

Inside

summer 2020



A special lockdown edition of



Inspire magazine



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If inspiration strikes you, please send your articles, photos and/or ideas to:
stlukes.inspire@gmail.com

20/20 vision?

At the start of this year I was just waiting for the puns about having a '20/20 vision'.

But if someone had told me that for three months now I wouldn't be working; Alex would be at home every day; after being closed for months, our church would only just be starting to reopen; and we would only be seeing friends and grandparents via Skype then I wouldn't have believed them.

This is not a typical issue of *Inspire* magazine. But then nothing about daily life right now is normal, is it?

I've written before about the power of a simple chance encounter to transform a day that is not going quite to plan. Right now those meetings can feel like a rainbow bursting through on an otherwise grey day. I think that God is in those moments with us even more than before.

Take care,

Louisa

Thanks to all contributors to this unusual issue, and especially for the front cover photographers including Alex Hughes, Nikola Sorrell, Sally Somerville, Revd Sally and Messy Church parents. Apologies if I've missed anyone.

“Jesus Christ is the same: yesterday, today and forever”

Revd Sally reflects on lockdown and looking forward

Those powerful, affirming words from the letter to the Hebrews (13.8) have been with me as we have travelled the last few months of very different and challenging living, right across the world. I recall using them as we went through the huge upheaval of reordering our church building a few years ago. The church of God at St. Luke’s, the people, came through that time in God’s grace and with deep faith and we now have a building that has served us and our parish community more fully. At that time, those words from Hebrews reminded us that though change is painful, challenging and demanding, Jesus never changes and is with us – the same in love, always.

And now we find ourselves ‘locked out’ of that beautiful building and facing huge change and challenges, the world over. How much more we need to hear those words now – and not just as words, but as truth to be sustained by. The truth is, that despite all that the world and its people are going through, Jesus Christ is the same – he has the same love for every part and every person of the world that, with the Father and the Holy Spirit he created.

Bishop Steven reminds us, in one of his reflections for churches in lockdown, that whilst it will be wonderful to get back into our churches and worship

together, it is Jesus whom we worship and he is not confined to buildings. Do listen to that reflection, on Psalm 5, if you can. The link is below. There, Bishop Steven takes us on a whistle stop history of places of worship and reminds us that our faith does not depend on being able to meet in a place or building, but on Jesus himself, who IS the Temple of God. In the vision of heaven in Revelation 21.22 we read:

I saw no temple in the city, for its
temple is the Lord God
the Almighty and the Lamb.

In a dissertation on the pastoral significance of place, which I wrote some years ago now, I explored the importance of places for people as spiritual space and ‘thin places’ where we meet God more easily. These may be churches but can just as easily be our gardens or other spaces, and of course, our hearts. What matters is that, as one scholar has written, ‘God has an address on earth’ – Jesus.

If that is so, then Jesus is with us, wherever and however we are spending lockdown, and Jesus is in the very centre of the COVID-19 pandemic – the suffering and the good stuff that has come out of it for the environment and community building. Philip Sheldrake

writes about sacred space:
“God is not in a protected place shrouded in a hermetically sealed ontological box. God is, rather, a shocking presence in a world of ambiguities ... The vision of God disturbs any tendency on the part of theology to settle for a comforting indwelling of God in the world of protected particularities. The catholicity of God’s transcendence cannot be domesticated or controlled.”

God is at work in the world, particularly through the incarnation of Jesus – God with us. He is enabling us to get through this challenging time and maybe he is also challenging us to reflect on what we have learned for ourselves and how the Church might ‘be church differently’ as we go forward.

Many of us have learned new technological skills very quickly and found that we are able to meet together for worship in new ways – both exciting and challenging. We have reached out to a wider group of people through our website and Zoom services. Those who are housebound can worship on a level with everyone else. Regular phone calls to folk without internet enable friendships to flourish.

We miss receiving communion, we miss congregational singing, and other treasured aspects of our faith. But Jesus is the same – He is with us and will never leave us – he urges us to share that faith with others.

It will be a long time before we are able to meet together as a whole church family, to hug each other in ‘The Peace’ and to sing out together, as lament for what is lost and in joy for what we have. As we keep travelling on, let’s ask God to show us how we can use all that we have learned in this time to further His mission in this part of his world. He will use all that we are going through now, in love, for, as R.S. Thomas wrote: “He is such as fast God, always before us and leaving as we arrive”.

[Find Bishop Steven’s reflection at tinyurl.com/yawvxzen](http://tinyurl.com/yawvxzen)



Photo by Revd Sally

Guidance during the coronavirus crisis

In March this year, Christopher Southgate, Carla Grosch-Miller and Hilary Ison from the Tragedies and Christian Congregations Project offered thoughts for ministers. Their words will help congregations too.

We are offering these out of the work of a three-year project on trauma and tragedy in Christian congregations. First thought: context is everything. You will know better than anyone else how your particular community is likely to react.

Second: this *is* a trauma to communities, the nation, the world. It's not a shock-event like a fire or a terrorist attack, but slowly there has built, and is still worsening, a crisis that shatters people's assumptions that the world is generally safe and reliable, and that all that we have worked for in businesses, churches and communities will be fruitful. The loss of those assumptions, the breaking of connections between people, and the overwhelming of people's ordinary resources – all of these are characteristic of **trauma**.

Some of the wisdom that has been gained about trauma recently can help us:

People's whole selves are affected – they may feel all sorts of strange symptoms because the body is reacting to the fact that they are not safe. Emotions will be all over the place in surprising ways. Concentration may be difficult. Sharing this information – that

it is normal to be up, down, energetic, exhausted, afraid – will help people to cope with it.

People react very differently depending on different backgrounds and experiences, including past traumas. People respond best when they have clear, reliable information; when they have something to do – 'agency' of some sort; and when they are cared for in warm and authentic ways. Even phone calls can be reassuring.

“Self-care, attending to your own well-being, is vital. That includes the basics of good rest, eating, and exercise. It also includes having people you trust whom you can share with, and making sure you are in touch with them.”

We make sense of things by being able to integrate the experience into an overarching story. But it is much too soon to assemble a coherent narrative out of all this. Even the process of meaningfully gathering together to lament what has been lost is very hard. The trauma is unfolding and there are many losses yet unrevealed.

Community responses to disaster typically show a **'heroic phase'**, full of energy and self-sacrifice, which burns itself out and is followed by a **'disillusionment phase'**, which may contain much mutual blame and suspicion. Only as the disillusionment phase loses its force can **realistic, hopeful re-making** take place.

Many of the responses in communities can be celebrated and affirmed. It is worth ministers thinking about what, over and above the generous and heroic actions of many in the secular world, Christian story and practice can contribute. Public worship may be suspended, but these great transformative moments in the whole human story need some sort of marking.

Lastly and in a way most importantly, this is a very confusing and draining time, a time when ordinary healthy rhythms are lost. Trauma professionals are disoriented! You may be feeling in yourself and your body the impact of trauma – feeling low and anxious one day and hard to get your brain in gear, energetic the next, and all at a time when clergy are needing to be creative and adaptive in their approach. So self-care, attending to your own well-being, is vital. That includes the basics of good rest, eating, and exercise. It also includes having people you trust whom you can share with, and making sure you are in touch with them.

www.tragedyandcongregations.org.uk

Book review

Simon Bader is moved by Paul Cowley's
Thief Prisoner Soldier Priest

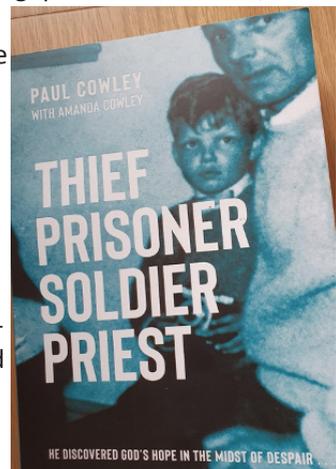
I watched Revds Nicky Gumbel and Paul Cowley talking on Holy Trinity Brompton's website and was moved that minute to buy Paul's new book.

What an inspiring story: taking me from his abusive alcoholic family to leading Alpha in prison and in the forces.

I must admit it made me emotional hearing his testimony of coming to accept Jesus after many years of a hard and rough life. I have read many books since becoming a follower of Jesus; not many have been as God-filled and inspirational as this one.

I came to know Jesus through the Alpha course so I know how powerful and life changing the course can be. God has a plan for every life, and this book shows that it's people being friends of the least, the last and the lost that God just loves to bless and it so often bears fruit.

If a friend, colleague or family member is asking questions about life, faith and lots more, give them this book. I bought this book to share, so ask me at church (eventually) if you'd like to borrow it.



Lockdown creativity

Look out for other examples dotted through the magazine



At Easter, Revd Sally got creative with paving to make this sealed, then empty, tomb in the vicarage garden.



Sofia's beautiful rainbow



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Eddie and Arthur concentrate on weaving their ribbon crosses during Messy Church

Photos by Revd Sally and Messy Church parents

Messy Church, at home: Easter Bonnets and sock sheep

Like so many things these days, our monthly Messy Church meetings have moved online. These families didn't let that get in the way of their creativity



Jonas



*Squeaky Ted wearing
Charlotte's bonnet*



*Millie
and Julia*

*Ellen
and Mia*



*Rupert
and Jemima*

Memories of VE Day

Jean Jackson recalls her experience of Victory in Europe Day

Alexandra Road celebrated VE Day much as other people did. Keeping social distancing, of course, we met outside, with bunting, drinks and nibbles. My neighbours were very interested in my memories of the actual day. I have a very clear memory of VE Day. I'd been evacuated to Sibley in Leicestershire. It was my last term at Sibley Senior School, a few weeks after my 11th birthday. Mrs Bennett, our teacher, was taking the lesson that day. To our surprise, one of the other teachers came in, all smiles and began to hug Mrs Bennett. What was going on? Our somewhat stern teachers hugging,

smiling, whispering? After the visitor departed, Mrs Bennett turned to us and said "Children, the war is over." We did not shout or laugh; we just looked at each other in stunned amazement! During the previous fortnight, young German soldiers, POWs, were doing some maintenance work to the playground and outside our classroom. We were told not to speak to them. They kept jumping up at the windows and pulling funny faces to amuse us children. We kept looking at the windows and laughing. Our teacher was furious. Needless to say, this diversion was put a stop to very soon!



Meet Covid...

...built by Tasha and Charlie for a Guides project to convey the 'stay at home' message. Made from water bottles, a cardboard box and fruit

and veg packaging, Covid the robot stood in the front garden alongside a home-made banner and bunting for VE Day.

Celebrating VE Day



*Ruth Sheppard
enjoying her road's
At Home Street Party,
and the flag she made
to mark the occasion*



*Louisa's Union Jack
iced biscuit
(I would have
decorated
others but I ran
out of blue icing)*

Lots to pray and be thankful for

Johanna Raffan outlines Soroptimists' voluntary efforts around the globe

As you would expect, clubs from Aberdeen to Truro, and India to the Caribbean have been sewing thousands of scrubs and masks, some in incredible colours. Trinidad and Tobago provided sewing machines for 18 local women's groups to make masks which the Soroptimists distributed to the local community.

Cannock Soroptimists have provided moisturiser and hand cream for NHS staff by putting collection boxes at the end of their driveways. Durban Club has provided a wellbeing helpline organised by a couple of members who are psychologists.

At the start of the outbreak the Soroptimists in Italy collected 300,000 euros for 100 hospitals to buy sanitary materials and other female kit plus 25,000 masks. In Colombo, Sri Lanka they have been delivering food and cooked meals to low income families.

Many of the clubs in India have been providing cooked meals and food to the slum areas. Kolkata in West Bengal was hit by typhoon 'Umpana' in the middle of May. The video footage of 40' containers blowing around is terrifying but amazingly there were no deaths. But the Soroptimists have helped clear up Kolkata Book Market – the largest in India and the second largest secondhand book market in the world – a sad loss to the region.

Plymouth Club has been providing ingredients for virtual cookery lessons for the Women's Refuge to help them improve their culinary skills during

strict lockdown. Anglesey and Surrey Hills have been knitting pairs of hearts for hospitals – one goes to the patient and the other to the family – these are sent in batches once a week as they need to be in 'quarantine' for a week before being given to patients.

Bombay club has organised a 'Flavours from Homes' recipe competition and the money raised has gone to a local Sikh temple that provides 3,000 meals a day for the local area. The Caribbean clubs have provided face masks for all the public workers including bus and delivery drivers, and care packages to the National Children's Home.

Pune in India set up a series of Zoom webinars on 'Women and Wellness in these uncertain times' which focused on mental health and music therapy; 60 women attended the first session. Nearer home, Stockton on Tees sent thank you letters to all the care homes and hospices in the area

Many Soroptimists work on the front line and many others have volunteered for front-line work. They tell some very sad stories: sitting with patients at the end of their lives because their families cannot be with them; women in labour without the support of their partner; babies being born with coronavirus.

A past UK president was visiting Colombia at the start of the pandemic and admitted to hospital with COVID-19. She was the first patient to recover in the country, and the applause when she left was just like here. She is now back home.

Talking with roses

Sally Somerville turns to the garden for solace during strange times

In the absence of conversation and visitors, I have taken to visiting my roses. I begin with a twirl through the *Ballerinas* with their frothing pink tulle and come to *Constance* who offers fat blowsy blooms like velvet cushions and invites me to relax.

Then *Graham Thomas*, full yellow, fizzing and zinging like the Headmaster I worked for of the same name. "Get cracking girl!" I hear him say as I drift or dream a bit. *Gertrude* across the way looks on. Like a much admired maths teacher, *Miss Fenn*, she is a little stiff, but delicate and giving.

Round the corner is my Retirement rose who has flourished like my life in Maidenhead and over the arch stands *Compassion*, pink edged but with a deep apricot heart. These last weeks there has been much need of that deep heart for the bereaved and dying and the selfless devotion of those caring for them.

At last, *Paul's Scarlet*, full crimson red – the colour of love, reliable and resilient – mixes with the soft blush of *New Dawn*, our hope for the future.

Refreshed, I go in and make the coffee.



Pictures, from top: Constance; Graham Thomas and Gertrude Jekyll; Compassion, Paul's Scarlet and New Dawn.

Photos by Sally Somerville

Sociable distancing

James Ellins explores some creative ways to keep in touch during these times

One inevitable consequence of the lockdown is that many of the most common forms of socialising have suddenly become impossible or at the very least inadvisable. Going to the pub, as of writing, can't really be done. Friends round for dinner: sort of, but you'd need to have dinner in the garden and be very careful with plates and cutlery. Board game evenings were growing in popularity across the country but are not at all practical under lockdown.

Fortunately, thanks to widely-available fast internet, a variety of affordable devices that can access the internet (e.g. phones, tablets, computers), and no small amount of ingenuity, some of our favourite means of social interaction can still be accomplished, often with a few (minor) concessions.

Let's start with some personal examples. Our son Alex has missed seeing his grandparents. While weekly calls and video calls were taking place before lockdown we have since added weekly video bedtime stories as well. With my mum we are able to share a digital children's book via the Skype app so that Alex can see the pictures in the book, and hear his Nana read the words to him. With Louisa's parents, Grandpa focuses the phone's camera on a physical book to show Alex the pictures while Grandma reads the words. We've also had a game of remote hide-and-seek in which Alex

took a mobile phone holding a video call with his Nana to go and hide while Louisa did the seeking.

Louisa and I used to play board games with family and friends when we'd meet up in person; we now do this via computers and tablets while having a group video call open at the same time so we can see the faces of our fellow participants (or opponents if you prefer). Online games of the Jackbox series, as well as a computerised version of the railway-building board game Ticket to Ride have become semi-regular fixtures for our evenings.

I asked a few friends and colleagues to list activities they participate in while socially-distanced and was provided with a number of great examples of "sociable distancing". One friend used to go to a number of dance classes each week, and belonged to a group that had danced at local festivals (Maidenhead Festival included). These dance classes now take place on Zoom. Admittedly she prefers the real thing, but appreciates the enjoyment, camaraderie, and exercise that can be achieved via the virtual classes. On top of that she takes part in online exercise and yoga classes run by Slough council, attended a *Frozen*-themed four year-old's virtual birthday party, and competes in weekly pub quizzes with friends. Another friend takes her three year-old daughter to virtual tea parties

with other parents and children from her preschool as well as fancy dress parties over Zoom.

St Luke's and many other churches have been successfully running services, prayer meetings, and Bible study groups over Zoom, as well as posting recorded services to YouTube. Other religious groups have got creative with services, meetings, and festivals as well. A Buddhist friend has weekly meetings over Zoom, and has teamed up with other Buddhists to help the isolated members by delivering food and prescriptions as well as contacting them via video call and telephone for regular chats.

Ramadan for this year took place entirely during lockdown (23rd April to 23rd May) forcing Muslims to get creative to be able to gather together (as is traditional) at a time when one of the kindest things you can do for someone is keep your distance. Actor and comedian Adil Ray described staying home, saving lives, and considering others as

“wonderful Eid gift” (Eid-al fitr coming at the end of Ramadan). A Muslim friend in Maidenhead joined family for Iftar (evening) meals



Photo by Louisa Ellins

over Zoom and Skype video calls. My favourite example of sociable distancing during Ramadan was a Dutch man inviting people of all faiths and none to join him for Suhoor (pre-dawn) and Iftar meals via the popular Nintendo video game Animal Crossing. In the game their virtual characters could all meet up and sit around a virtual table together while they ate.

It is encouraging to see that even a virus as destructive as COVID-19 can't stop people enjoying each other's company. That said, I still hope and pray for a future in which we can enjoy more activities together in person. If we as a nation/world listen intently to the experts, act responsibly, and pray for guidance, then hopefully we can limit the damage of this current crisis, and minimise the probability of such a catastrophic pandemic happening again.

Editor's note: James is too modest to mention the surprise Zoom birthday party he organised for me. I can confirm that the cake was deliciously real.

Church memories from an octogenarian

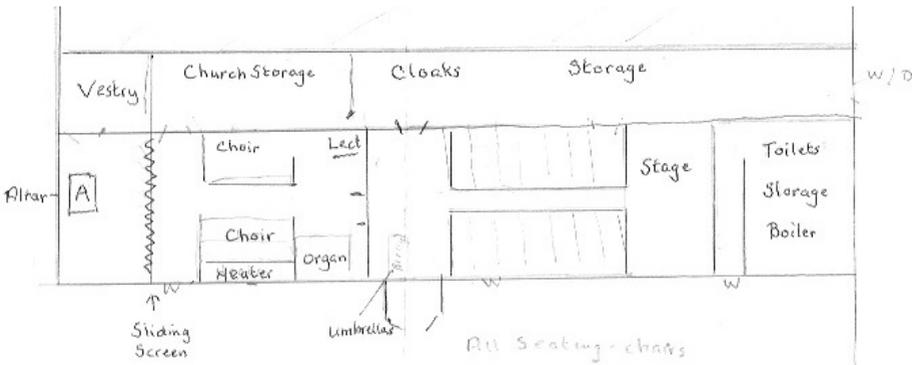
My first memory of church is Sunday School on a Sunday afternoon in a traditional C of E church. Very sombre. We were divided into boys and girls sitting either side of the aisle on hard pews with a lady teaching the girls and a man the boys. Never the twain did meet. The man was the Crucifer and a Scouting friend of my father. As children we were expected to sit still and listen and learn part of the scriptures. This was back in 1941; the war was getting worse but my older brother and I took ourselves to and from church with strict instructions what to do if we heard the air raid siren. Children walked everywhere – that was normal.

After my father had fought his way back to Dunkirk and escaped in a Scottish fishing boat he was sent to hospital in bridport then posted to Beverley in Yorkshire. We moved to be near enough to see him at weekends. The nearest church was a bus ride

away and, yes, we took ourselves. Not only an adventure, the church gave us coloured sticky stamps to collect. One day I was in real trouble, as I left my gas mask on the steps by the bus stop. It was returned to me the following day by a policeman. Now I was very scared, would I be sent to prison? No, but I did receive a right rollicking. I never forgot it again.

The time came when my parents wanted me to join the Brownies – another change of church. The nearest pack was 20 minutes walk away – partly through the forest to a congregational church in Woodford, Essex and yes – I walked alone.

I enjoyed being a Brownie. At the monthly church parade we started in church then descended into the lower room for activities. At that age all churches looked alike to me but this one was much more friendly.



W: window

D: door

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A rough sketch of the fondly remembered church of my teenage years

Inspire

At the end of the war it was time to move onto Girl Guides. The nearest was also a 20 minute walk but in the



My brother and I with our gas masks

opposite direction through suburbia. What a surprise when I first saw this church! I was expecting a typical stone building – this one was corrugated iron. It had been built hastily to accommodate people who had lost their homes in the Blitz as well as local residents in Chingford Hatch. Internally it was the best design I have ever seen to be both church and community centre. Truly multipurpose. I helped with a very active Sunday School in the hall area. For church services or special events the sliding partition was rolled back to reveal the altar. The 12-year-old organist in the ‘tin church’ was

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amazing and he went on to become choirmaster at St Paul’s Cathedral. The young priest was like the Pied Piper and drew in so many people that by the time I left college a large brick built building had emerged.

During my years at college in Brighton I regularly attended the local church. There was a large congregation, but no one spoke to me. I felt that I was a student who comes and goes, which I was. My roommate belonged to a different denomination and was regularly invited to Sunday lunch by some of that congregation.

Back to Highams Park where I grew up and many of the young people I knew had moved on. At least the same priest was still there, and that was where we married in the new brick church and our first child was baptised – following the then obligatory cleansing service of the mother, me. Neither the priest nor I liked the wording of that service, called the ‘Churching of Women’. Fortunately by the time our second child arrived it had disappeared in the mists of time.

After completing his two years’ National Service my husband decided to continue in the forces and we moved frequently, mostly in different parts of Lincolnshire. A very small village church with an equally small congregation had that old attitude, “they won’t be here long”, followed by a more friendly church where the people seemed more used to folk coming and going and we felt welcomed. At the

midweek service I was allowed to park the pram in the porch.

The 12-year-old organist in the 'tin church' was amazing and he went on to become choirmaster at St Paul's Cathedral

Somehow I found myself being enrolled in the Mothers' Union. Our home at that time overlooked the valley which was to become Rutland Water. I found the way a death was announced in the village fascinating. One toll of the bell for a man and two for a woman, repeated the number of times of the deceased's age.

We spent some time living overlooking Crowland Abbey and this time were invited to take the pram plus baby inside the Abbey church. The priest even visited us which had never happened before. The Christmas family service took place at 4pm together with prams, babies and children of all ages, mostly bringing new toys with them. We met some lovely people there.

Times were changing, really changing. With a 2½ year old child and 2 month old baby we were off to Cyprus for 3 years.

Watch this space...

The Royal Maundy Service

Phyllis Sigsworth was honoured with a special delivery from Her Majesty

In mid November last year I received a letter from the Royal Almonry Office at Buckingham Palace. It told me that I was to be a recipient of the Royal Maundy money at the Royal Maundy Service in St. George's Chapel, Windsor on 12th April when the Queen would distribute the Maundy gifts of specially minted coins to the recipients who had been chosen from across the United Kingdom. The number of recipients is equal to Queen's age, i.e. 94 men and 94 women.

I was both thrilled and humbled. Events overtook the anticipated occasion which was cancelled. However, the day before Maundy Thursday I received a package through the post including the two purses containing the Maundy gifts and a letter from Her Majesty expressing her disappointment at the cancellation of the ceremony.

I hope that I will be able to show you the gifts and the correspondence when we meet again.



Once more unto the scrubs

We're at war with an invisible enemy. With apologies to William Shakespeare, Jean Tyrwhitt-Drake presents a new version of a classic battle cry

Once more unto the scrubs, dear friends, once more;
Or close the ward up with the staff unclothed.
In health there's nothing so becomes a nurse
As hygiene, gentleness and care.
But when the blast of Covid blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of a seamstress;
Insert new needle, dust off the Singer,
Discover shapes, but no make-up notes;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
Let it try to match different sized pieces
And produce a garment able to be worn for work.

...

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The race is on:
Create a scrubs suit and upon this charge
Cry "Thanks for all medics, nurses and key workers!"

*Scrubs pictured
made by Jean,
Ruth Sheppard and
Sally Somerville.*

Photos -r by Jean and Sally.



Photo by Nikola Sorrell

Good enough to eat...

Nikola explains: "Tasha won the Year 9 prize in her school's Great Geography Bake Off competition. She made a chocolate and vanilla marble cake which was then decorated to look like the earth, including waterfall, forest, grassland and plants. Once complete, she sliced it open hoping it would have layers inside that would become various stratas. Thank goodness it worked. She won a £10 Amazon voucher, yet to be spent..."

Lockdown laughter

Smiling is infectious
You catch it like the flu
When some one smiled at me today
I started smiling too

I passed around the corner
And some one saw me grin
When he smiled I realised
I'd passed it on to him

Thanks to Lisa Sharp who sent me this poem. The author seems to be a mystery - in five minutes on Google I've seen it attributed to three different authors - but it is definitely has a timely message.

Hopefully these pictures will raise a smile

I thought about that smile
And realised its worth
A single smile like mine
Could travel round the earth
So if you feel a smile begin
Don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic
And get the world infected



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

The spell checker poem... or is it?

Ruth Sheppard suggested including this well known poem

but there is more than 'meats the l'...

I have a spelling checker
It came with my PC
It plane lee marques four my revue
Miss steaks eye kin not sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong or write
It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite
It's rare Lea ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it
I am shore your pleased two no
It's letter perfect awl the weigh
My chequer tolled me sew.

Sauce unknown

Wait a minute. There is a source:
the first two lines were written by
Mark Eckman, an AT&T employee, in
1991. The rest of the poem came from
the pen of biology professor Dr. Jerrold
H. Zar.

A checker is a bless sing,
It freeze yew lodes of thyme.
It helps me right awl stiles two reed,
And aides me when eye rime.

Each frays come posed up on my screen
Eye trussed too bee a joule.
The checker pours o'er every word
To cheque sum spelling rule.

Bee fore a veiling checker's
Hour spelling mite decline,
And if we're lacks oar have a laps,
We wood bee maid too wine.

Butt now bee cause my spelling
Is checked with such grate flare,
Their are know fault's with in my cite,
Of nun eye am a wear.

Now spelling does knot phase me,
It does knot bring a tier.
My pay purrs awl due glad den
With wrapped word's fare as hear.

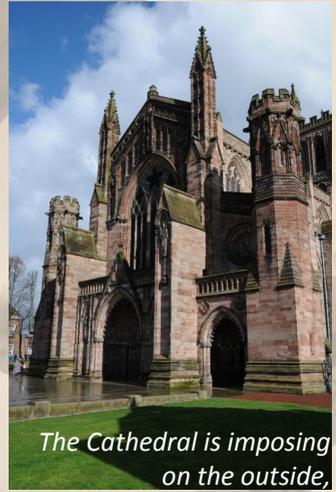
To rite with care is quite a feet
Of witch won should bee proud,
And wee mussed dew the best wee can,
Sew flaw's are knot aloud.

Sow ewe can sea why aye dew prays
Such soft wear four pea seas,
And why eye brake in two averse
Buy righting want too pleas.

And the title? Candidate for a Pullet
Surprise (aka a Pulitzer Prize).

Postcards from Hereford Cathedral

*On a weekend that feels like a very long time ago, but was in fact only early March, **Louisa Ellins** visited the magnificent Hereford Cathedral during a stay in the city*



The Cathedral is imposing on the outside, and truly beautiful inside.



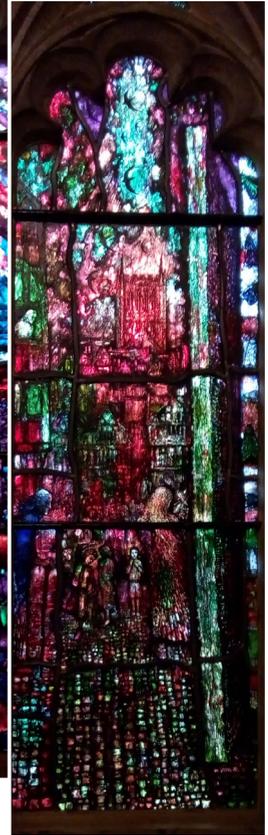
A huge golden crown, or halo, appears to float above the middle of the church



I was struck by the stained glass windows in places I didn't expect, from the Lady Chapel Crypt to high above eye level



Main picture: Looking up to the vaulted ceiling from the Crypt steps



Our whole group was enthralled by these wonderful stained glass windows. Created by Tom Denny, they commemorate the life of Thomas Traherne, a 17th century priest, poet, and spiritual writer. Traherne was born in Hereford, and ministered at a church near the city, while participating in the life of the cathedral.

He was largely unpublished during his lifetime, but after a number of manuscripts were discovered in the 20th century, his talents are finally able to be celebrated.
summer 2020

The four windows, left to right, reveal themes in Traherne's writing:

- Love for the Herefordshire countryside
- Seeing the cross of Christ in the world around us
- Insistence on the importance of love in human lives
- Love for the city of Hereford and its inhabitants.

Our temporary congregation

Alex Hughes took these incredible pictures of peregrine falcons which moved onto St Luke's spire during lockdown



Love only requires one skill

Phyllis Sigsworth shared this allegory

One day a man said to God, "What are Heaven and Hell like?"

God showed the man two doors. Inside the first one, in the middle of the room, was a large round table with a large pot of stew. It smelled delicious and made the man's mouth water, but the people sitting around the table were thin and sickly. They appeared to be famished. They were holding spoons with very long handles and each found it possible to reach into the pot of stew and take a spoonful, but because the handle was longer than their arms, they could not get the spoons back into their mouths.

The man shuddered at the sight of their misery and suffering. God said,

"You have seen Hell."

Behind the second door, the room appeared exactly the same. There was the large round table with the large pot of wonderful, mouth-watering stew. The people had the same long-handled spoons, but they were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking.

The man said, "I don't understand."

God smiled. "It is simple," he said.

"Love only requires one skill. These people learned early on to share and feed one another. The greedy only think of themselves..."

Author unknown

(Thanks also to Richard Burdett, for typing it out)

Lockdown 'firsts'

Louisa Ellins puts a positive spin on all that extra time at home

1. Enjoyed any PE apart from swimming

Fitness coach Joe Wicks has been running online YouTube weekday living room workouts since schools closed. It's hard work, sweaty and silly but it's really good for us: mentally and physically.

2. Kept a new year's resolution

Easy when that resolution is "I'm going to bake more often"; I need to keep a four year old entertained; and we managed to find flour.

3. Virtual tea break

When work friends are furloughed alongside you it's really nice to have time for a proper catch up.

4. Online book group

Sadly the biscuit selection isn't as good at home.

5. Emptied the laundry bin

We've had some great weather for drying washing, don't you think?

6. Created weekly meal plans

A real achievement after years of near-daily top-up shops... who knew spending an hour in a supermarket queue could be so motivational?

7. Turned our box room into useful space

Goodbye uninspiring dumping ground; hello yellow craft room and cosy home office. I even fitted a working roller blind and bought a rug from a photo. It's anyone's guess how long the transformation would have taken otherwise.



Alex dressed as Marshall (from Paw Patrol) for PE with Joe: Fancy Dress Friday edition



Photos by Louisa Ellins

Biblical siblings

Family has been front of mind recently... why not find these biblical brothers and sisters? Thanks again to **Dorothy Strack-Hankey**

G A D I N A H Z E B U L U N
F E D C B A A Y D A T K T M
M Z W I H P E S O J O H N A
D A N T L E A H R E T E P I
W E R D N A H A D U J L X R
X A E Y Z N T S W H Z E A I
M S U Y W X E H T M E H S M
J H B H N S S E P Y C C L I
A E E A O X H N I A C A E V
C R N M R P U A S E N R B E
O W X J A M E S U R A Z A L
B E N J A M I N O E M I S Y

Aaron, Moses, Miriam (*Num. 25:59*)
Cain, Abel, Seth (*Gen. 4:25*)
Jacob, Esau (*Gen 25:26*)
James, John (*Mark 3:17*)
Leah, Rachel (*Gen. 29:16*)
Mary, Martha, Lazarus (*John 11:1*)

Peter, Andrew (*Matt 10:2*)
Shem, Ham, Japheth (*Gen. 5:32*)
Simeon, Reuben, Levi, Judah, Dan,
Naphtali, Issachar, Gad, Zebulun, Asher,
Joseph, Dinah, Benjamin
(*Gen 30: 21; 35:23-26*)

*Recreated from Fun with the Bible by Lynette Hampton,
Concordia Publishing House (1980)*

St Luke's Evening 'Amblers'

Roger Clarke looks back on two seasons of wonderful walks

I know that there is a common view that Maidenhead does not have a lot going for it in terms of shops and the town centre etc. Well, I am sure we all have a view on this and could discuss the subject at length! However, one thing I am sure we can all agree upon is the wonderful countryside we have surrounding us: woodland, fields, riverside and the nearby Chiltern Hills. Given all the open space that we have close by, through last spring and summer we were able to join together in evening walks which we now continue in memory of our dear friend Roger Bevitt.

Our walks during 2019 started in late April – bluebell time – and finished at

the end of August. We enjoyed eighteen walks of between two and three and a half miles, always over gentle ground with just the occasional uphill section. In that time we explored the areas of the 'Cookhams', Fifield, Bourne End, Bray, Winkfield, Waltham St. Lawrence and of course, Maidenhead. All the walk starts were within a few miles of Maidenhead town itself so easily reachable with a short car journey. During our walks, which were almost always dry we enjoyed not only good conversation, but also a variety of scenery and quite a lot of wildlife. I mentioned the bluebell woods which were particularly special but there were plenty of other wild flowers to be



Photo by Roger Clarke

seen along with butterflies, bees and other interesting insects. There were sightings and sounds of various bird species and we were often spied upon by one or more Red Kite and occasionally a Buzzard.

For the more eagle-eyed amongst us there were also some interesting mammal appearances: deer (roe, fallow and muntjac); fox; rabbit and hare – always something to keep us interested. Group numbers varied but there were always some takers and we tried to vary the actual day of the week, as some days were better for some folk than others. Special mention should be made of Clare Burdett who brought Isabella along for much of the time, even in the hot weather, and before she (Isabella) had even seen the light of day! Well done Clare, you were a real star and Matthew, I hope that you will be purchasing a baby carrier for next spring! In writing this summary I should also pay special thanks to Don Luff and Gerry Knight who filled in for me as leaders whilst Sonya and I were holidaying in Scotland – thanks again guys.

In planning future walks I would always welcome any feedback. Ideas for areas to walk, thoughts on distance and/or terrain etc. are always useful. Also, if you have not joined us yet, why not give it a try: you would be really welcomed along with any friends who

might be interested. Our walks, like our church are inclusive and open to anyone. As an extra incentive we often finish up in a local hostelry for a drink and a packet of crisps, so what more could you ask for?

Thank you to everyone who supported the walks this year, thank you all for your company, your friendship and support.

Footnote: As things stand we are in the middle of the COVID-19 outbreak and nobody can be sure when we may be able to resume our outdoor activities. Additionally, Sonya and I are looking to enjoy our retirement in a quieter part of the UK and will at some point be moving. It would be really good then to discuss with anyone interested (our number is 01628 632626) how we might ensure our church group evening walks (and longer occasional Saturday rambles) continue in the future. Perhaps this might be something you are being called to do?

Editor's note: this article was originally due to be published in the winter 2019 issue but email problems meant it disappeared into cyberspace instead. Thank you so much to Roger for updating it for this issue, and to you and Sonya for all your contributions to Inspire magazine. You shall be missed in many ways and we wish you all the best in your new life.

From the Registers

Since the last issue of *Inspire*

We welcomed into God's family by baptism:

Ritchie Cole Westbury

Ryan John James Gordon Roy Westbury

Jonas Samuel Lanyon

Sebastian Alexander Lanyon

We commended into God's keeping at their funerals:

Christopher Haywood

Joyce Bryant

Isabella Monk

David Jones

Bernard Bowdery

Phyllis Boshier

Peter Curtis

Harvey Lovegrove

Francis Garnett

Jillian Sinclair-Hill

(Phyllis) Eileen Herbert

Andrew Curtis

Brian Beard

Stella Lee

Rita Redhead

Patricia Lovering

Maureen Williams

Reginald Jacobs

(Francis) Frank Hepburn

Alice Smith

George Hayward

John Mclean

May they rest in peace, and rise in glory

Inspire

I'm sorry to announce that this will be my last issue as editor of *Inspire*. It's been a privilege to work with all the contributors – thank you again for all your stories, pictures, support and kind words about the magazine. I'm anticipating big changes for me work-wise – and after much thought have decided that I cannot carry on.

As you know, James and I were relatively new parents when I took on the magazine in 2016. I would particularly like to say a massive thank you to James and Alex for the countless trips to Cliveden and many more hours entertaining themselves during yet another weekend spent on the magazine.

I'm immensely proud of the nine issues I've produced over the last four years and enjoyed pulling together your various pictures, articles and snippets into a cohesive, colourful magazine. I hope the St Luke's congregation is proud of the magazine too – you should be, as it wouldn't exist without you!

I'm sure *Inspire* has a bright future and I wish my successor(s) all the best. If anyone feels they'd like to get more involved in the magazine, Revd Sally would love to hear from you.

Who's who and how to contact us

All numbers prefixed with Maidenhead 01628... unless otherwise stated

Ministry team



Vicar
Revd Sally Lynch

783033



Associate Priest
*Revd Canon
Terrie Robinson*

634017



**Licensed Lay
Minister**
Sonya Clarke

632626



**Lay Minister
/ Ordinand**
Phyl Sopp

781390

Churchwardens

*John Salter 634439
Sue Hinchliffe 784724*

Assistant churchwardens

*Dave Sopp 781390
Michael Masango 789978
Johanna Raffan 680913*

Flowers

Rita Salter 634439

Electoral Roll Officer

Ann Burdett 631486

Gift Aid Secretary

*Kim Rumble
07973 294082*

Director of Music

*Adam Went
01753 643974*

PCC Secretary

Ralph Hinchliffe 784724

PCC Treasurer

Richard Burdett 631486

Parish administrator

Office currently closed

More about St Luke's Church

Write to us at:
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26 Norfolk Road
Maidenhead
Berkshire
SL6 7AX



Like *St Luke's Church, Maidenhead* on Facebook



The church office is currently closed due to coronavirus. For the quickest response, please contact Revd Sally at sally514@btinternet.com or call the vicarage on 01628 783033.



We hope to be meeting together in church again before too long...

See our website for details of when the church is open for private prayer.

St Luke's is part of Inclusive Church
Find out more at www.inclusive-church.org.uk



To find out more about St Luke's and the various online services, discussion and prayer times we are currently running visit our website at:
www.stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk

We hope to see you soon...



For obvious reasons, our usual 'coming soon' diary page hasn't been included here.

Keep an eye on the church website, the pew sheet and the noticeboard outside church for the latest updates.

In the meantime, thanks to Don Luff for capturing this beautifully atmospheric shot of a sunset over church.