



roundabout



Parish Magazine of St. Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane with St. Luke's Church, Bromley Common

Issue 519 February 2021

A Good Read

As a priest I read many books on theology to help my understanding of the Bible and how that applies to the context in which we live today and this is particularly relevant when thinking about sermons. As you can imagine these can be heavy-going especially, when like me, you are not a natural academic. So, to balance that I love to read fiction, to read a few pages or chapters just before bedtime helps to transport me to somewhere else so that I can drift off to sleep when I turn the light out. And so, it is very important that I pick the right book. My trusted authors are Wilbur Smith, Lee Child, Bernard Cornwell, Alexander Kent, Julian Stockwin, Philippa Gregory and my latest is a new writer, Richard Osman, author of *The Thursday Murder Club*. This read is extremely exciting and I am enjoying it immensely, and the reason why is because I like the characters. The author writes in a way that allows me to put myself in the middle of the plot and how it is shaping up. Yet the previous book I read, incidentally written by Wilbur Smith, took me ages to read because not only could I not identify with the main character, more importantly, I did not like him.

Bearing that in mind I started thinking about the book based on 'The greatest story ever told' although it has many different authors, and spans time that stretches our imaginations, you of course have all heard of it - the Bible. I may be slightly biased, but I think it is the most exciting book you could pick up and read. It has all the elements that will keep you gripped to the edge of your seat; murder, intrigue, and love. The characters are just like us with the same hopes, dreams and aspirations, while at the same time struggling to understand the meaning of life (no it's not 42!) Yet as you progress through the pages it becomes clear that the path to understanding the great question of 'why are we here?' starts to be discovered and finally revealed in the presence of a Saviour. Although this is not a book for the faint-hearted - or maybe it is - I would encourage you not to start at the beginning but rather start at the four chapters headed Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

This year possibly more than any other we need to find inspiration and hope in a world that is struggling to cope. I believe that in the pages of the Bible we can find exactly that as we explore the revelation of God through his son Jesus Christ. As we enter into Lent and start to look towards Easter let us focus upon God's word, The Bible, and discover his message of Love and salvation maybe for the first time - or perhaps rediscover it afresh. I can promise you it is the most exciting read you will ever have; it will challenge you, it will make you laugh, it will make you cry, but most importantly it will inspire you to love humanity from the least to the greatest.

If you want to know more about reading the Bible or do not own one, please get in touch.

Yours in Christ

Revd Steve Spencer - Vicar



As members of St. Augustine's with St Luke's, we seek to follow Jesus' command—to share God's love with our community.



Brian Kendall

Brian died just before Christmas. Within days, Mary Plummer had asked me to write something for the next edition of Roundabout. Not easy, I thought, because Brian was a very private person. His funeral service in church was not a history of Brian's achievements; being rather more of a reflective nature.



Yes, perhaps I had known Brian longer than most at St. Augustine's. I would say that I (and others around at the time, who later moved away) had known Brian not far short of 50 years. We knew him as a member of the 7.45 Group which met in our house each Sunday after the evening service. Canon Brian Jewiss was often there when we were able to share the Eucharist together. We knew that Brian had become closer to Margaret when they were both teaching at Crofton School, and that they were married by Canon John Barnard at Seal Parish Church after John had moved on to Seal, not far from Sevenoaks. We knew Brian as a Lay Reader, as they were called in those days. (To our two very young children, Jacky and Nikki, he was known as 'Uncle Brian who reads' because he regularly came round to read to them from early books for small children).

We also knew that Brian had a terrible medical history of cancer.

Yet what came out strongly with Brian was his love of learning, though that was not enough because he would say: What's the point of learning if you are not prepared to pass that knowledge on to others? As a graduate in English from Aberystwyth University, retiring as Head Teacher of St. George's CofE School, Bickley, he had every opportunity to do just that.

Brian was firmly grounded in the Faith of Christ, whom he worshipped and adored, and I would want to comment on Brian's time as a Reader in the church. John Barnard's preaching had 'an introduction, a middle and an end'. It was perfectly ordered. Brian was the same, he was not one for quoting one passage of scripture after another. With a text, he went to the knub of the matter and gave the people something to take away and reflect on afterwards. As I would say, he spoke to us as though we were there in the classroom and we were being taught by him. On occasion he would repeat the last sentence, or two, thus underlining the importance of the point he was making. I say that, never in the derogatory sense. That way we could take away what was important to him and to us.

It is easy to recall, not that long ago, how he seemed to set the church alight when he told us how he settled down to say his prayers. People were clamouring for a copy!

Some other time and elsewhere, we were discussing a comment attributed to Lord Hailsham, Lord Chancellor in a Tory government, on dying and reaching the heavenly realms. Lord Hailsham had been quoted as saying that he would 'fall on his knees and offer no defence'. What was Brian's response? 'Oh, I wouldn't fall on my knees. I would run and keep on running'. Brian would have had that same opportunity as Lord Hailsham, except that Brian, in his own words, would see the light, and be running ever faster and faster still, towards that Light, and towards the Lord he loved and adored so much.

May he rest in the Love of Christ. Amen

Alan Skinner

Jubilee Country Park during Lockdowns

It's a well-known fact that during the lockdowns many people have made much more use of their local park or greenspace than ever before. For residents of Petts Wood and Bickley, Jubilee Country Park is where they have been heading. Many have said to me that they've rediscovered Jubilee after not visiting for many years, purely because they never had the time before. Others have confessed that although they've lived in the vicinity of the park for decades, it was not until lockdown when there was nowhere else to go that it ever occurred to them to visit! It has been great to see so many new faces in the park.



You may have read in the media of the tremendous increase in litter resulting from the influx of visitors to parks and wondered perhaps if this were the case at Jubilee. The answer is most definitely yes. Although our weekly Friends of Jubilee conservation work party is not permitted to operate, a dedicated team of individuals are still allowed to litter-pick in the park on a regular basis. These Friends all devote many hours, and walk many miles, clearing up rubbish. The majority of what we've been finding was not from our daytime visitors, but from the nocturnal ones (and I'm not referring to hedgehogs and bats) who clearly were gathering in contradiction of all the social-distancing laws and guidelines. Cans, bottles, PPE and much more besides are being found in vast quantities. Had it not been for the dedication of our litter-pickers since last March, the park would not be the beautiful place it is today. I would also add that it's not always visitors who litter – sometimes it is our neighbours. On one occasion recently, clearing a huge quantity of bottles from near a boundary in the park, I narrowly escaped being hit on the head by three large gin bottles being thrown over a garden fence into the park! Litter-picking can have much nicer memorable moments too though – one day we got a glimpse of a deer near Alan's Path on Southborough Lane. Now that was exciting!



With increased footfall, social distancing and puddle-avoidance after heavy rain, many of the informal paths are progressively growing wider and muddier as vegetation is trampled underfoot. However, even if you just stick to the Cycle Track, signs of spring will soon be evident. Keep a lookout for catkins on the trees (hazel, aspen and alder amongst others) carpets of white flowers – Wood Anemones – in Thornet Wood, bright splashes of brilliant yellow Celandine, the more delicate yellow of Primroses followed in April by Bluebells.

In these dark and difficult days for us all, a walker in Jubilee Park can see signs of the hope of spring on a daily basis and that's what we all need at the moment - hope.

by Jennie Randall from the Friends of Jubilee Country Park

The Time Machine

A dear friend is going through a very difficult time and I decided to give her a call, but as she answered, a strange thing happened. The years flew away and suddenly we were 14 again. Our giggly conversations were all about our new hot-pants - should we wear them to the Croydon Suite at the weekend, was Rod Steward sexier than Cliff Richard (of course!) and could we get away with turning our uniform skirts over our belts just one more time? After a Saturday afternoon at Wembley to watch the womens' hockey cup final, we would dance around my Dansette record player, grooving to The Troggs and The Small Faces and drink vast amounts of Tizer.



We weren't silver-haired grannies any more with many aches, pains and problems, but bright-eyed, optimistic teenagers with our lives ahead of us, full of hopes and dreams.

Perhaps you too could pick up your own 'time machine' and call a friend, but whatever you do, please pray for my wonderful friend, Elaine.

Sheila Griffin

Encounters with Jesus

Did January feel like a very long month? At least I can promise you that February will be a short one! Spring is on its way and the snowdrops are pushing their way up through my lawn. There is hope for the future.



The seasons pass and the Christian year moves on. Easter Sunday will be on the 4th April and, whether or not we can meet inside our church buildings, we will still be celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus - the promise of eternity, that death is not the end.

Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter, has always been described as a time of preparation, an opportunity to reflect on our relationship with God and look forwards. You can do that on your own, but this year why not let's do it together as a community? Would you like to join in?

We are going to run a six-week course on the theme of Encounters with Jesus. It will be a chance to get to know some of the characters in the Bible who met Jesus face-to-face. Their lives were changed forever and maybe ours will be too.

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

The woman at the well (John 4:1-26)

Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)

The healing of the sick woman (Luke 8:40-48)

The rich man (Mark 10:17-27)

The woman (and presumably the man) caught in adultery (John 8:1-11)

There will be four groups, meeting online using Zoom at different times and days of the week, beginning on 22 February. In each one-hour session, there will be a genial host to welcome you, we'll read the encounter in the Bible, listen to some music, watch a short video and then have a chance to chat through our ideas.

Don't be a stranger. Come and join in. Exact times will be confirmed in due course but if you would like to join a group, please speak to Steve or Rachel, phone 020 8467 1351 or email office@st-augustines.org.uk.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party - 16 February 7pm
Including the launch of this year's Lent course Encounters with Jesus

Ash Wednesday - 17 February 7pm
A service of reflection to mark the beginning of Lent



Newly Appointed Catechist

Amani is a newly appointed Catechist at one of the churches in the Mwaikisabe parish. As yet, there is no housing for him, so he and one son are living in the small house previously occupied by Pastor Sinda and his wife and the rest of the family are living 45 Km away. Amani is a recent graduate from the Bible College in the diocese of Kondoa and his role will be assistant church leader alongside Pastor Sinda.

Catechist Amani, wife Ester and 7 children Fred, Godfrey, David, Pendo, Given, Brown and Jeremiah

Helping the Homeless



My daughter Claire and her friend Jayne, who both work for the Bank of England, wanted to do something to help the homeless this winter. They chose to take part in The Big Walk for Shelter and set themselves the target of a walk of 10k through local woodland last December. The response was so amazing that they decided to increase the walk to 20k

to be more challenging. The Bank of England would add £350 for each of them. Their target amount was £1,000.

Their first attempt was thwarted by Jayne's son testing positive for Covid but they did the walk just before Christmas. Their route took them from Chislehurst to Petts Wood, Bickley, Bromley Common and back to Chislehurst. They stopped at the 11k point for a mulled wine at The Manor at Bickley and the man selling it gave them £20. They raised an amazing £2,100. The Bank of England then agreed to match this amount, as Shelter was their chosen charity for 2020, bringing the final total to £4,200.

The money raised will help Shelter campaign to end rough sleeping, build more social homes and protect renters who face discrimination and eviction: £10 could pay for two webchats of online support and advice. £20 could pay for two calls through their emergency helpline. £80 could pay for two face-to-face advice sessions. £120 could pay for a legal advice session for someone facing housing problems. £150 could help someone keep their home, resolving a complex housing issue for them.

2020 has been a difficult year, with thousands of people across the UK struggling to make ends meet. Shelter are working to support people whose jobs and homes are under threat and they are campaigning for a stronger safety net for everyone.

Sue Goodger

That's Entertainment

I don't stay up to see the New Year in. Instead I celebrate on New Year's Day by watching the New Year concert from the Musikverein in Vienna. The concert hall is spectacular. It is decorated with beautiful flowers grown especially for the occasion. Normally the hall is full of a beautifully dressed audience from all over the world. They will have paid hundreds of euros for a ticket.



This year the hall was empty but still full of flowers. The audience was on a bank of videos. The orchestra was live. All had been tested daily so they could be together. It must have felt so strange for them, but their performance was as brilliant as ever.

During the interval the TV audience sees a film showing the beautiful countryside of Austria and a performance from the Vienna State Ballet. This year they danced partly outside in a park, on grass and gravel paths. This left me worried about the state of their shoes!

The second half of the concert is always a programme of Strauss music ending with the Radetsky March. This normally involves audience participation as they clap along to the beat. The conductor was spared this. In his speech he reminded us that music brings joy, peace and love and helps our minds. This made me realise how much I had missed live music and theatre.

This must be the first year I had missed a pantomime since my first one when I was three. I haven't been to a concert or theatre for over a year. Usually I like to support local productions at the Bromley Little Theatre and the Petts Wood Players, and of course the 23rd Bromley Scouts company panto! I have taken these things for granted. I must now appreciate them more in the future.

Ann Hanrahan

Remembering with appreciation our neighbour Sheila Danson 30.10.1930 – 28.11.2020

Bill and I lived very near to St. Augustine's Church for 25 years. We moved away 15 years ago, and have only met Sheila and Jack Danson a few times since. Bill and I referred to Jack as 'The Chatty Man'. He was always smiley, helpful and very chatty when we came into out front garden. Sheila forever seemed to be busy; dashing here and there with new grandchildren arriving to increase their family.

One day, in the late 1990's, Sheila asked me whether our church would like to receive a banner of a Celtic Cross that she was working on to obtain the City and Guilds Certificate for an embroidery using gold thread. This proved to be a beautiful piece of intricately worked artwork that had taken endless hours of patience and skill to produce. I introduced Sheila to Brian Ash, telling him of her offer which he gladly and gratefully accepted. Sheila also worked another banner, this time of a boat, so they could be displayed either side of the nave. Everyone agreed that these beautiful works of art greatly enhanced the church.



After moving away I only bumped into Sheila from time to time when we were both shopping. She told me with pride of her expanding family, but she also told me that Jack had become a victim of Alzheimer's disease, and that life was becoming increasingly difficult, and how very supportive her children were. In 2012 I met Sheila again and I asked her how Jack was getting on. "He died this morning" was her reply. I was at a loss for words and was moved greatly by her courageous stoicism. I met her much more recently when she seemed to be struggling with her breathing. I therefore immediately thought of her when the pandemic hit us all. I asked another neighbour how she was and was told that she was at home receiving nursing care for Covid 19. I kept enquiring how she was doing and was told that she had beaten it! After making excellent progress, sadly, she had to be admitted to hospital with pneumonia. She appeared to be making progress and the family were looking forward to seeing her at the week-end when they received the sad news that she had died, unexpectedly, peacefully in her sleep.

Sheila leaves three children, Linda, Ian and Elaine, 11 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren and we offer them our love and sympathy. Sheila touched many lives with her energy, friendliness and of course, her embroidery skills. Let us admire those two beautiful banners in our church and give grateful thanks for Sheila.

By Sally Morris

Roundabout

We hope that you are enjoying Roundabout. We welcome contributions from our readers: just send them, unformatted, to one of the editors. If there are issues relating to the church or the parish which you would like to be covered, let us know that too.

The first six months of Roundabout in 2021 will be printed and delivered as well as online, and February – July editions will be free of charge. The new year will bring challenges, but we hope that Roundabout keeps you in touch with us at St Augustine's with St Luke's. *Ed*

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It's Good to Laugh!

There is something quite Biblical about laughter. Who can forget the words from Ecclesiastes chapter 3 verse 4, 'a time to weep and a time to laugh' and in the familiar reading of The Beatitudes Jesus teaches, 'Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh'.

As I returned from my morning walk recently, I noticed an elastic band on the ground. Before long I counted another five or six abandoned on the hill up to our close. The sight of them transported me back to the office I worked in for about twenty years before the birth of A Little Girl I Know.



I laughed, not out loud you will be pleased to know, as I recalled a large mail delivery one morning. After sorting it out and delivering it to the various offices I was left with a large pile of elastic bands on my desk. I was just about to put them away in the box in the stationery cupboard when my boss appeared from his office. He laughed and said, "I need to teach you a very important life skill". He picked up a band and placed it on his thumb and the next finger, he pulled it tight using his other hand, sent the band flying across the office... just missing his boss who was walking through the door early for a scheduled meeting! We didn't know what to say or do. Fortunately, the big boss laughed and said, "Good to see that you are passing on some useful skills!" A Little Girl I Know laughed as I recalled this story and what I had learnt that day.

A good few years have passed since then, but what of my 'important life skill'? At the end of my shift at work recently I returned the two-way radio to its charger in the general office. There on the side was a large pile of elastic bands. I picked one up and this time laughed out loud. The lady in the office looked up and remarked that she had always wanted to learn how to flick an elastic band. This was my chance to pass on my knowledge to someone else. Before long she had mastered it and bands were flying across the office. The sound of our laughter brought the Acting Head from her office, and before long she was laughing and joining in!

You see there is fun and laughter in the simple things in life even in these difficult times. In the words of Bessie Anderson Stanley –

Live well, laugh often, love much

Congratulations to:

Holly Smith and **Tony Stanley** gave birth to a beautiful baby boy Harrison Jamie on 10th January weighing 7lb11oz. This is the fourth grandson for **Helen and Tom** and the 8th great grandchild for **Tom Manthorpe**.

On a cold but sunny day, funeral of **Joanne Kane** took place at St Augustine's on 22 January and was followed by interment in St Luke's cemetery.

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SOURCE: FAIRTRADE FOUNDATION



As members of St Augustine's with St Luke's, we seek to follow Jesus' command – to share God's love with our community.

You are welcome to worship with us:

- on Sunday mornings at 10 am via Zoom and phone.
- on Wednesday mornings 11.30 via Zoom and phone.

For details of how to join ring 020 8467 1351

Our church office is closed until further notice and normal church activities and room bookings are suspended. For details about our church life please see the website: www.st-augustines.org.uk.

Our Vicar Steve Spencer can be contacted at revsteve.spencer@btinternet.com

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Editor - Sue Goodger email: sue_goodger@ntlworld.com

Layout - Adrian King email: aandcking@waitrose.com

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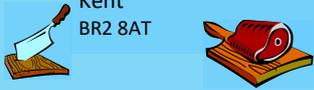
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