anderson	01902 677666
Treasurer	John Anderson	01902 677666
DCC Secretary	John Anderson	01902 677666
Caretaker	Pam Pugh	07860 256535
Junior Church	Barbara Price	01902 676591
Bell Ringer	Keith Williams	01902 672585
Organist	Martin Platts	07941 173252
Youth Leader	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
Brownies	Heather Churm	01902 674709
Ladies' Society	Geraldine Baker	01902 674608
Men's Society	Roger Berry	01902 881374
Mothers' Union	Liz Williams	01902 672880
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Web Editor	Martin Jones	01902 884461
Server/Verger		
Please Contact	Revd Guy Hewlett	01902 295164
Noah's Ark		
Parent &		
Toddler Group	Linda Edwards	01902 672556

Funerals

3rd May Neville Allen -	Gornal wood
14th May Roy McKay -	Gornal Wood
21st May Joan Mary Moodie -	Gornal Wood
Irene Ivy Mary May Hughes -	Gornal Wood
Peter Leonard Morris -	Gornal Wood
25th May William Edward Braddock -	Willenhall Lawn Cemetery
27th May Alice Lilian Bradley -	Beacon Hill
28th May Dorothy Dunning -	Gornal Wood
Robert John Marsh -	Gornal Wood
Malcolm James Parkes -	Gornal Wood

High Days & Holy Days for June

- 1 Justin Martyr – first ever Christian philosopher
- 2 Erasmus – a good saint for when you're all at sea
- 3 The Martyrs of Uganda
- 4 Petroc – the abbot of Padstow
- 6 Gudwal – the first Christian in Brittany?
- 7 Trinity Sunday
- 7*NEW Without the Trinity, there is no Christianity
- 8 William of York – victim of injustice
- 9 Columba of Iona – missionary to Scotland
- 11 Barnabas – Paul's first missionary companion
- 13 Antony of Padua – friend of St Francis of Assisi
- 14 Richard Baxter – Puritan Divine
- 15 Evelyn Underhill – mystical writer of the 20th century
- 16 Richard of Chichester – wanting God more clearly, dearly and nearly
- 16 Father's Day – time to celebrate male role models
- 21 Summer Solstice – longest day of the year
- 22 St Alban – helping a stranger in need
- 22 St Alban – British martyr under the Romans
- 22 Alban – Britain's first Christian martyr
- 24 John the Baptist – preparing the way for the Messiah
- 29 Feast of SS Peter & Paul – the two most famous apostle

THE BEACON

If you are interested in having the magazine delivered to your home on a regular basis please contact:

Karen Evans: 01902 678056

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admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk

by

Friday 19th June

and needs to be in Arial typeface, size 18.

Do not send files in pdf format

WEBSITE: www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk



You will have seen in the Press that all our churches are closed for services for the foreseeable future. This means there will be no Vestry Hour at All Saints' to deal with wedding and baptism enquiries. We are having to re-arrange those weddings and baptisms disrupted by the current situation so, regretfully, cannot consider any enquiries for baptisms until further notice, nor can we consider any requests for weddings for 2020.

If you wish to enquire about a wedding for 2021 or 2022, please contact

Chris Williams chriswilliams550@btinternet.com.

Heaven in ordinary...something understood

By Robert Jones

The month of June sees the Church emerging from the long seasons of Lent and Easter into the even longer Trinity season, which stretches through the summer into the autumn. Some churches call this period Ordinary time, which I rather like. Without ordinary, we would not appreciate the extraordinary.

It seems to me that most of us are yearning for a touch of the ordinary right now. We have done our best to make the most of difficult times under lockdown, but are looking forward to 'normal' human contact and, as some people put it, getting our lives back. In truth our lives have carried on, albeit within boundaries. And we have had time to reflect. A little while back in the midst of all this, I read something which stuck with me and got me thinking: *'God does not send us plagues to teach us things, though we can learn from them.'*

When bad things happen, people ask why. The God revealed in Jesus does not visit plagues on people, nor wish natural disasters on anyone. Rather, the Gospel shows us a God who chooses to walk with us, meets us in the storms of life, and experiences the highs and lows of what it means to be human alongside us.

So what are we learning? After years of bruising debate about our relationships within Europe, we are learning the art of listening and talking kindly with one another again. Community spirit is flourishing and in the midst of isolation we have become more connected: not only through social media, but also through the humble telephone. We have learned what it is to miss our social contact with one another: love of neighbour has re-emerged in a new and stronger way.

We are learning that we are connected across the whole world. 'Me first' does not work when facing a common challenge to our well-being - whoever thought we could all be first anyway? What happens thousands of miles away affects us and we are learning that we are all responsible for each other, challenged to work for the common good because that includes our own good.

George Herbert, the seventeenth-century priest-poet, wrote a poem called *Prayer*, in which he used the delightful phrase ‘heaven in ordinary’.

As we enter these weeks of Ordinary time, we could try to see what we have learned. You might like to look up the poem, for tellingly it ends with these simple words: ‘something understood.’

Robert Jones, Archdeacon of Worcester

The Valley of Dry Bones has a future hope

‘A dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones. An’ I hear the word of the Lord!’ At this time of global pandemic, we live with stark reality of death and life. Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of dry bones (37:1-14) was given when God’s people were in exile in Babylon. They felt dead, being separated from home and God! The vision answers God’s question: *‘can these bones live?’*

We can also feel cut off from God, facing the loss of job, business, home or health, with churches unable to meet on Sundays. This vision assures us that God has power over death and can breathe new life into what is hopeless.

When Ezekiel is told to *‘prophesy to the bones,’* God brings them back to life: the bones come together and are covered with muscles and skin. He then prophesies to the wind, from the four corners of the earth, to bring the bodies alive. The physical bodies are then filled with God’s breath to bring new life. The miracle of this story is that God not only makes these bones live, but also brings the life of His Spirit.

The Covid-19 virus robs people of their life by suffocation, so that they can’t breathe. Our hope beyond the pandemic is that the gift of God’s Spirit will bring new life to our lives, churches and world. Life will certainly look very different in the future, but we can be assured that God is with us and that we are safe in His hands.

‘I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord.’(vs 14)

We leave a mark on everything

God is love.

When I worked as a Police officer something called Locard's principle was, and still is, crucial to crime scene investigation.

The key principle underlying crime scene investigation is this concept that has become known as Locard's Exchange Principle. It states that whenever someone enters or exits an environment, something physical is added to and removed from the scene. This physical rule of course helps established whether or by whom a crime has been committed.

I was reminded of this when recently I took a funeral service for a family who wanted the extract below from a book called 'Fahrenheit 451' by Ray Bradbury read at the service. Before you read it I must make it clear that our souls go to heaven not to things, but there is a clear message of leaving something behind which is important!!

'Everyone must leave something behind when he dies, my grandfather said. A child or a book or a painting or a house or a wall built or a pair of shoes made. Or a garden planted. Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die, and when people look at that tree or that flower you planted, you're there. It doesn't matter what you do, he said, so as long as you change something from the way it was before you touched it into something that's like you after you take your hands away.'

Simply summarised we leave something behind wherever we go, whether we realise it or not.

I think that the greatest 'thing' that we can give, receive and leave behind is love. This is not physical but spiritual.

When Jesus walked this earth his disciples saw him, touched him, ate with him, walked with him – they were physically with him.

As I write we have just celebrated the ascension and we are moving towards Pentecost. When Jesus physically left his disciples, he very obviously left behind something life changing for the whole world, but at that time it was very localised to a relatively small number of people (although it was many tens of thousands!!).

At Pentecost the Father sent the Holy Spirit upon all his people and continues to do so – to you and to me. This is clearly spiritual. We cannot see the Holy Spirit in the ordinary sense of ‘see’; the bible uses the image of a dove to help us. But we can see the working out of the Holy Spirit in lives of love and care. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers and changes our lives; enables us to love and forgive, to know we are forgiven.

I pray that as we move forward as church that we will all leave love, the most wonderful trail of love, until we one day are completely caught up in the love of God and made complete in the love of God.

During this terrible pandemic we have seen many acts of love. Know that you are deeply and eternally loved. Where might you leave a trail of love today?

God Is Love.

1 John 4.7-16

Beloved let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Vicars Ponderings June – Being Called

Some years ago I had the privilege to attend a friend's ordination as Priest in Liverpool Cathedral. It was wonderful to see my friend ordained in such an amazing building (not as good as Durham or Worcester of course!!) to celebrate with her and her family at the start of the next phase in her ministry journey.

At the start of the ordination service in Liverpool the Dean of the cathedral, who to me, had an uncanny resemblance to the actor Patrick Stewart (or for the Trexies amongst you, Jean-Luc Picard the captain of SS Enterprise), which was a little distracting!! welcomed the supporters, friends and relatives of those being ordained.

In his welcome, the Dean, suggested that often when someone is ordained people will say that the person has been called “into the church”, they are “entering the church” or they have been called to do the work of God; but as the Dean at the cathedral helpfully reminded all those present, that through baptism, the person being ordained has already entered the church, by virtue of our baptism we have all “entered the church”, we are all called as a royal priesthood, as the whole church in this place to be witnesses to God's love and to the work of his kingdom, this is not the sole calling of those ordained, this is **ALL** our callings.

The first two paragraphs of the Bishop's introduction to an ordination service also reminds us that we are all, as the church, those called by God;

God calls his people to follow Christ, and forms us into a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to declare the wonderful deeds of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

The Church is the Body of Christ, the people of God and the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit. In baptism the whole Church is summoned to witness to God's love and to work for the coming of his kingdom.

In his letters to the early fledgling church, Paul often uses the analogy of the church being the Body of Christ.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:12-13)

This passage continues with more detailed descriptions of body parts and how they serve the body as a whole in particular ways, they all have a specific job or function to perform, and through these individual jobs and functions the body is made whole. It is within this body, when it is functioning as a whole body in unity, with the direction of the Holy Spirit, the body can achieve so much more.

Individuals from the body, may be called to do specific jobs, as Paul describes towards the end of chapter 12;

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues.

From within the body, individuals are called to take on a particular function, some people are called to lead our children's work, some people are called to lead services, some are called to clean the church building, some to make the tea and coffee, some are called to oversee the finances, some are called to take on an overseeing role and some called to ordained ministry of a deacon, a priest, a bishop.

The Bishop's introduction to the ordination service continues with the following paragraph;

To serve this royal priesthood, God has given particular ministries. Priests are ordained to lead God's people in the offering of praise and the proclamation of the gospel. They share with the Bishop in the oversight of the Church, delighting in its beauty and rejoicing in its well-being. They are to set the example of the Good Shepherd always before them as the pattern of their calling. With the Bishop and their fellow presbyters, they are to sustain the community of the faithful by the ministry of word and sacrament, that we all may grow into the fullness of Christ and be a living sacrifice acceptable to God.

To serve the body of Christ, the royal priesthood of the church, God has called individuals as priests, this is not a calling that supersedes the calling of being a member of the church, this is a calling to help the church fulfil, to its fullest potential as the Body of Christ, its first and foremost calling as witnesses to God's love and his work in this place.

This is a calling that cannot be done alone; it is a calling that is reliant on the sustaining and directing power of the Holy Spirit, not just for the priest but also the for the church in which they serve.

By the time you read this, we will have celebrated Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon those early disciples in a real and powerful way. This same Holy Spirit is available to each and everyone of us, if we ask. The Holy Spirit enabled the early church to do amazing things, enabled the church to reach out and grow, and the Holy Spirit enables us today, to fulfil our calling as the church, the Body of Christ, here in this place. Why not seek the Holy Spirit's guidance and power now, today, to fulfil your own calling in Christ's church.

Blessings Catherine

Lesson Sent To Us By John Grosvenor

The second lesson appointed for today's (Saturday 9th May 2020) Morning Prayer is in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 4 verses 31-37.

To understand the context of this very wee snippet we should really read the whole of chapter 4 and the first eleven verses of Chapter 5.

I shall try to set the scene briefly:

In Chapter 3 Jesus has been baptised in the River Jordan by John the Baptist; the first thirteen verses of Chapter 4 (set for Thursday's Morning Prayer) tell of Jesus' temptations in the desert and His quoting of scripture to rebut them [note that the devil also quote scripture, but in a distorted context]. Verses 14-30 (yesterday's MP) returns to Galilee after his time in the desert and in the synagogue at Nazareth has read from the prophecy of Isaiah (61: 1-2a), sat down and began to speak to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled as you listen."

Yesterday's reading ended, "... they led him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built, so as to throw him down. But he passed through the middle of them and travelled on."

Today's reading, "And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and he used to teach them on the Sabbath-day: and they would be amazed at his teaching, because his speech was marked with authority.

"And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon; and it cried out in a loud voice, "Leave us alone – what have we got to do with you, Jesus the Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!"

"And Jesus rebuked it, "Be silent, and come out of him."

"And the demon threw him into the middle and came out of him, causing him no harm! And astonishment came upon them all, and they spoke to each other saying, "What is this word? Because he commands the unclean spirits with authority and with power – and they come out!" And the rumour about him started to go out to every place in the area round about."

Let us keep these words and ponder in our hearts.

There are certain themes which occur within this passage and recur throughout the gospels:

- “amazed at his teaching, because his speech was marked with authority”
- “he commands with authority and with power”
- “the rumor about him started to go out to every place”
-

Why are they amazed?

Because Jesus speaks with authority and power.

From where does this authority and power come?

In the opening of the Gospel for today’s Mass (John 14: 7-14)

Jesus said to his disciples:

“If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.”

In our passage from Luke the unclean demon identifies Jesus as “the Holy One of God!”

Both their amazement and the dawning realisation of the source of His authority and power cause the people (not just his disciples) to talk about what He says and does:

“the rumour about him started to go out to every place”

When reading (or listening to) Luke’s Gospel note that he often refers to the ripple effect of rumour in the spreading of Jesus’ words and deeds.

Whilst thinking about Jesus’ words and deeds being with power and authority do not forget to read and compare the first chapter of Genesis and the Prologue to John’s Gospel.

Then read Mark 4: 35-41.

Mothers' Union

It was with sadness that we heard of the death of Alice Bradley in April. Alice was a member of Mothers' Union for 22 years, and joined the Mothers' Union Choir, which she enjoyed very much. In latter years she became an Indoor Member and moved into residential care. I enjoyed visiting her and was always greeted with that wonderful smile of hers. It was interesting to listen to Alice's stories as she reminisced, and to hear the latest news of her family who meant the world to her. Alice will be remembered by the congregation of All Saints' and the members of the Mothers' Union for her bright and cheerful personality and she will be sorely missed by all who knew her. In these unprecedented times we were unable to pay our respects at her funeral but we will hold Alice and her family in our prayers at this time.

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Many of you may have already listened to the Daily Hope Line and be aware that you can now access Mothers' Union Midday Prayers through this. The number to dial is 0800 8048044 - option 4, then option 8.

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The Williams' household is continuing to keep busy. I have mastered 'Click & Collect' at Waitrose where I picked up their weekly paper which had the following extract about our (the nation's, not the Williams'!) shopping habits during 'lockdown'.

Week 1: Top sellers included toilet rolls, baked beans and chicken soup. Fridges, laptops, printers and landline phones.

Week 2: Antibacterial surface wipes and paracetamol. With schools closing, sales of puzzles, craft kits, Lego and swing ball sets.

Week 3: Pasta machines, bakeware and food processors, and there was a hike in wine sales!

Week 4: Burger and salad sales rose with the temperature. DIY products, outdoor furniture and garden tools.

Week 5: Male grooming products.

Week 6: Fresh food and family fillers as shoppers fall into a weekly routine, while parents-to-be search for cots, babygrows and changing mats.

This does show how our shopping needs have changed over the weeks. The one need that never changes is our need of prayer – for one another, for all who are struggling with our present situation, for our politicians, medical advisers and NHS, for all who are working in our community to serve us, for our clergy and diocese, and for the work of the Mothers' Union.

I received the following message on 22nd May from Sheran Harper and the Mary Sumner House Team.

£500,000 and still going!

This week our £1 million 'Urgent Appeal' passed the halfway point and that is thanks to our amazing members and supporters of Mothers' Union worldwide. Your donations have ensured our movement can continue our work putting faith in action to change lives and deliver God's work.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread without fear or favour in its claiming of our daily way of life. As a fellowship and movement that works at the heart of communities worldwide, our work, prayer and support is needed more than ever. United, our members and friends have continued to go above and beyond to help both practically, prayerfully and through the support of this appeal. We just wanted to say a heartfelt thank you.

Pigeons

Three vicars discussing a problem with pigeons "We tried poisoning but people don't like dead pigeons falling from the rafters," one says. "I tried shooting them but it damaged the roof," says another. "We had this problem but not anymore" says the third. "I just catch them, christen and confirm them, let them go and we never see them again."

Food and Drink Quiz Courtesy of John Grosvenor

1. There is an awful lot of this in Brazil.....
2. A grain that could fall as snow?.....
3. Breakfast that served a sentence.....
4. Ruby Red is the breed of this meat producer. Take note of his boots they are also fit for a Duke.....
5. Character from Wind in the Willows changes the spelling of his abode.....
6. Dover, for example.....
7. Liqueur that makes a noise like a game of cards.....
8. Could this mean that it is foggy?.....
9. Cosy country home between sheets of pastry.....
10. You would not make a loss with Her Majesty playing this part.....
11. Yankee Doodle called the feather in his hat this and placed it before the dairy produce.....
12. A queue of traffic before a disreputable lady.....
13. Anika? before a dessert.....
14. Ballerina follows the soft fruit.....
15. This animal has a high temperature.....
16. The fowl in front of the olympic skater.....
17. Named after a queen and a snack.....
18. Pisces covered in pastry.....
19. You would get this if he was pushed down the mountain.....
20. Guardian of the sheep encased in shortcrust.....
21. Bovine agitated and cooked in fat.....
22. Game caught illegally with the product of a reproductive organ.....
23. Goes before tag and the colour of chocolate
24. A small amount.....
25. They won Eurovision.....

In May, we celebrated the end of war in Europe in 1945, but in May 1940 the picture was much bleaker. On 10th May 1940 the Nazis invaded neutral Belgium and Holland. British and French forces rushed to the aid of their neighbours, but they were being lured into a trap. The main German blow fell with tremendous fury, further to the east at Sedan. German tanks brushed aside the weak defences and raced virtually unopposed across Northern France. They reached the Channel Coast in only 10 days and cut off the main allied armies in Belgium. Short of supplies and surrounded, the allies fought their way back to the port and beaches of Dunkirk. It seemed that only a few thousand would make it over the English Channel, and the war would be lost. This was the darkest hour.

An evacuation was hastily planned but it was expected that only a few thousand would make it back to Britain. An unlikely collection of naval ships, ferries, paddle steamers, sailing barges and private pleasure boats, set sail for the inferno of Dunkirk. On the beaches, exhausted troops stood for hours in lines stretching out into cold sea, waiting for rowing boats to ferry them out to the bigger ships; it was painfully slow. The only escape from the burning port itself was over a long, narrow wooden breakwater. The troops faced repeated attacks from artillery and planes. Day after day, the ships returned. Many were sunk, and lives lost, including civilian volunteers on the small boats. Against all odds, more than 330,000 were brought back. That was the “Miracle of Dunkirk”.

Was this a miracle? The escape of the Israelites through the Red Sea comes to mind, but in the Bible, Pharaoh’s army is swept away. In 1940, Hitler was triumphant, and he would bring death and misery across and beyond Europe. Dunkirk itself was only freed in May 1945. Dunkirk was the final scene in a short chapter of catastrophe, but it was not the final chapter. For the British, it became transformed into a moral victory in the face of enormous danger. It demonstrated the spirit of sacrifice, not to win military glory but to save others. It provided the purpose and resolution to face the years of hardship, danger, fear, and loss that lay ahead.

Disbelief

We approach the 80th anniversary of what is still called the Miracle of Dunkirk. In our current crisis, images of the War are drawn upon to help maintain morale. Are there any lessons from Dunkirk that are applicable to the ongoing battle against an invisible enemy?

On 10th May 1940 the Germans invaded neutral Holland and Belgium, using airborne troops to reach deep beyond the borders. The British and French rushed to the aid of Belgium, as in the First World War. But this was not to be a repeat of 1914. The would-be rescuers were lured into a trap, as the main German blow fell on weaker French forces further at Sedan. Once the line was breached, German tanks raced virtually unopposed across Northern France, reaching the Channel Coast in 10 days. Allied troops in Belgium, still locked in fierce battles with the Germans from the east were cut off from supplies and in danger of attack from the south. Through many sacrifices and a deal of fortune, the armies held out but in an ever-shrinking pocket around the port and beaches on Dunkirk. It seemed that only a few soldiers would escape over the English Channel, and Britain and France would have to surrender.

Although the war had started in 1939 little had happened

Greg Ball

How wonderful in these times to share something very heart-warming. One of our Singing Angels decided because her church's door was closed at the moment and they weren't getting any money, she wanted to do something.

So she put a box of her books and toys outside on her drive with a note saying please make a donation to my church.

She then came to my door with £40.

What a wonderful donation such kindness from a small child really does encourage- and warm my heart.

Well done again to Poppy , she is such a kind, caring child.

God bless her and her family

Jan

I was reading my thoughts for the day this morning before work and thought how appropriate this seems saying this was written before we knew what was happening today.

Gail.

The path was worn bare in the middle by a multitude of horses hooves over the years.

To either side were ruts made by the wheels of the carts the horses pulled.

In the space between the wheel ruts and the horses path, the writer and philosopher Henry David Thoreau saw a flower grow, blossom and live outside its natural span, unperturbed by all that went on to either side of it.

Now, we are not flowers and we cannot ignore the rest of the world, but neither should we let the fear of this and that prevent us from blossoming where we are.

Just a pint of social media for me, please

Even before the lockdown, social media seems to have been replacing the role of pubs in socialising, as far as young people are concerned. In 2005, an estimated 18 per cent of young people aged 16 to 24 were non-drinkers. According to one study, that has now risen to 29 per cent. “Online technology has made friends and family instantly accessible and the role of pubs and clubs for initiating and consolidating social networks appears to have changed.” So says Dr Dominic Conroy, a psychologist at the University of East London.

Dr Conroy adds: “With the internet being used to initiate and maintain social relationships, both romantic and otherwise, the use of alcohol as a social lubricant may be less necessary.”

He co-authored a recent study on the subject with Prof Fiona Measham, a criminology expert at Liverpool University.

His love is like a gentle breeze
That brushes my cheek and travels with ease

His love is like the open sea
so wide and deep and flowing free

His love is like the prettiest flower
That brings such joy in a dismal hour

His love is like the sun's warm rays
Brightening even the saddest of days

His love is like a crystal stream
that sparkles with the sunshine's gleam

His love is like a warm embrace
Making our troubles fade without a trace

He loves us with a love so true
that we can't help but love him too

By Amanda **Jayne Lanceley**

Where are our fathers?

21st June is Father's Day, and last year four in ten fathers failed to see their children on Father's Day.

Now there may be perfectly good reasons for this – Father's Day is not as 'big' as Mother's Day, and fathers may well be seeing their children just fine on other days.

But a survey commissioned by the campaign group Fathers 4 Justice (F4J) has also found that one in five fathers who do not live with their children fear losing, or have lost, contact with their children. Many of these 'separated' fathers experience mental health issues after being denied access to their children.

At a time when depression and male suicide is on the increase, is there anything that we as a church can do to help local families who are struggling with these issues?

The Lane's latest antics!



Over the last few weeks we have had lots of fun at home. Isaac, Reuben and Solomon seem to be very happy playing together, (most of the time) and although the noise they make is sometimes overwhelming, it is happy noise!

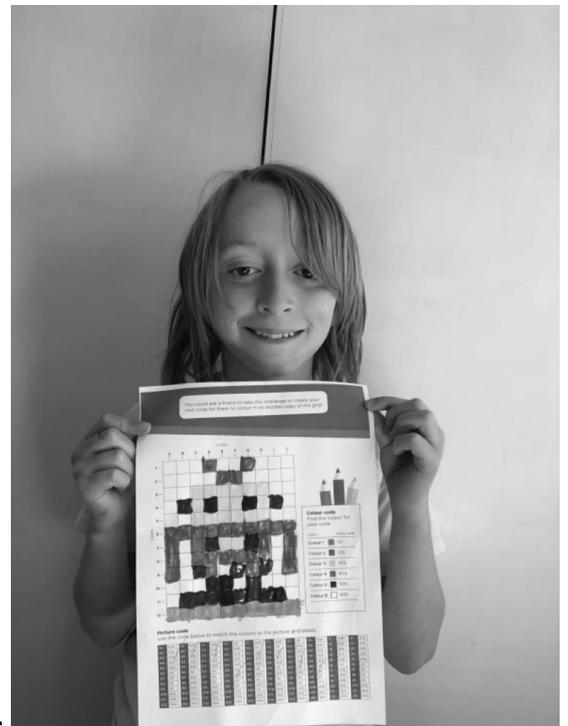
The thing I really wanted to share is that last week, West Mercia Scouts held a virtual camp event for all their Beavers, cubs and Scouts, which Isaac took part in. He joined 3rd Sedgley Beavers as soon as he was 6 and has now progressed into the Cubs. I always wanted my boys to attend

Beavers/Cubs as I love the values they promote, and Isaac really enjoys it!

For the virtual camp, children had to spend at least 1 night from the 7 sleeping out of their bed. This could be a tent in the garden but could also be a den in their bedroom. Whatever suited each family.



Isaac, Reuben and Barrie (I had to stay inside as it was too cold for Solomon out there last week) slept in the garden for 3 nights, then in the tent in the playroom for the rest of the week. Reuben is only 4, isn't in Beavers yet, but can't wait to join!



The cubs also had to prepare a meal: Isaac did Sausage and mash for the family.

There was a daily science challenge that the cubs had to do, build their own marble run, build a car from junk modelling and create a helicopter from paper and a paperclip, just to mention a few.

The week finished with a live streamed virtual campfire sing along. It was a very well-run event, and really made us feel like we had a purpose and has given us some great family memories which I'm sure will stay with the boys for ever.

How do you feel about your health?

Having a religious faith may well make you feel better about your health, according to recent government figures.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published data linking religious belief and health in an effort to “understand the circumstances of people of different religious identities.”

It found that 66 per cent of Muslims, 68 per cent of Christians, 69 per cent of Sikhs, 71 per cent of Buddhists, 72 per cent of Hindus and 77 per cent of Jews were satisfied with their health between 2016 and 2018. In contrast, only 64 per cent of non-religious people reported being satisfied with their health during that time.

Michael Wakelin, chair of the Religious Media Centre, said: “I guess this has something to do with an attitude of gratitude. If you are of the opinion that God loves you and He created you, you are more likely to be grateful for what you have.

“Also, if you have a faith you are more likely to be hopeful for a better future, so that even if things are a bit tough now, they will improve in God's time.”

Refugee Week – 15th-21st June

As the annual 'Refugee Week' approaches, various Christian relief agencies and campaign groups warn that coronavirus could have a catastrophic impact on the refugees whom they are trying to help. First, the big picture: according to the UNHCR, "we are currently witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 70.8 million people around the world have been forced from home. Among them are nearly 25.9 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18."

Refugees are especially vulnerable, as their usual homes of makeshift tents or flimsy shelters are over-crowded and without clean water or sanitation, making social distancing and isolation impossible. Also, many refugees are already suffering under-lying health conditions and mental health issues.

As the head of the Humanitarian Division at Christian Aid, Nick Guttman, also points out: "Refugees are some of the most vulnerable people in the world. Access to medical facilities is limited and the destabilisation of the global economy is likely to have an impact on their livelihoods and the flow of humanitarian aid." He warns that it is only a "matter of time" before it reaches the countries with a high number of refugees: Bangladesh, Syria, Lebanon, Nigeria, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Tearfund has highlighted the problem of warning the one million Rohingya people, crowded in camps in Bangladesh. "There is no internet provision in the camps and the mobile network is currently suspended, so getting the message out about the dangers of the virus relies on word of mouth."

Meanwhile, Open Doors is concerned for the plight of the Pygmy people in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Many fled their rainforest after persecution by Islamist rebels, and are now living in camps, where they are extremely vulnerable to the virus.

Leprosy Mission has warned that India "faces a human timebomb, waiting to explode." Communities affected by leprosy, malnutrition, overcrowded living conditions and poor sanitation, make "ideal breeding ground for the spread of coronavirus. Social distancing and isolation are impossible in the densely populated areas."

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Christians and the bubonic plague of London

The Reverend Richard Peirson was one of the exceptions. Most of the other clergy in the City of London had fled the Great Plague in 1665, but Peirson stayed behind to look after the parishioners of St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, where he was Rector. The parish was densely populated and the pandemic was catastrophic. The church's register records 636 burials that year in the month of September alone, with 43 interred in one day.

Houses of infected people were marked with a red cross on the door, with occupants kept inside for 40 days. Handcarts were pulled along the city streets to cart away the bodies; the drivers' cries of "Bring out your dead", became etched in the memories of subsequent generations.

Relatives were banned from attending funerals.

The official count numbered 68,596 deaths in London alone, but other estimates suggested two or three times that number. Bubonic plague – for that is what it was – was incurable. Poor people were fatalistic about it but complained that even their 'spiritual physicians' had abandoned them. Clergy of the Church of England were often supplanted by non-conformist preachers.

It wasn't just the St Bride's Rector who put his life in jeopardy by staying at his post. While most wealthy people, along with King Charles II and his court, escaped the plague-ridden city, Churchwarden Henry Clarke also chose to remain at the church. When he succumbed to the illness, his brother William took over. William survived for a fortnight. Plague cases continued to occur sporadically at a modest rate until mid-1666. That year the Great Fire of London destroyed St Bride's Church and much of the City of London. It was rebuilt to a design by Christopher Wren, but almost obliterated once more in 1940 during World War II before being restored yet again. Today's Rector, Canon Alison Joyce, says that compared with her predecessor Richard Peirson, she has it easy. Like everyone else, she is confined by the lockdown rules to her Rectory next to the church. But her pastoral work continues, and she collates sermons and archive music to

create a Sunday webcast service. Alison writes, “these days it is a ministry of telephone calls, emails and Facetime. I offer such practical help and support to the vulnerable as I can . . . I keep a candle burning before our main altar and continue a ministry of prayer.”

Alison says she is surprised when people regard the faith as a kind of celestial insurance policy against bad things happening to them. The first followers of Jesus knew that in dedicating their lives to following the crucified and risen Christ, their discipleship would take them into the very heart of darkness, not away from it.

She adds, “Hope is no hope at all unless it can engage with utter despair

Charles Dickens **prolific writer with a social conscience**

Popular Victorian novelist Charles Dickens died 150 years ago, on 9th June 1870. His books include *The Pickwick Papers*, *A Tale of Two Cities* and *David Copperfield*.

He died of a stroke in Gad’s Hill Place, his country home in Kent, when halfway through writing *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. The last novel he completed – most of them were written in regularly released parts – was *Our Mutual Friend*, in 1865.

He had been born in Portsmouth in 1812, the second of eight children. His family were relatively poor, and his mother wanted him out at work, so he never received a formal education. Nevertheless, he edited a weekly journal for 20 years and wrote 15 novels, as well as many other stories, articles and letters. He was also a staunch social campaigner, particularly for children’s rights and education.

As could be deduced from one of his most loved works, *A Christmas Carol*, he was a firm believer in Christian elements such as compassion and redemption, and he loved the New Testament, while having little time for the Old or for organised religion. His parents were nominal Anglicans. He is said to have wanted his stories to be seen as ‘parables’ emphasising the teaching of Jesus.



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Looking for Hope Amongst the Clutter

In this strange locked down season, because of the coronavirus pandemic, I've noticed a change in the type of pictures posted on social media. In place of the look-here-at-me selfies are snapshots of buds opening to display the colours of spring.

Such hopeful images counterbalance gloomy statistics in the news media. There are also more memory pictures – this is what I was doing on this day years ago with people I love – I wish we could be together now. While we're not allowed to make the kind of memories depicted in those pictures, we find comfort in memories we already have.

One thing I've done with this unexpected free time is to organize printed photographs into albums. The photos and the albums have been there for a while, waiting for me to get a round tuit. You remember the old joke? Imagine people finding their round tuits in cupboards and drawers all over the country. How would you use yours? To sow seeds that had not been planted? To read the book gathering dust on a shelf? What else needs tackling? Now may be an ideal time to face the daunting corner where clutter lurks. Daunting because of what you may disturb among age-old piles of unsorted belongings. Looking squarely at the past may be an unwelcome prospect. It makes us face uncomfortable questions. Projects we may never finish, equipment we cannot use any more, objects of attachment from people we've lost. Isn't that like what we're doing as a nation in these unprecedented times? Issues we have been avoiding are suddenly highlighted through unfamiliar circumstances. There is much talk about how we're looking forward to getting back to normal on the other side of this international crisis. Some people say they hope things will have changed, that normal will not look the same as it used to, because we have learned valuable lessons about what really matters in life. It's up to us whether or not we rise to the challenge, to reorganize society more fairly, to care more for the environment. By myself I cannot change the world, but I'm determined to look after the little space that is in my care, not to let it be overwhelmed with needless clutter. Be brave. Use this negative time to make a positive change in your small corner. If you choose to sort it out, I guarantee that amidst all the mess you will find at least one thing, however small, to bring you joy – even if it's just a clean and tidy corner.

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My dear Nephew Darren

Your decision to hold a Summer weekend Arts Festival in church, bringing culture to your inner-city streets, was most commendable. Pity, how it all turned out. The Friday evening started well with the concert of Scott Joplin piano music. Obviously knowing that the pieces were originally played in seedy bars on pianos wildly out of tune with several notes missing, your committee must have gone to endless trouble to find precisely the right instrument. Your stage-hands, were, however, less careful and hadn't noticed that the platform had a noticeable list to port. After each piece, the pianist had to relocate the piano stool closer to his nomadic piano, with the last piece being performed with both entirely out of sight behind the pulpit.



It created much innocent entertainment for the audience, but the fault really should have been remedied before the Saturday evening choir concert.

Discarded kneelers and rotting hymn books do not form a stable base for a stage supporting an 80-strong choir. So when it came to the enthusiastic

rendering of hits from 'Oklahoma', with copious hand movements, it came as something of a relief that the stage took this as the moment to signal defeat, tipping the tenors behind the altar. The audience's thunderous applause, assuming this was a carefully choreographed part of the performance, was quite touching. I am sure all the compensation claims will soon be sorted out.

Your one great mistake was to take on responsibility for organising the

refreshments afterwards. Church entertainments committees have centuries of collective experience in judging the numbers of ham sandwiches and bottles of milk required. I am forever proud that our own ladies – through years of experience – can now get five cups of tea from every tea bag and can butter bread so thinly that one pack can last several months.

What you now do with 29 surplus loaves of bread is a problem you have brought upon yourself. You could possibly use them for supporting the stage next year. Your loving uncle, **Eustace**

The day they first climbed Annapurna

The first successful ascent of a mountain over 8,000 metres high was achieved just 70 years ago this month, on 3rd June 1950, when Annapurna in the Himalayas was climbed by a French expedition led by Maurice Herzog. Annapurna is the tenth highest mountain in the world.

It was just three years before the first ascent of Everest. Annapurna was a largely unknown mountain, and the team first had to find a way to reach it, and then survey a possible ascent route before doing the actual climb – an amazing achievement in one season.

The team had originally intended to climb the slightly higher Dhaulagiri, but when they saw it, they decided it was impractical. They went on to climb Annapurna without oxygen and survived extreme conditions which resulted in the two summiting climbers, Herzog and Louis Lachenal, suffering severe frostbite and surviving an avalanche on the descent.

At the summit the excitable Herzog said: “Never have I felt happiness like this, so intense and pure.” Lachenal, who had been reluctant to make the final attempt, said he felt “a painful sense of emptiness.”

This was the first mountain summit attempt that Nepal had permitted: afterwards the Maharajah of Nepal greeted the climbers as national heroes.

Beware soft drinks

Having just one soft drink a day in middle-age could increase your risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke.

Recent research has found that the sugar-laden drinks raise cholesterol levels, increasing the risk of clots that cut off blood supply to the heart or brain. It was found that daily consumers of soft drinks were 53 per cent more likely to have large amounts of a fat called triglycerides, that collects in vessels and arteries, compared with people who rarely touch sugary soft drinks. The study was done at Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts.

Cardiovascular disease is the UK’s number one killer, claiming 170,000 lives a year. It is responsible for one in four premature deaths.



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Dandelions!

Many of us actually like dandelions. Their amazingly cheerful colour always brings a smile to our faces. The not-so-neat-and-tidy gardeners among us can simply enjoy flowers where they grow.

The name 'dandelion' apparently derives from 'dent de lion' – lions' teeth, owing to the tooth-like shape of its leaves. There are many different varieties of dandelion, but they all have the toothed leaves arranged in a rosette around the single flowers, each one made up of up to *two hundred* [yes, really!] tiny florets on a smooth stem, that when picked, releases a milky substance known as latex.

The golden heads, which close up at night, in wet weather, or if picked to go in a vase, give way to the seed-heads we all know as clocks.

Who cannot remember proclaiming the time as a child, having blown the seeds away, counting each breath as an hour? And who, if this happened in the garden, remembers the reaction of a parent, or grandparent, to the efficient dispersal of the seeds all over the vegetable patch or flower bed!

In the past, dandelion drinks and concoctions have been valued for their medicinal powers in combating a variety of complaints, and the Victorians used to cultivate them in order to fill sandwiches with the young leaves. Fizzy drinks manufacturers still produce a variety known as Dandelion and Burdock, and intrepid wine-makers can use the flowers to concoct a heady brew.

The roots, some say, can be dried and ground up for use as a coffee substitute. It is those same roots, long and strong, that our grandmothers would water carefully, to the amusement of onlookers, in order to pull them up completely.

To many of us, dandelions are one of Nature's joys.

SERVICES FOR THE MONTH

SHARED WORSHIP

As we continue in lockdown, we have slowly been able to meet in various ways (in the virtual sense) for prayer and fellowship. The following services will take place on Zoom or Facebook and most will also be available on our parish web site afterwards. If you would like advice on how to access the services or how to get Zoom please speak to Catherine or Guy. For Zoom services and meetings an invitation will be sent to all 3 email News Groups.

The Liturgy, if applicable, will be available on the website.

Sunday

9:30am Holy Communion – this will be ‘live’ on Zoom and then posted on Facebook and our website and will last about 20 minutes.

10:30am prayer/worship - praying through the Sunday liturgy individually but hopefully at the same time! – This is available through the email News Groups and includes links to hymns and a printed sermon and is usually emailed out on the Saturday before.

11:30am Zoom coffee fellowship – bring your own coffee to your computer and see and hear some of your church friends; for about 40 minutes.

4 pm Singing Angels on Zoom and then via the website. This is an encouraging and lively session!

6:30pm Compline on Zoom, about 20 minutes. A quiet and reflective service.

Tuesday

2:30pm Prayer meeting on Zoom – about 30 minutes following the Prayer in Isolation leaflet.

Thursday

8pm Fellowship Group on Zoom and open to all. We will spend some time with each other and reflect on a scripture reading.

Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

9:15am Parish Prayer on Zoom – an informal time of prayer as when we’re meeting in our buildings, where we share the Gospel reading for the day and pray quietly for about 15 minutes.