

Ipplepen



Torbryan



Denbury



Woodland



Broadhempston



Seasons' Greetings



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From the Editor – Seasons Greetings!



Welcome to our Christmas Beacon-with plural ‘Seasons’ Greetings’ as this issue covers Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and a New Year- all in just two months!

But times will be strange with the pandemic possibly changing our normal family traditions over Christmas and New Year. We hope the Beacon will bring something special and re-assuring in these times for you.

I am reminded of lines from the poem used by King George VIth in his Christmas broadcast to the British Empire in 1939:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

“Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”

And he replied:

“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be better than light and safer than a known way.”

My thanks to so many who have contributed making this a special issue with some articles that I hope may be of interest to our younger readers. I am particularly encouraged and grateful for the input from student contributors!

Articles for the next edition should reach me by 16th January 2021.

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Michael Price

The Beacon is produced at no cost to the Mission Community

www.missioncommunity.org.uk

Christmas – how will we celebrate it?

As I write this we are in the middle of the second lockdown, the purpose of which is to reduce the rate of infection and so we watch and wait for signs of its effects. This has been our journey since March as we have been attentive to signs of hope in reduction of the R rate and news of progress on a vaccine. Attentiveness has been a theme throughout the pandemic as our lives have been turned upside down and we have become aware of those around us in new and different ways. The denial of physical contact and other restrictions has produced a heightened attentiveness to life and the things that are important. Many things that were unnecessary and a distraction (even if we previously did not realise this) have fallen away.

The Christmas story is all about attentiveness. At its heart is a young mum (Mary) and step dad (Joseph) cradling a vulnerable new born (Jesus) who is totally reliant on their attentiveness. It is a story of struggle and difficulty – two young people struggling with a sudden new, perplexing and radically different reality and their struggle to meet basic needs, such as a roof over their head, at a time of great need. In this difficulty, those least valued by that society (the shepherds) come to play an essential and central part in being the first to give the love and care this young family needed; those who were far off and strangers (The Magi) become friends. Haven't we seen these things again in the times we have been living through?

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas we are doing so in new, perplexing and radically different circumstances. In the emotions we will face as we work out how to celebrate this year, we enter into the Christmas story in a new way. We enter into the struggle of this young couple trying to find somewhere to lay their head, safe enough (if not quite what they would have wished or hoped for) to have their baby. We will undoubtedly continue to notice who it is that comes alongside us to offer love and care when we need it most and I suspect at times it might surprise us who this is. I am sure in all of the differences this year there will be many moments when strangers become friends.

We don't know yet what celebration will look like in our homes, communities or churches. Whatever it is, it will be different from what has happened in previous years but my prayer is that these strange times will give us a new and fresh insight into the Christmas story and that the Christmas story will be once again a resource to help and guide, offering us understanding, light and hope.

Keep an eye on the notice boards around our villages and churches, church Facebook pages and websites to see how our churches will mark and celebrate Christmas this year.

Peace and good wishes

Andrew



Celebrating and Marking Christmas 2020

At the time of going to print, we are in the middle of the second lockdown. We are yet to discover what restrictions or freedoms will be in place over the Christmas period. One thing is for sure that Christmas will happen and our churches will be marking and celebrating it in whatever ways are possible.

Please keep an eye on the church and village notice boards, Facebook pages and websites for arrangements as what is possible becomes clear.

www.missioncommunity.org.uk

www.facebook.com/StAndrewsIpplepen

www.facebook.com/Broad20

www.facebook.com/denburyworship

You do not need to have a Facebook account to view our Facebook pages.

We look forward to celebrating the Christmas story with you.

December 2020 – Individual Prayer

Do remember our church buildings are open for individual prayer and reflection. We provide a **space** to come and **simply be** when you need to.

9.00am to 5.00pm	Daily	- Ipplepen
9.00am to 4.00pm	Sundays & Wednesdays	- Broadhempston
10.00am to 5.00pm	Daily	- Denbury

Virtual Carol Service and much more!

A useful source for grandparents with young grandchildren to have up their sleeve! -

If you usually enjoy singing at a Carol Service, <http://www.whychristmas.com> may be of interest this year. It is one of the largest Christmas information websites on the web and was launched 20 years ago by James Cooper – a self-confessed ‘Christmas Nut’, and Christian.

The website was originally designed for schoolchildren as some of his friends who were teachers wanted a site that was child friendly and wasn’t trying to sell something. However, there is now a wide variety of fun and interesting content suitable for both adults and children.

Sections include Christmas Traditions and Customs, Christmas around the World, The Christmas Story and Christmas Fun and Activities. This last section includes an online Advent calendar and an online Carol Service where you can listen to the carols and/or join in! The service lasts about 35 minutes. You can see the words of the carols and readings by scrolling down the page. In the absence of many Carol Services this year, it would be a good alternative for many people – especially if you want to sing.

From Sally Churchus, Chairperson of the Association of Church Editors

What is the collective noun for churchwardens?

Ipplepen has jumped from one churchwarden to six!!!!

So now we have two churches, Broadhempston and Ipplepen, being led by what can only be described as 'Skeins' of churchwardens.



What is a skein I hear you cry!!!

Well I am thinking of the 'V' formation that geese fly in taking it in turns to be at the front.

Each churchwarden in this new structure has specific responsibilities therefore a lot of people doing a little is the model. This more collegiate approach allows a greater number of people to offer their gifts and an increased level of flexibility and nimbleness from our churchwarden teams which is something very needed in these current times. These roles will be reviewed and change with time as has just happened at Broadhempston.

So here is a snap shot of our churchwarden teams and how current roles are being divided:

<p style="text-align: center;">Ipplepen with Torbryan</p> <p>Sheila Sheldon – Safeguarding and pastoral care</p> <p>Sue Hird and Jane Outhwaite – Prayer and Worship</p> <p>Bridget Vickerstaff and Geraldine Dennis - Buildings and Grounds/churchyard</p> <p>Clive Tompkins – Meetings and Finance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Broadhempston</p> <p>Paul Russell – Safeguarding & relationship with school</p> <p>Maggie Sercombe – Prayer and Worship</p> <p>Janice Parnell – Fellowship</p> <p>Alex Paton – Grounds/churchyard</p> <p>Chris Parker – Meetings, Finance and buildings</p> <p>Pastoral Care shared across the team</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Woodland</p> <p>Jane Usher – Safeguarding</p> <p>Sheila Ashford</p> <p>All roles shared with the help of David Wrayford and John Usher</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Denbury</p> <p>Tessa Aimes – Safeguarding</p> <p>Steve Bassett – Buildings and Grounds</p> <p>Mike Bray – Finances</p> <p>Other roles shared with the help of Rachel Belringer</p>

Life Events

We continue to pray for those we, as Beacon Parishes, have had the privilege of supporting and accompanying, and also their family and friends.

Funerals and Interments

Nora Dennis - Ipplepen
Ivor House - Denbury
Elizabeth Mounce - Woodland
Marg Lake - Denbury
Monica Trigoll - Denbury
Jack Raymond - Ipplepen
David Broughton - Denbury
Jean Woodward - Ipplepen
Sylvia Taylor - Ipplepen

How to keep in touch

- Weekly Notices** These contain up to date information of services and activities in our parishes. Published prior to each weekend, these are given out at services and also available to pick in the churches during the week. They are also emailed out by the office to those on the email circulation list
- Website** The Beacon Parishes website www.missioncommunity.org.uk is the 'go to' place for information. It also contains the Weekly Notices and Beacon Magazine
- Videos** Video recordings of some of the services held in our Beacon Community can be found on the website
- Facebook** Three of our parishes keep up to date Facebook pages:
www.facebook.com/StAndrewsIpplepen/
www.facebook.com/denburyworship
www.facebook.com/Broad20/
- Email** The Church Office has an email list which is used for sending out the Weekly Notices as well as any other important information. If you or someone you know would like to be included on this list, please contact the office
- Contacts** Names and telephone numbers are to be found in The Beacon.
- Rector** Rev'd Andrew Down. Tel: 01803 813403 E: rev.andrewdown@gmail.com
- Church Office** Church Office, St. Andrew's Church Hall, Church Path, Ipplepen, TQ12 5RZ
Tel: 01803 814178 E: office@beaconparishes.co.uk

Floodlighting

The towers at both Denbury and Ipplepen have floodlighting which needs sponsorship to cover the cost of electricity and maintenance.

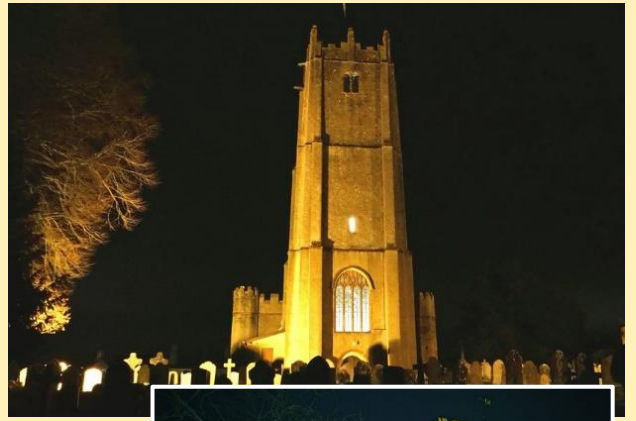
Sponsorship is usually for a week at a time, and people often like to sponsor to mark a special occasion.

For Denbury, contact Rachel Belringer 01803 812529

Mobile: 07751804007

For Ipplepen, contact the Church office on 01803 814078

or office@beaconparishes.co.uk



Denbury:

New

From Tom New to celebrate Joan's 94th birthday and 64 years of marriage

From Sue Abraham in memory of John

Ipplepen:

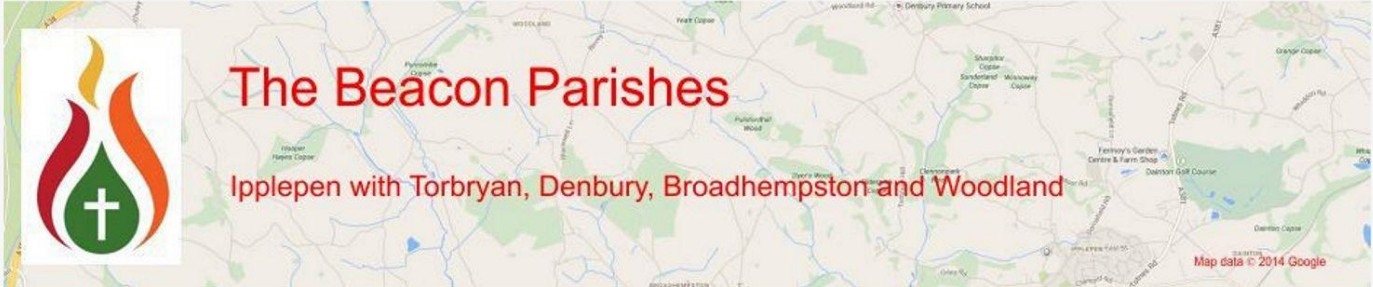
Retrospective

- 25th – 31st Oct From Shona Elders in memory of Keith Howard and Ray Elders. Both served their country in the Royal Navy during the Aden Conflict. Wonderful father and stepfather, gone but never forgotten.
- 1st – 7th Nov From Mark Karen & Ken Squire. Remembering Pamela who died on 6th November 2011.
- 8th – 21st Nov Remembering Michael Kemp on his birthday 10th November, sadly missed by his family, Sheila, Graham Beckie and Hannah Needs.
- 22nd – 28th Nov From Sarah, Hannah and Damon in memory of her husband Michael and their father who passed away in February and whose birthday would have been Friday 27th November.

New

- 29th Nov - 5th Dec In memory of Wendy Osborn, with love from Rex Osborn and family.
- 13th – 20th Dec From Shona Elders in memory of Betty Elders. The cheekiest girl in town, loved the church. Died Easter Sunday at the height of lockdown. Would have been 88 on 16th December. Much loved Mum.
- 22nd – 28th Dec From David, Linda, Hannah and Katie Simmonds in memory of Hope and Faith.
- 22nd – 28th Dec From Peter Mason remembering his wife Jan whose birthday would have been on 23rd December.
- 27th Dec – 2nd Jan From Ingrid Marsh to celebrate the first wedding anniversary of her son Patrick Marsh and his wife Lalita.
- 19th – 25th Jan In loving memory of dear Ron on his birthday on 24th January. Love from Pam Sharland.


Welcome to the Website!



The Beacon Parishes
Ipplepen with Torbryan, Denbury, Broadhempston and Woodland

Welcome Weekly Notices Services and Events Church Magazine Being involved Resources Life Events Contact Us Archive

Welcome



Welcome to our website. It contains a wide range of information about our churches and activities, including [Weekly Notices](#), information on upcoming [Services and Events](#), [Videos of Services](#), [The Beacon](#) magazine and a host of other topics. Have a look through the menu!

Latest News

The new national lockdown commenced on 5th November. Three of our churches will open for private prayer – see note on 'Welcome' page about times.

The October – November 2020 Beacon magazine contains all of the usual news from the Beacon Parishes.

The Weekly Notices are in a new format – have a look if you haven't been able to pick one up in church. Please email the Office if you would like to be put on

Just over 3 years ago, with about five minutes notice, I took on the role of 'webmaster' for the Beacon parishes. What did I know about running a website? Not a lot – just how to use them. After a quick lesson I just 'dived in' and learnt the basics of how to update the website.

Recently, Andrew and I decided we needed to change the structure and menus, and the result is now there for all to see and use.

It is not there as a 'marketing tool', but more as the 'go to' place for up to date information and resources for our congregations, visitors and parishioners.

Current information is updated as required either by myself or Caren in the office.

What can you do?

1. Put it on your 'Favourites' List on your browser
2. Go on line and go through all of the menus to see what is there
3. Check through the pages for your parishes and provide me with updated content or menu subjects, which I will then enter.

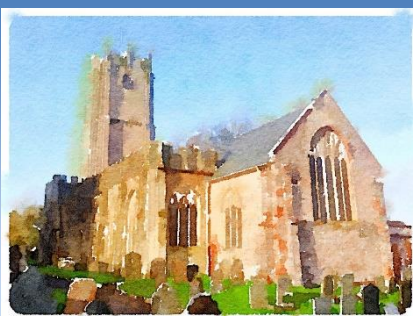
Just send to me: webmaster@beaconparishes.co.uk

4. Use it!!!!

Charles Quartley

News from Ipplepen

St. Andrew



Harvest Festival was celebrated with our Reader, Hillarie Griggs, Rev. Kevin Hook and our Methodist friends on Sunday October 11th. It was rather different from other years but none the

less a lovely service. Music was provided by recordings from the Youth choir with Tom Morris playing the guitar and singing the anthem *'Praise God for the Harvest'* with Marilyn Ellis accompanying and also *'The Fruits of the Land'* with the added voices of Jo Innes Lumsden, Vanessa Bevan and myself. This was a new experience for us recording individually then sending the recordings to Tom to 'mix' and I was so pleased to have a chance to actually sing!

The flowers and foliage decorating the church were provided by church members from their gardens and arranged by Sue Sanders, a great idea in these times! During the service Professor David Griggs spoke about sustainable development and shared with us his global experience. Instead of fruit and vegetables, these days donations of tins and other non-perishable goods were brought into Church over the week and the next for onward delivery to the 'HITS' foodbank.



The following Sunday, 18th October, at the Harvest Communion service, Rev Andrew welcomed the Diocesan Mission Resources Advisor, Stephen Mitchell who spoke about gifts and stewardship.

The Annual Parochial Church meeting took place on Monday 12th October which had been postponed from 3rd April. This was a good positive meeting with many members attending -masked and socially distanced.

The annual Gift Day was held on Saturday 17th October. Unfortunately owing to Covid restrictions we were unable to serve coffee this year but our thanks to those people who brought or sent their gift envelopes. It was also 'flu jab day for many of us in the village.

The Taizé Service on the following Wednesday evening focused on healing and Dr Tom Morris gave a reflection on his work during the current crisis. It was extremely interesting, humorous and enlightening. Rev Andrew explained the history of the Taizé movement and its role in worship. Rachel Belringer from Denbury sang some moving Taizé songs accompanying herself on the guitar. We were able to reflect and meditate. A recording of the service can be heard on our website

On Bible Sunday Jo Innes Lumsden led the Celtic Service. There were readings by Bridget Vickerstaff and myself and a meditation read by Ann Holroyd. Jo asked us to listen to the words of two hymns *'Praise my Soul'* and *'Go forth and Tell'*. Dr Tom sang two songs with appropriate words for this particular Sunday, *'Speak O Lord as I come to you'* and *'Teach us to read the Scriptures Lord'*. Marilyn Ellis played the clavichord with some uplifting music.

News from Ipplepen - continued

We celebrated All Saints at the Holy Communion service on Sunday 1st November at 11am with Rev Andrew. We obviously think of St. Andrew but there are many other saints and in his address Andrew encouraged us to choose and explore the life of a particular personal favourite saint.

The All Souls service in the evening was poignant. We remembered our loved ones by reading out their names with candles being lit for each one. Hillarie Griggs led the service and the music was provided by Marilyn Ellis and Dr Tom Morris.



Remembrance Sunday was commemorated at the War Memorial in the village square as being in 2nd lockdown we were unable to have a Church Service. It was well organised with everyone social distancing and wearing masks. Rev Andrew led the service, Vanessa Bevan read the names of those on the War Memorial. The bugler Steve Bourne began and ended the two minutes silence. Many representatives of organisations in the village laid their wreaths. We missed seeing all the Brownies, Guides and Scouts this year and hearing the muffled bells ringing but glad to be able to safely have a service of remembrance. A recording of the service can be found on the website <http://www.missioncommunity.org.uk/videos/> along with recordings of other services.

The weekly notice sheets with the reflections provided by Andrew, Steven Sheldon, Tessa Amies, Tony Meek, and Anne Burden with a beautiful picture of Decoy Country Park in autumn colours, have all been appreciated.

As we move towards St. Andrew's Patronal Festival, Advent and Christmas we wonder at this time what will happen with church services. In the meantime keep safe everyone and God Bless.

Marilyn Clark



*Five of the 'ghost ships' off Torquay. There are currently 21 cruise ships located off the south coast.
Picture by Antony Mitchell*

St. Andrew's Pet Service

Everyone was excited to see each other after a summer of lockdown, and it was good to have the service safely outside in the field behind the Church. Luckily the sun shone, and we stayed dry. There were lots of dogs present, which made the service exciting, and most of them were very well behaved. Our dog clearly felt we should have been singing, and took a lead role as soloist!



Tessa led the lovely service, and helped us to reflect on how our animals had helped through the difficulties of lockdown. People were thankful for a huge range of pets including cats, dogs, chickens, horses, guinea pigs, hamsters, fish, snakes, and others. Tessa made us think about what it might have been like on lockdown on Noah's Ark with the range of animals in that confined space! She suggested it may have been rather noisy and smelly!

We hope there will be another open air pet service again soon!

And a couple of 'animal' jokes:

Where did Noah keep his bees?

In the Ark hives.

What did Noah say when he finished loading all the animals?

"Now I've herd everything."

Emily Hunt – aged 13

St. Andrew's Gift Day - Thanks

Andrew and churchwardens of St. Andrew's church would like to thank everyone who donated so generously to our annual Gift Day appeal. We are especially grateful that you have taken the trouble to do this at a time which has been so difficult for all of us.

We pray that you will all stay safe in the coming weeks and months.

- Once you've seen one shopping centre, you've seen a mall.
- Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.
- Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.
- Acupuncture is a jab well done.



A view from Torbryan



I can't say I feel any great happiness when the clocks go back and we head into winter. And this year potentially is worse than many, with lockdown restrictions still in place. But some great news potentially is on the horizon in terms of an effective vaccine. We can but hope for an efficient roll out of

this and for those who are vulnerable to be protected by it.

This has been a frightening time for elderly people and others who are at a heightened risk of contracting the virus. But it has also been really hard for kids and young people who haven't been able to study and socialise as they would like. My heart goes out to undergraduates who have started courses this year, supposedly one of the most exciting times in their lives, and who have found near prison-like conditions in their halls of residence, that they are forced largely to study online and prevented from enjoying most all the normal socialising that would take place for most when starting at university.

One night before the most recent lockdown I went out with a couple of mates and at the end of the evening got a taxi home. There was a group of teenagers congregated outside the kebab shop and the taxi driver launched into a diatribe about the size of the group they were in and the lack of social distancing. I couldn't bring myself to agree with him; if I was that age now I'd probably be doing the same thing.

And it hasn't exactly been easy for those of us who are somewhere in between young and old either. Entertaining and educating the kids while also trying to work from home and do all the other household chores wasn't exactly easy during the first lockdown. Respect is due to our teachers who are carrying on this time around in difficult circumstances as well as to our heroic NHS staff and other key workers.

So, although it might not seem like it now, we are turning a corner and things are starting to improve. I for one cannot wait to throw away my masks, to get back to normal and no longer have to hear all this tiresome vocabulary of lockdowns, bubbles, self-isolating, Test and Trace, R Rate etc.

Georgie Brendon

Hazel Ford – a thank you note

Dear Andrew

Thank you for thinking of Hazel's family and myself and also for sending me a copy of The Beacon. What an interesting publication this is!

I recently received a 'thank you' letter from Devon Air Ambulance Trust with the news that the wonderful sum of £170 was donated in Hazel's name. I should be grateful if this could be mentioned in your parish magazine.

I hope you and yours are well and keeping safe in these strange and difficult times.

Regards, Julia Ford

News from Woodland

St. John the
Baptist



We have certainly had a spectacularly colourful autumn this year. Despite losing all its leaves in the recent gales the branches of the hawthorn tree opposite our house are still full of haws, the leaves of the silver birch and beech

trees down our road are gloriously afire with copper and ripe holly berries gleam from every female bush. These red tones seem to be reflected in my own garden, with red day lilies and sedum still in bloom and, for some reason, only the red rose bushes having a second period of flowering. I expect that by the time you read this, the bright and brash colours will be gone and we will be appreciating the subtle hues of a misty winter morning instead! Lockdown 2 certainly seems to have driven many more people outside for daily exercise along our lanes, in determination to enjoy every last moment of sunshine before the grey short days of winter close in.

This year has certainly given many of us, in all sorts of ways, the impetus to reassess what is important to us and to try doing things differently. For Woodland, this has indeed been the case this autumn. Bearing in mind that the village hall was too small to hold our regular monthly coffee mornings in, whilst maintaining social distancing regulations, it was decided to try holding it at the Rising Sun. It was certainly a successful morning but, of course, we have been unable to repeat it since due to the recent changes brought about by the increase in Covid-19. Changes were also made to how we celebrate Harvest Festival. Instead of filling every corner of our little church with flowers and fruits from our village gardens and orchards it was decided to keep things a little more low key, decorating windowsills with sprigs of rose-hips from village hedgerows amongst smaller and more subtle arrangements.

I think this year, certainly at time of writing, it is very difficult to predict what form the Christmas celebrations will take within our village. I, like many, have no idea how we will even be able to celebrate within our own family, which does make things a little difficult to both plan and, perhaps more importantly, look forward to. I think that this year I shall concentrate on trying to enjoy the autumn while it lasts!

Helen Pearse

True grit



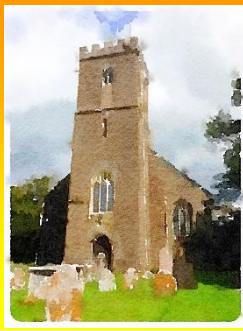
My local area is having a competition to name five new gritting lorries. Having told my family, they have come up with:

- Salt of the Earth
- Grit and Bear It
- Some are born Grit, Some Achieve Grit and Some Have Grit Thrust Upon Them

Come on readers, share your ideas -Editor!

News from Broadhempston

St. Peter and St. Paul



Pet Service

These words were sent to us by Ffion Russell, aged 10, after our Pet Service:

“It was at the end of the summer and our family had just started to watch ‘The Vicar of Dibley’ when we found out about the pet service. Me and my sister got very excited, as it looked like it would be fun.

“On the day, many pets came to the service, three chickens, three dogs, one guinea pig and many more in people's thoughts and hearts. We all gave thanks to our pets and Andrew gave each of us a special blessing.

“I was very grateful and enjoyed the pet service and I hope that we can do it again!!”

Remembrance

We gathered at the War Memorial to lay our wreaths and, after a period of silence, heard this poem by Joshua Dyer, aged 14. We don't know who Joshua is or where he comes from but we thought his poem wonderful and wanted to share it with you.

ONE THOUSAND MEN ARE WALKING

*One thousand men are walking
walking side by side
singing songs from home
the spirit as their guide*

*They walk toward the light milord
they walk towards the sun
they smoke and laugh and smile together
no foes to outrun*

*These men live on forever
in the hearts of those they saved
a nation truly grateful
for the path of peace they paved*

*They march as friends and comrades
but they do not march for war
step closer to salvation
a tranquil steady corps*

*The meadows lit with golden beams
a beacon for the brave
the emerald grass untrampled
a reward for what they gave*

*They dream of those they left behind
and know they dream of them
forever in those poppy fields
there walks one thousand men*

Lest we forget

News from Broadhempston - continued

Christmas celebrations

We, like everyone else in the Mission Community, have been thinking of ways to celebrate Christmas whilst complying with Covid restrictions, both current and future. We are very aware that whatever Services we offer will be heavily constricted in form (no singing!) and in the number of people who can attend. With this in mind and with Andrew's encouragement, we have been thinking through what we, as a church community, can offer our village that will bring a little joy and hope over Christmas. In the event there is no more powerful story than the Nativity: the joy of the Messiah's birth and the hope of his message of God's eternal love. We therefore plan to put together a large scale model of the Nativity scene for display in the church over the Christmas period. The model is being put together by members of the PCC and we are inviting anyone from across the community who would like to help to join us (contact any of our PCC members).

We will also erect the usual Christmas tree but this year we would like to invite children and families from the village to add their own decorations to the tree. These will be available from the Community Shop for a nominal sum of £1 and all proceeds will be donated to charity.

Currently church opening is restricted to two days per week (Wednesday and Sunday). We plan to open more frequently in the run-up to Christmas so that individuals and families can visit to see the Nativity scene and add their decorations to the tree if they so wish.

More information on these events will be posted on the Mission Community website www.missioncommunity.org.uk and the Broadhempston Church Facebook page as our plans evolve.

Team 'Broadhempston PCC'

An exercise for people over 60



Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute and then relax.

Each day you will find that you can hold this position for just a little bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to a 10-lb potato bag. Then try 50-lb potato bags in each hand and eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute.

After you feel confident at this level.....put a potato in each bag.

With thanks to our 'fitness instructor' (?) Peter Coles

News from Denbury

St. Mary the Virgin



Over the last few weeks we have been enjoying the ability to hold weekly services at St. Mary the Virgin, which have been on an alternating Communion and Celtic Morning Prayer basis. Along with all other places of worship this pattern came to an end on 5th November as we entered a month long lockdown with all churches closing for

services during this period. We wait to see whether this restriction will continue after the lockdown review date early in December.

Although we were unable to use the church building, we were able to hold a short Service of Remembrance at the centre of the village at the war memorial with all attendees socially spaced. Tessa conducted the service which, although condensed from the normal programme, still contained the essential prayers for the Fallen, the reading out of the names of those from Denbury who fell during the two World Wars, and the playing of the Last Post. Poppy wreaths were laid on behalf of the Parish Council and the church. As it has not been possible for poppy collectors to visit homes this year, it was suggested a couple of weeks ago that villagers might like to make their own symbols of remembrance by painting poppies on pebbles and displaying these around the village. These have been beautifully done and the memorial was covered with many pebbles painted by village folk making a very moving addition to the Remembrance Day service.

Some 5 years ago, the decision was taken by the PCC and the bellringing team to commence fundraising to refurbish the peal of 5 bells at St. Mary the Virgin as these were in dire need of repair and upgrading and there was a real possibility that ringing at Denbury would have to come to a halt if improvements were not undertaken.

After what has often felt like a very steep uphill climb, work finally started on the tower at the end of October.

The first phase involves creating trapdoors through all the floors to enable the removal of the bells and the installation of steel lifting beams to assist with lowering and raising the bells. There is still some discussion regarding the siting of the ringing room as this could be positioned on the first floor giving a bit more space and a lot more comfort for the ringers, but costings need to be considered before a final decision can be made.

We were very hopeful that all work would have been completed in 2020 but as with so many things this year Covid 19 intervened resulting in a delay in starting Phase 2. This involves the removal of the bells, the replacement/refurbishment of all running gear including new bearings and the reinstallation of what will now be a peal of 6 bells including 3 new bells. This work will not unfortunately be started until June 2021 however we all look forward to hearing the first rounds rung on the new bells by summer next year.

We have had some positive news this week regarding the battle against the virus and we all hope that true normality will be achieved in the not too distant future. In the meantime we are looking at ways within the current guidelines, in which we can still experience and enjoy the joys of Christmas.

Mike Bray

How Jesus can help you get a pet!

Bet you never expected this guy to be the one to help you get a pet! Have you always wanted a pet but been told “Now’s not the time”, or “We haven’t got room for a pet”, or similar? Well here’s a teaching of Jesus that will help you change your parents’ or carers’ minds!

There was a widow who needed a judge to help her get justice in a problem she had. However the judge was dishonest and didn’t care. So the widow kept asking and kept asking until eventually the judge said, “If I just give her what she wants then maybe she’ll stop bothering me!” So he did.

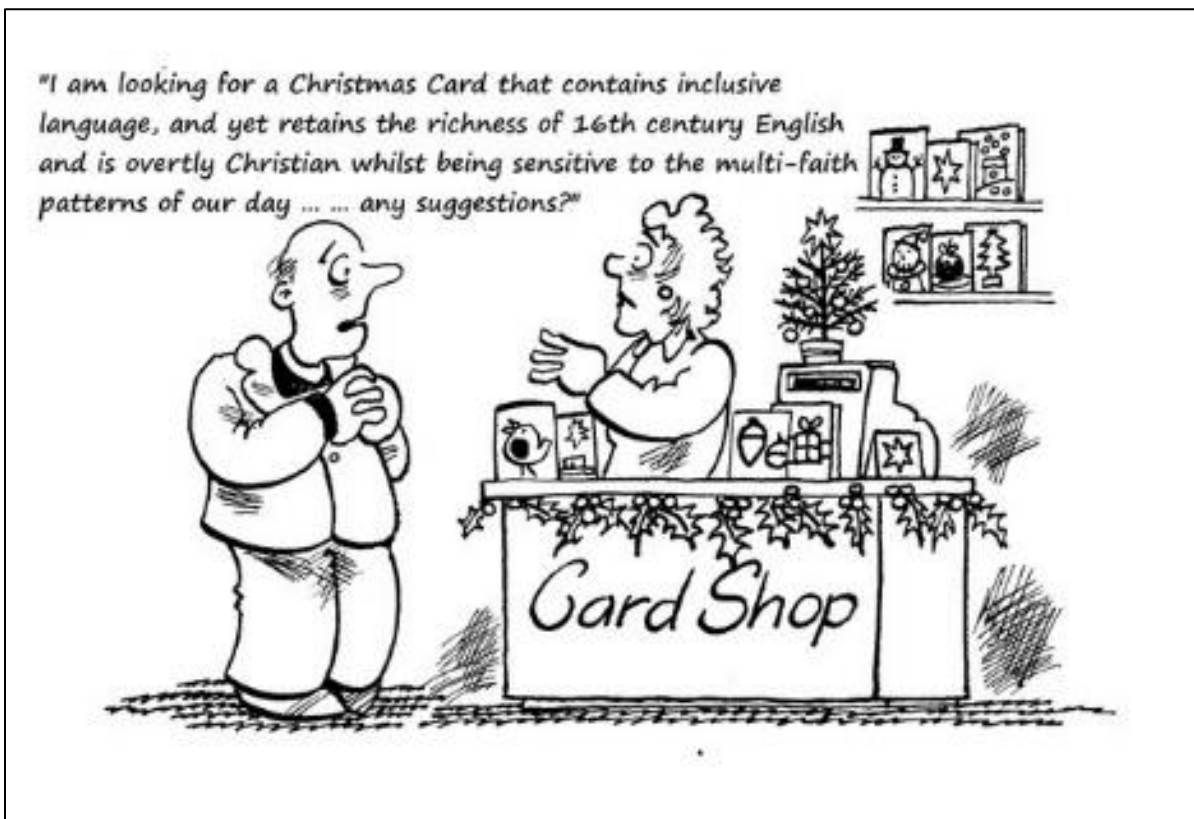
This story clearly shows that if you want something really badly, you shouldn’t give up on trying to get it. So back to the question of getting a pet... My first piece of advice is DO NOT GIVE UP! Just keep asking and reminding them of how badly you want a pet. One of the best ways to ask is by bombarding them with facts to show how well you have researched the needs of your pet. For example: a hamster needs finely shaved bedding so their eyes aren’t irritated; a chicken will go broody and try to hatch the eggs if you leave them in the nest for too long; snakes taste the air with their tongue if they are happy.

Secondly, show how responsible you can be. If you already have a pet then try showing how well you can take care of it, or try asking for a smallish pet first, like a fish. This way you can prove you are willing to put in the time needed, before moving onto a higher maintenance animal, like a puppy for instance.

You might be surprised to learn that Jesus wasn’t actually intending to give pet advice in his story, but he was saying that God does listen to our prayers. This doesn’t mean that you’ll get everything on your Christmas list if you keep pestering, but that God cares for our needs. Remember, you always have more time, so if the answer is still no to a pet now, then don’t give up. Maybe there’s a neighbour who needs their dog walked or their guinea pigs fed, and you could be the one to help.



Emily Hunt – aged 13



Back to Front Christmas



There's something odd about Christmas,
In a back to front sort of way.
I can't help thinking that Christmas
Is a back to front sort of day.

We give presents to all our family,
And people give presents to us,
But what have we done to deserve it
And why do we need such a fuss?

It's strange that the person whose birthday
Is the cause of this annual rave
Is often ignored, and not mentioned
On the cards and presents we gave.

He's left out of his very own party,
No presents for Jesus today,
In the rush of our back to front Christmas
His presents are hidden away.

A thank you would be a good present
For the treasure the poor shepherds found,
Just a moment to think about Jesus
Turns our back to front Christmas back round.

"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."
Luke 2:14



Students

Ipplepen school recently had an 'Environment Day'. Here are two letters written by pupils from year 6 to their parents, which Amanda Lacey, Head of School, has asked us to put into The Beacon.

UNITED SCHOOLS FEDERATION

St. Michael's C. of E. Nursery & Primary School St. Catherine's C. of E. VA Primary School
St. Mary's C. of E. VA Primary School Marldon C. of E. VA Primary School
Ipplepen Primary School and Stokeinteignhead School



November 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

We have recently enjoyed a visit from Demelza from the Devon Waste Education Team as part of our school focus on the Environment.

Each class worked with Demelza and some classes went out into the Ipplepen Community to pick up litter. As year 6 pupils, we were asked to focus on the area around the Village Hall, Churchyard and Church Hall. While we didn't find any litter around the church or Church Hall, we were especially disappointed to discover that there appears to have been a dramatic increase in the amount of litter in our village since we last carried out this task with Councillor Dewhurst a few years ago.

The worst area was the Village Hall car park where we found a shocking 254 pieces of litter in just 20 minutes! This included plastic bottles, glass, sweet wrappers, hair bobbles and cigarette butts.-Did you know that in London there are enough cigarette butts collected to weigh the same as 7 baby elephants! This is just one interesting fact we found out on the day. Rather worryingly, in relation to the number of cigarette butts that we found in the Village hall car park, we also learnt that 1 cigarette butt contaminates roughly 10 litres of water not to mention them looking unsightly and a den for germs!

Our class were quite shocked by the rubbish that we found and would like to encourage all members of the Ipplepen community to carefully dispose of rubbish in bins and recycling centres. It is good to know that there is now a recycling facility at the Ipplepen Hub and we encourage people to use this. We also politely request that people think more carefully about where to dispose of their cigarette butts! Ipplepen is a lovely village, let's all work together to keep it that way! Our school Eco Ambassador, Charlotte Saunders, has also written to parents to make them aware of this important issue.

Thank you for taking the time to read our article-Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all at Ipplepen Primary School!

Written by Ruby McNulty and Juliette Levey- Class 6 pupils and Eco Councillors

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November 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

A Plea for help!

My name is Charlotte Saunders and I am a Year 6 pupil and the Eco Ambassador for our school. This means that I work with the class Eco Council representatives to consider the ways in which our school could be more environmentally friendly.

Some of the Year 6 Eco Councillors have also just written an article which will appear in The Ipplepen Village Magazine, December edition, about a recent whole school litter pick with the Devon Waste Education Team, around our village.

My team and I have been thinking about the huge amount of packaging and rubbish that we generate in our daily lunchboxes and would like your help in trying to reduce this please.

We have noticed that an awful lot of cling film and tin foil is used across the school each day and wondered if maybe you could think of different more environmentally friendly ways to send in sandwiches from home please? Some ideas for this, could just be placing sandwiches etc. into clear reusable boxes that would mean that cling film is not needed at all. Other options could also be the use of Beeswax wraps. These are reusable food friendly wraps which would mean zero waste. When asked about these, many children in our school had never heard of them. They are something that can easily be purchased on Amazon for as little as £10. Just think about how much money you could save on cling film or food bags after just a few uses of a Beeswax wrap!

We also want to remind you to try and recycle as much of the rubbish that comes home in your child's lunch box as possible. It is also great that the Ipplepen Village Hub now has a recycling facility which you can use.

I hope that you can try to do your bit to reduce rubbish in lunch boxes and recycle rubbish and think of other packing ideas for food. This is really important and helps in our fight to protect the environment and our planet.

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Saunders
Year 6 Pupil and Eco Ambassador Ipplepen primary School.

Festive recipes

Here are a couple of seasonal recipes from Rosie:

Vanilla biscuits

Ingredients:

- 100g (4oz) softened butter
- 225g (8oz) self-raising flour
- Few drops of vanilla extract
- 100g (4oz) caster sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tablespoon milk

Method:

- Pre heat the oven to 190 degree C / fan 170 / Gas mark 5
- Lightly grease two baking trays
- Rub the butter into the flour with your fingers until it looks like fine breadcrumbs
- Add all the other ingredients and mix until it becomes a dough
- Roll out the dough onto a lightly floured surface and roll to your desired thickness
- Use some Christmas cookie cutters to cut out your cookies. Place them on the baking trays and bake in the pre heated oven for 10-15 minutes or until they are turning a golden brown
- Cool on a wire rack and then decorate!



Rosie and the finished product!

Gingerbread men

Ingredients:

- 350g (12oz) plain flour
- 1 level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 2 level teaspoons ground ginger
- 100g (4oz) butter
- 175g (6oz) light muscovado sugar
- 4 tablespoons golden syrup
- 1 large egg, beaten

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 190 deg C/ fan 170/ Gas mark 5
- Lightly grease three baking trays
- Place the bicarbonate of soda, flour and ginger into a bowl. Rub in the butter until the mixture is like fine breadcrumbs. Now add the sugar and stir it in
- Add in the syrup and egg and mix until it makes a smooth dough. You may need to knead it lightly towards the end
- Split the mixture in 2 and roll out one section on a lightly floured surface, until it is about 1/2cm thick
- Cut out with either gingerbread men cutters or some Christmas shape cutters. Place the cookies on the baking trays and then repeat this process with the other section of the dough
- Bake in the preheated oven for 10-12 minutes until they become a slightly darker shade. Let them then cool slightly and then move them to a wire rack. Decorate them once they have cooled

Christingle Cake

Ingredients

Orange sponge

340g soft butter or margarine, plus extra to grease
340g self-raising flour, plus extra to dust
340g castersugar
6 large free-range eggs
Zest of two large oranges
1 tsp vanilla extract

Frosting

250g icing sugar
80g unsalted butter
20 ml milk
2 tablespoons Marmalade

Orange sponge

500g of ready-to-roll Orange icing

Christingle decorations

Christingle candle
12cm square of Tin foil
4 wooden skewers
4 x marshmallows
4 x fruity pastilles (or other sweets of similar size)
4 x dried apricots
30cm Diameter cake board (optional)

Special Equipment:

Electric whisk or freestanding electric mixer
Large hemisphere cake tin

Method

1. Get ready to bake: Preheat the oven to 170°C/340°F. Grease the Large Hemisphere Cake Pan thoroughly and sprinkle with a light dusting of flour.
2. Make the cakes: Beat the butter, sugar and orange zest together with an electric whisk or freestanding electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat the 6 eggs together in a jug, then pour into the butter & sugar mixture bit by bit until well incorporated. Then fold in the flour & vanilla extract gently using a spatula or large metal spoon until you have a smooth batter (be careful not to overmix).
3. Bake the cake: Pour the mixture into the cake tin, scraping the bowl with a spatula. Balance the tin on a round cake tin for stability and bake for around 60 minutes on the middle shelf of the oven. Leave in the tin until completely cool, then turn out onto a cooling rack.
4. Make the frosting: Beat together the butter and icing sugar until roughly combined, then beat in the milk until the frosting is smooth. Whisk on a high speed for 5 minutes until light and fluffy then add the marmalade and whisk for another 2 minutes.
5. Frost the cake: Using a pallet knife, cover the cake dome with the orange frosting. Roll out the orange icing until about 35cm Diameter. Place onto the cake, gently smooth from the top downwards and trim away any excess icing from the bottom so you are left with an orange dome for your Christingle. Place the cake on your cake board.
6. Christingle time!: Wrap a red ribbon around the base of your orange cake. Place the square of foil on the top and push the candle into the centre of the cake, as you would do with a normal Christingle. Poke a marshmallow, pastille and apricot onto each skewer and then stick in each corner of the cake to resemble the cocktail sticks and fruits of a Christingle.
7. Serve the cake: You can light the candle and admire your Christingle cake in all its glory before cutting and serving slices to your hungry congregation, family or community group. Enjoy!

Christingle is likely to be a Covid casualty this year but there is no reason why we can't celebrate it at home. As well as making a Christingle, some of our readers might like to make a cake! Thanks to the Children's Society for this recipe.

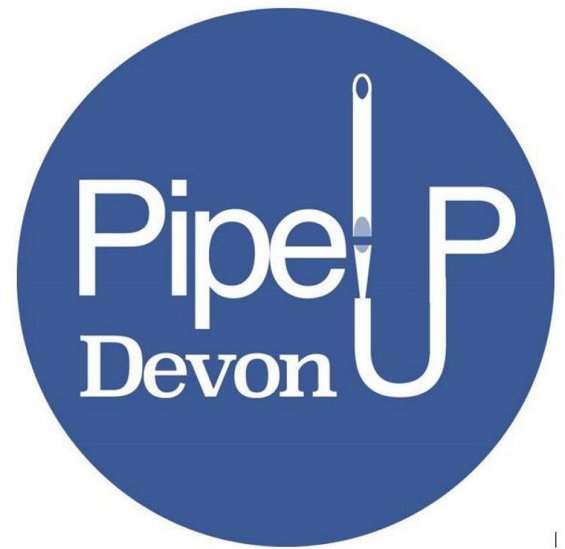
Pipe Up Devon!

A new scheme to encourage young people to learn to play the organ is being launched in Devon by the Diocese of Exeter.

PipeUp Devon has been set up by three experienced organists: Andrew Millington, the former Director of Music at Exeter Cathedral, Peter King, the Organist Emeritus at Bath Abbey and Ian Curror, the former Director of Music at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

It aims to inspire 11 to 18-year-olds who already play a musical instrument to give the organ a go.

It is hoped training up a new generation of organ players will eventually increase the number of people available to play some of Devon's historic church organs.



Beginner to Advanced Tuition

Pipe Up Devon has been inspired by similar schemes elsewhere.

Andrew Millington said "Mozart described the organ as 'the king of the instruments'.

"We hope to revitalise the art of organ playing by offering training to young players."

He said the organ was an instrument for everyone, regardless of class, background or age "The organ and church music has been my lifelong passion since I was a parish choirboy and I would consider myself neither posh nor holy (try as I might with the latter!)

"A degree of innate talent is needed in order to make progress, but basic enthusiasm is the key, plus some parental support."

The PipeUp Devon initiative follows a similar successful scheme in Salisbury Diocese.

"Organists delight in the rude noises they can produce with their feet and the opportunity to shock unsuspecting congregations with their loud trumpets." Peter King, Bath Abbey Organist Emeritus.

Students who take part will receive subsidised tuition at all levels, from beginner to diploma standard.

They will be taught by experienced tutors, with lessons available across Devon.

Opportunities for Performance

Peter King said he had begun playing the organ as a school boy, but with fewer children now regularly going to traditional church services, there were less opportunities for them to hear the organ and be inspired to play themselves.

He said: "Playing the organ is endlessly fascinating because all organs are different, each has its own range of colours.

"Because some churches need an organist every Sunday there are lots of performance possibilities, so students will not be learning the instrument in a vacuum.

"Leading a congregation in the singing of a hymn or a carol can be an exciting responsibility, there may be 100 or more people in the building (in non-Covid times) and you, as the organist, are in charge!"

The funding has come from the Ouseley Church Music Trust and the St. Wilfrid's Trust, as well as money raised through the Exeter & District Organists' Association.

Pipe Up Devon! - continued

Part of the scheme involves students volunteering to play the organ at their local church once they have learned the basics.

It is hoped this will benefit the student, the church and the local community.

Peter King said learning the organ could really suit young people who liked a physical and mental challenge, "No other instrument requires you to play with both hands and both feet, to play on two, three or four keyboards and to change stops.

"Learning the organ is challenging but rewarding

"Acquiring the skill to manage all that is a tremendously satisfying experience.

"Organists delight in the rude noises they can produce with their feet and the opportunity to shock unsuspecting congregations with their loud trumpets.

"Holiness is the last thing that is needed in an organist, and is often not found. On the whole we tend to be rather an earthy lot!"

Andrew Millington agreed that playing the organ was a special experience.

"There is nothing like the thrill of filling a large building with glorious sound and enhancing worship in regular services and special ceremonies such as weddings," he said.

You can find out how to sign-up for PipeUp Devon here:

<https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/worship/pipeup-devon/>



...and in Menorca!



Ellie ready to go!

At the church we go to when we visit Menorca, we have an 18 year old organist Ellie, who started very slowly 6 years ago playing in church once a month - not very well and very slowly I have to say. With perseverance by chaplain and congregation she is now more than competent. It just shows you what can be done!

Michael Price

A Christmas thought

Colin Reeves offers this Christmas thought:

Christmas is just the icing on the cake!

Be honest, everyone, especially the kids, love a lump of icing off the Christmas cake! We get round to the fruity, nourishing stuff underneath, of course, but it is not so tempting. Such is modern Christmas, all sparkly good things with an admirable emphasis on children, family, and gifts.

Yet it is not surprising that those on their own, childless, ill or bitter over tough times, will dismiss the occasion as trivial, irrelevant or 'just for kids', even querying God's existence. And that is because we so easily miss the fruity, nourishing stuff underneath. Oliver Cromwell even banned Christmas celebrations because they clouded the issue of Christian faith – a faith which throughout the Bible is aimed squarely at mature adults rather than children. After all, the birth of Christ is only mentioned in two of the four gospels, while the rest of the New Testament ignores it completely!

And Christmas was a baffling, fearful time for all the participants. Joseph, Mary and the shepherds were afraid throughout all stages, even though each was being urged by angels "Fear not". Joseph, mature, respectable, yet frightened of wagging tongues over his relationship with a pregnant girl; Mary, amazed and puzzled by supernatural changes to her body and her life; The shepherds, ordinary, unschooled workers, drawn suddenly into remarkable affairs.

Despite that awfulness (i.e. full of awe), it was a magnificent, meaningful occasion. Almighty God was coming to earth to start the greatest stage of his relationship with humankind. Little wonder, then, that in our modern, well-to-do society, we find it easier to concentrate just on the Santa-Clausy, party-party top layer and forget the nourishing stuff underneath!

But each of those fearful Nativity people in the Bible responded with positive trust in God, which brought them through to the 'icing on the cake.' At its simplest level, Christmas is a story of light coming into darkness, of a pure, new baby bringing joy and hope into the murkiest places; it is a picture of new life changing real people for good.

The words of 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' ring true today in all our local towns, too:

*How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven;
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.*

Time for a Christmas smile



The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from house to house knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them. As they continued to get 'no room' answers a little voice called from the back "You should have booked!"

Poems to ponder - 1

Let me begin by claiming no credit for titling this piece 'Poems to Ponder'; that belongs to a very dear man and well-loved friend who some of you may have known, the Reverend Ian Graham-Orlebar. It was Ian who introduced me to these two poems, which as we approach what promises to be a very strange Christmas this year, I would like to share with you. Both were written by the late, great, U A Fanthorpe. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do - Steve Bassett

'BC AD'

This was the moment when Before
Turned into After, and the future's
Un-invented timekeepers presented arms.

This was the moment when nothing
Happened. Only dull peace
Sprawled boringly over the earth.

This was the moment when even energetic Romans
Could find nothing better to do
Than counting heads in remote provinces.
And this was the moment

When a few farm workers and three
Members of an obscure Persian sect
Walked haphazard by starlight straight
Into the kingdom of heaven.

A Close Shave.....

You may have noticed that a few people have grown beards during the recent pandemic - with varying degrees of success. In recent years beards have changed and some are little more than stubble.

I cannot imagine a day without shaving, and in a way equate it with cleanliness and godliness BUT... Reading the famous diary of Parson Woodforde I came across this entry, so perhaps I need to think again:

March 12th 1769

I read prayers and preached this morning at Ansford church..

Mem: As I was going to shave myself this morning as usual on Sundays my razor broke in my hand as I was setting it on the strop without any violence. May it be always a warning to me not to shave on the Lord's day nor do any other work to profane it pro futuro.

Stephen Bryant

Poems to ponder - 2

If you come from Yorkshire or the north (that's anywhere beyond Exeter) you'll probably have no problem with the next one; for the rest of us, just think 'All Creatures Great and Small'

'What the Sheepdog Saw'

After the very bright light,
And the talking bird,
And the singing,
And the sky filled up wi' wings,
And then the silence,

Our lads sez
We'd better go, then.
Stay, Shep. Good dog, stay.
So I stayed wi' t' sheep.

After they'd cum back
It sounded grand, what they'd seen.
Camels and kings, and such,
Wi' presents – human sort,
Not the kind you eat –
And a baby. Presents wes for him
Our lads took him a lamb.

I had to stay behind wi' t' sheep.
Pity they didn't tek me along too.
I'm good wi' lambs,
And the baby might have liked a dog
After all that myrrh and such.

Steve Bassett

Transported by Faith



One doesn't associate the royals with public transport or wit. But in Andrew Lownie's book, 'The Mountbattens' he writes that Prince Philip's uncle liked to amuse his daughters with what he called The London Bus Drivers' prayer:

Our Father which art in Hendon, Harrow be thy name. Thy Kingston come, Thy Wimbledon, in Erith as it is in Hendon. Give us this day our Leatherhead and forgive us our bypasses as we forgive those who bypass against us. Lead us not into Thames Ditton but deliver us from Ewell. For thine is the Kingston, the Purley and the Crawley, for Esher and Esher. Crouch End.

Book review: Imagining Mission with John V Taylor

Rachel Belringer writes:

This is an extraordinary book by Jonny Baker & Cathy Ross and I'm very tempted to review it thus:

Jesus centred, mission based, thought provoking, challenging, creative – READ IT!

However...



This book is a meditation on, and a development of, the thoughts of John Taylor, General Secretary of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) 1963-74. The two authors are Pioneer Trainers at CMS today. Together they lead the reader into a vision of church, mission and society, built on Taylor's insights, in our contemporary context. Whatever your image of a "Missionary" – earnest, sensible shoes, teaching little African children in crisp white shirts/revolutionary trouble maker in Doc Martins – you won't find it here. In the first chapter on Church we are asked to "Imagine the Church as a forest". A mixed ecosystem of biodiversity, interdependent but flourishing in its own settings. It responds to management – both wise planting, and clearing to let God's light in. This is the Church in the World, and this vibrant image stayed with me throughout the discussions that followed.

The Church of God is in, and of, the World. Therefore Mission is the main function, they argue, not just a module in theological training. But how can an institution like the Church continue to function as a mission movement? The answer lies in creativity and imagination...in risk taking...in gentle questioning: "Why is this the way it is?" and then, "What if..." - imagining. Listening and asking questions, rather than confrontation (like Jesus!). Institutions can become risk averse, defensive, fearful of change – offering "Services rather than service" (Taylor). Historical and geographical context is important, local is best. (In Cusco, Peru, there is a painting of the Last Supper, which includes roast chinchilla – I've seen it!). In a beautifully nuanced phrase, they talk about "Becoming unstuck". Allowing space and time for creative thinking: Christ the Innovator. Christ the great disturber. (Taylor again). We follow what God is doing and Jesus leads the way. Of course!

The process of provocation – of being interrupted – has the silver lining of sparking imagination and creativity. And this brings me to the most extraordinary aspect of this book: Its timing. The Covid 19 pandemic has got to be the biggest interruption of modern times. The book, conceived and written before the outbreak, is suddenly front and centre relevant. A dramatic re-imagining has been imposed upon us in the Church. What was an open and challenging discussion treatise, now appears more like a Manual for What to do Next! The pandemic is dreadful, the disruption and heartache awful. But this is also such a time of silver linings and exciting possibilities, it's difficult to know where to start. Why, for example, has it never occurred to us to record and share Services to the wider community before?? We've had the technology for years, and we've been aware of people of faith around the edge of the church community, who don't attend for whatever reason. We were interrupted and made to think creatively and imaginatively. What if we made it a habit??

Like I say...READ IT!!

Book review – continued: Post Scriptum

With the Editor's indulgence, I'd like to share a thought process springing from reading this book and relate it to Michael Price's article in the October/ November Beacon about the future of our church buildings.

The book "Imagining Mission" talks a lot about Christian structures, but when talking with Pioneer pastors, their focus is more on creating and nurturing Christian communities. Conversely, in the traditional Parish pastoral structure, we serve existing communities, of all faiths and none. Both approaches seek to serve God's purpose. As the Pandemic lock down so definitively proved, if the Church building closes, the Church in the parish does not. So the Parish system (and its buildings) have been tested and found useful. You could ask, why maintain a building which is old, expensive, subject to the most onerous regulations and can be a major distraction from our mission calling if we let it. So why not close it and meet in the Village Hall? Well... it's a beautiful, sacred, peaceful place redolent with hundreds of years of worship. It served as a place of refuge for many in the community during the pandemic and is a source of continuing refreshment for its "regulars". So a double bind – It's a major financial drain but also a vital spiritual asset.



The pews in Denbury

So if the answer to "what if we closed the Church?" is "No", consider the question, "What if we re-imagine the Church building as a community resource and income generator?" Denbury Church has the most amazing acoustics and has been used for recording professional CDs in the past. It is a large, attractive, well heated (!) space, and Denbury may well be without a Village Hall in a few years' time. So, I think you know the next question! "Why keep the pews?". They were installed relatively recently in the church's history (people used to stand – or "go to the wall"), they were built for larger congregations and they are uncomfortable (!). Increasingly, Denbury people sit in a



An old picture of Denbury

circle in the wide chancel area – and already did so for mid week Services, pre lock down. The chairs are more comfortable and less noisy, and *Can Be Packed Away*. Without the pews we have the space and flexibility to have concerts, plays, markets, exhibitions...

So, as Michael said, "What do others think?" All answers, apart from "We can't face the protracted hassles of the Faculty process" will be considered!!

Rachel Belringer

Scooped... by God!

A Christmas' poem written by Marjorie Goodridge,

As cub reporter – on a story,
I'm looking for some by-line glory.

A city full of strangers milling,
surely some have really thrilling
tales of travel and adventure.
Of highway theft or bandit capture?

But no one here too keen on talking
after miles and miles of walking,
and every inn and tavern full
with hardly space to park a mule.

Of course the town is full of rumour
with folk from far away as Sumer.
Some say there's been a funny light;
they've seen it in the sky – at night.
Others claim that sheep run free,
ignored by shepherds on the spree!

As one of the more crackpot things
I'm told to look for foreign kings,
lurking near some local stables!
My boss would think I'd lost my marbles.

That's hardly going to make my name,
or give dull old Bethlehem lasting fame.

- She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg but broke it off.
- A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- If you don't pay your exorcist, you get repossessed
- With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.



Leap over the Wall or Perish – Cathy Ross

Inspired by the missiologist John V Taylor, Cathy Ross, Head of Pioneer Mission Leadership Training, CMS, Oxford and co-author with Jonny Baker of Imagining Mission with John V. Taylor, imagines three pictures of what church could look like.



John Taylor was certainly the master of a pithy phrase or a fascinating word picture. Jonny and I loved discovering these as we delved into his travel diaries and CMS Newsletters from back in the 1960s and 70s! We really felt like we were unearthing hidden treasure. So who was John Taylor and why were we so excited? He had been a mission partner in Uganda in the 1940s and 50s before becoming General Secretary of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) from 1963-74. We discovered that his insights into mission were fresh and radical and that he drew on imagination for engaging in mission in ways that were creative and generative. And this was part of our history, our story as we are part of CMS. We felt like we were owning part of our history and that it was coming alive for us. Taylor's posture of humble listening, attentive curiosity and lively interest in the world around him captivated us. We couldn't believe how pertinent and contemporary his ideas still are for our context today. For example, having taught theology in Uganda, in the local language, this forced him to think in concrete terms. He asserted that theology is living and emerges out of a dynamic encounter with the world. In fact he later claimed that there is no such thing as safe theology – we loved that!

These were the kind of ideas that excited and emboldened us to write this book and to dream about how we could be not only more creative, but also bolder and more innovative in our mission and theology. The book is framed around three sections – Church, Mission and Society. Inspired by Taylor, we imagined and dreamed what church could look like in our era, what mission might mean for us and we addressed interfaith and environmental issues, both of which Taylor wrote on presciently and prophetically. At the end of each section there are creative exercises to help you stretch your imagination and be bold and imaginative in mission.

Leap over the Wall or Perish – continued

So here are three word pictures to whet your appetite:

Cherish the weakness of limited means

I love this! One of CMS' founding principles is "put money in second place." I think the global pandemic has revealed and unmasked how limited our means are if we only think in certain ways. But let's flip this and cherish this as weakness, as the apostle Paul did. Let's celebrate and cherish the small, the weak, the ordinary and let's be content with that. There is much that can be celebrated and 'achieved' without large resources and funding. Simple neighbourly relationships, human connection and sharing lives only need vulnerability, openness and courage.

Get off your high horse and muck in

We have seen some of this in the pandemic, especially in the community with thousands volunteering and helping out in creative ways. This is a message for the church in our time. As one friend put it to me rather poignantly, "this is a great opportunity for us to get church out of the church." She was sad and frustrated at how insular the church has been – arguing over how to administer communion, when can we get back into our buildings – rather in-house discussions in the context of a global pandemic!

Leap Over the Wall or Perish

We think this is a prophetic word for the church. Get church out of church. Get out there and get stuck in. Mission is not about getting people in. It is about being out and about. Whatever the wall is for you – whether it is in your head, in your PCC, in your community or context, or a literal wall as in the picture, leap over it into God's big wide world, God's amazing, diverse, wonderful world. As Taylor said (and here is a fourth insight), "the world is the church's milieu."

Grandad Gummidge



My grandad was puzzled the other day by an occurrence he just couldn't explain.

"I was doing a bit of gardening in the front," he said, "and I stopped to take a breather. Two little children walked past staring at me, followed by their parents. They'd just passed the hedge when I saw the parents peer round it again, look at me and then suddenly hurry on. I didn't know them, though, so what an earth were they doing?"

"Hmm," I said, "were you wearing your old clothes, wellies and a cap?"

"Yes."

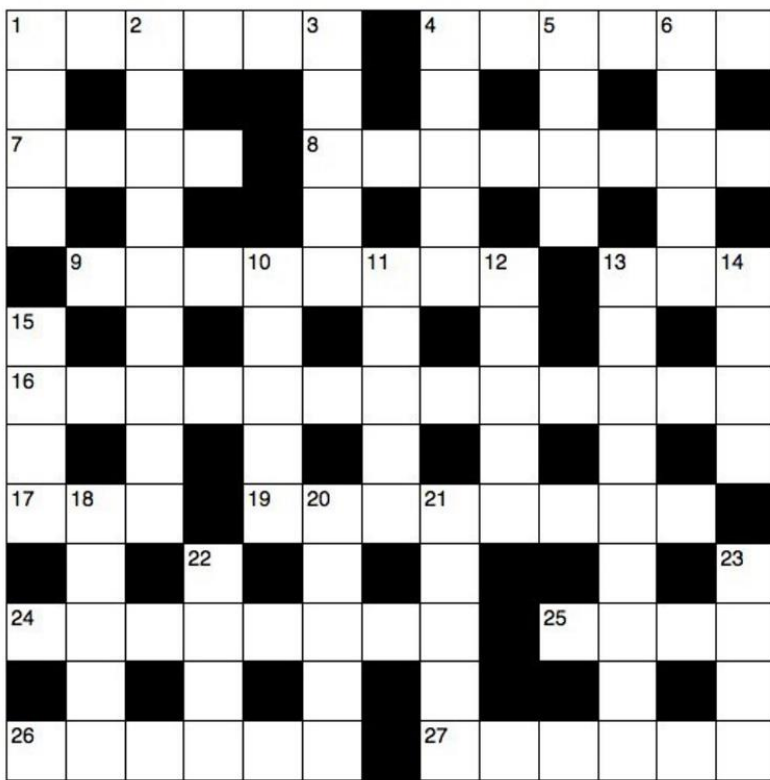
"And were you standing still?"

"Yes, leaning on the gardening fork."

"Well, I said, there's a scarecrow festival in the village today. Everyone has put their creations out in the front and families are walking round voting for the best one....I think they thought you might be an entry."

Grandad was silent for a moment before speaking.

"What do I win if I come first?"



Across

- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
- 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
- 13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
- 16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
- 17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)
- 19 Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)
- 24 Able dock (anag.) (8)
- 25 The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
- 26 Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)
- 27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

Down

- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
- 2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
- 3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
- 4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
- 5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
- 6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
- 10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
- 11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
- 12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
- 13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
- 14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
- 15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
- 18 Narnia's Lion (5)
- 20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
- 21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
- 22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
- 23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)

Sustainability

What is a sustainable future and how can we get there? – Part 1

Professor David Griggs started his working life as a climate scientist in the 70s, before most of the world had heard of it. He became the director of the Met Office's Hadley Centre for Climate Change, headed up the Science Working Group of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and co-chaired the World Climate Research Programme. After many years of advising governments to act on the science of climate he realised time was running out for debate about whether Climate Change existed or not. Urgent action was needed to mitigate the effect on the planet. As sometimes happens this coincided with being headhunted to set up a Sustainable Development Institute in Australia where he also set up a not for profit organisation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Through his work there Dave was asked to join the UN Scientific advisory group to look at the new global Sustainable Development Goals. At the moment, although officially retired, he is developing an environmental sustainability strategy for Riyadh, the capitol of Saudi Arabia and has just taken over as president of the Royal Meteorological Society.



David is married to Hillarie and lives locally.

In October, David came and talked to us about sustainability, and he has given his notes. Part 1 is below and we will publish parts 2 and 3 in future editions of The Beacon.

What is a sustainable future and how can we get there?

Sustainable and sustainability have become buzzwords that you see everywhere. You can get everything from sustainable toothbrushes to sustainable fruit and veg. But what does sustainability really mean, at an individual level, at a local to national level and even at a global level. What does a sustainable future for the world look like and how can we all be part of getting us there. There have been hundreds of attempts to come up with definitions of sustainability, or more correctly, sustainable development. I should know I came up with one of them. But one definition has become almost universally accepted. This definition is known as the Brundtland definition because it came out of a report called Our Common Future, published in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by then Swedish Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland. The definition defines sustainable development as:



“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

So, at its heart is the idea that we should be able to live well today but in a way that allows our children and our grandchildren to also live well.

Sustainability - continued

Are we meeting the needs of the present?

- Recent estimates for global poverty are that 8.6% of the world, or 736 million people, live in extreme poverty on \$1.90 or less a day, according to the World Bank.
- More than 820 million people (11%) are hungry globally
- About 400 million people (5%) do not have access to essential healthcare services
- An estimated 790 million people (11% of the world's population) without access to an improved water supply. An estimated 1.8 billion people (25% of the world's population) without access to adequate sanitation
- The world's richest 1% have more wealth than the poorest 90%
- The richest 22 men in the world have more wealth than all the women in Africa.

So, it would appear we are not meeting the needs of the present, but what about not compromising the needs of future generations?:

- On current trajectories, we are heading for a catastrophic global warming of between 3 and 4 degrees by 2100
- We are losing biodiversity at a record rate, with 25-40% of all species likely to become extinct by 2100
- 22nd August was Earth overshoot day, the date on which we've burnt through the amount of resources our planet can renew in a year

And these are just a few of the many examples I could have given. So, it would seem as a global society we are not living well today and we are not allowing future generations to live well either. In other words, we are not living sustainably.

What would it take to live sustainably?

People often talk about the three pillars of sustainable development:

- Social justice
- Economic prosperity
- Environmental protection

And we need all three simultaneously, because if you think about it having any two doesn't work:

1. **Social justice – yes, economic prosperity - yes, environmental protection – no**

The world is wealthy and that wealth is fairly distributed but if the environment has been destroyed then that wealth cannot be sustained. As the saying goes - there are no jobs on a dead planet.

2. **Social justice – yes, economic prosperity – no, environmental protection – yes**

The world is fair and just and the environment has been protected but if the economy has failed then everyone is equally poor and unable to buy food, medicine and other basic essentials.

3. **Social justice – no, economic prosperity – yes, environmental protection – yes**

There is plenty of wealth in the world and the environment is fine but that wealth is held by just a few rich people while everyone else lives in poverty.

In summary, the world is not living sustainably. So, what has been happening to put the world on a more sustainable path? This will be the subject of the second article in this series of three.

Response to the debate: ‘Death of the Parish Church?’

Steve Sheldon has sent in the following article by the Bishop of Leicester, Rt Rev Martyn Snow, from the ‘Readers’ Quarterly Journal’ in response to the opinions expressed by Stephen Trott (October Beacon p17)

A rumour has been circulating that the bishops of the Church of England are using the current crisis to plot the demise of the parish system. According to certain well-known commentators, the bishops are planning to centralise everything, replace priests with managers and spend all our historic assets on expensive innovations. In short, the bishops stand accused of forgetting what lies at the heart of Anglicanism.

As one of the accused bishops, I’d like to say that these ‘prophets’ are right to sound the alarm, but wrong to suggest that this is a conspiracy. At this moment in our history, the parish system is indeed under threat, but this is actually the result of the steady decline of religion in the West. It’s natural to want to find someone to blame, but I want to suggest that it would far more fruitful to work together to understand what is happening in our society and respond faithfully to the signs of the kingdom which are still very evident.

Whenever someone says that the parish system is the Church of England’s jewel in the crown, I want to ask what they mean by the parish system. If they mean the principle of incarnational ministry, then I am one hundred per cent with them. The principle of lay ministers and priests being alongside people in their joys and their struggles, making real the love of God in everyday situations – this is indeed part of our crown jewels, and it has been practised by churches up and down the land during this time of pandemic.

However, we also need to recognise that a very small church (which is what the Church of England has now become – however much we like to kid ourselves that we are still powerful and influential) can no longer exercise this incarnational ministry for every soul in our parishes. This may once have been possible in a predominantly rural society where the village parson knew everyone in their village and was known by everyone. But ever since the growth of urban communities, the parson has only ever been able to exercise the cure of souls for a small number within their parish. Their ambition is still to be available to everyone (whatever their background, beliefs or lifestyle), but as the tectonic plates of society have shifted, so fewer and fewer people have turned to the church for support or spiritual nourishment.

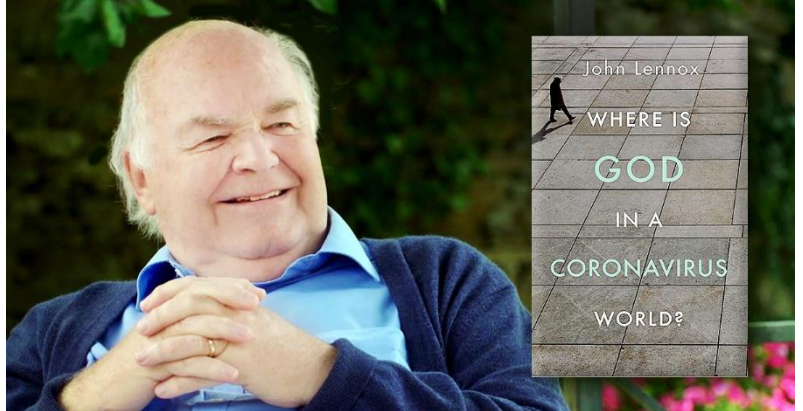
An example of this would be my last parish in inner-city Sheffield. With a population of about 10,000, I shared the cure of souls with a Curate, three Readers, several Church Army evangelists and a number of other lay ministers. The church was highly active in the community, yet I reckon we only ever served about one third of the parish population. Yes, we exercised an incarnational ministry and we retained our ambition to care for every soul in the parish, but most of the time it still felt like we had no contact with huge swathes of the population. So we started work on several fresh expressions of church – all led by lay people, all requiring very little financial outlay and all very fragile – but they started to reach a few people who would never have come to the parish church.

So I don’t believe that investing in lay ministry or fresh expressions of church (or indeed building managers or administrative assistants) is an undermining of the parish system. The fact is we need multiple forms of ministry if we are to exercise genuine incarnational ministry for those we are called to serve. God is not finished with the Anglican Church yet; our task is to hear God’s call afresh in this strange new land and respond like the teacher “who brings out of his treasure what is old and what is new” (Matt 13:52)

'Where is God in a Corona Virus world?'

Whilst reading a book called 'Where is God in a Corona Virus world?' by John Lennox, I found the following article which might or might not be helpful in our current situation.

Jo Innes-Lumsden



MAINTAIN PERSPECTIVE

C.S. Lewis once wrote a fascinating article about how Christians should respond to the existence of atomic weapons. I reproduce it below; but, to help us apply it to our own situation, I have inserted “coronavirus”, “virus” or “pandemic” in square brackets at the relevant points to give the idea (slightly imperfectly; I admit, and I apologise for that):

“In one way we think a great deal too much of the atomic bomb [coronavirus]. ‘How are we to live in an atomic [pandemic] age?’ I am tempted to reply:

‘Why, as you would have lived in the sixteenth century when the plague visited London almost every year, or as you would have lived in a Viking age when raiders from Scandinavia might land and cut your throat any night; or indeed, as you are already living in an age of cancer, an age of syphilis, an age of paralysis, an age of air raids, an age of railway accidents, an age of motor accidents.’

“In other words, do not let us begin by exaggerating the novelty of our situation. Believe me, dear sir or madam, you and all whom you love were already sentenced to death before the atomic bomb [coronavirus] was invented: and quite a high percentage of us were going to die in unpleasant ways. We had, indeed, one very great advantage over our ancestors - anaesthetics; but we have that still. It is perfectly ridiculous to go about whimpering and drawing long faces because the scientists [coronaviruses] have added one more chance of painful and premature death to a world which already bristled with such chances and in which death itself was not a chance at all, but a certainty.

“This is the first point to be made: and the first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by an atomic bomb [coronavirus], let that bomb [virus] when it comes, find us doing sensible and human things - praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends over a pint and a game of darts - not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about bombs [viruses]. They may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds.”

This is tough reading, but it reminds us that Christian faith gives us a different perspective.

Christmas Eve in an Empty Church

This poem by Shirley Fry was sent to me by a fellow church magazine editor, Deidrie Morris - Editor

And did that star so long ago
Reflect the future of the world?
And did those shepherds really see
The angel firmament unfurled?

And Mary straining to give birth
Agonising for the earth
To bear the Son of Man for us
Without, it seems, a lot of fuss
With Joseph mute just standing by
Waiting for the baby's cry.
It seems so distant, so unreal
What can we say to those who feel

It's just a lovely story or
A tale to satisfy the poor?

The world moves on and looks askance
At those who now would join the dance
And yet that babe when He was grown
Showed the way and stood alone
Calling to us all in turn
Those with ears to hear and learn
Saints and martyrs, early, late
Lives we cannot emulate.

And so, in this neglected pew
I humbly kneel and welcome You.
Happy Christmas!

Shirley Fry

A Sunday school teacher saw a little girl at work with paper and crayons, and asked her what she was drawing.

"I'm drawing a picture of God", she replied.

"But nobody knows what God looks like" said the teacher.

"Well," said the little girl. "They will do if they just wait for five minutes".



The Lord's Prayer

I was interested to read in "Andrew's Spiritual bit" in the last Beacon St. Francis of Assisi's response to The Lord's Prayer. It was a deeply spiritual response - but one of the surprises about this prayer is that it can mean so many different things.

Many years ago we attended a service at Tewksbury Abbey, and heard a sermon on the Lord's Prayer which has always "stuck" in my mind.

The preacher was an eminent Doctor of Theology and he pointed out what, I suppose is obvious, that when Jesus told his hearers how to pray they knew nothing of events leading up to His crucifixion, neither did Christianity as such exist. More than that the New Testament had not been written.

In particular the preacher talked about the words "Give us this day our daily bread". Two thousand years ago getting food was not a foregone conclusion. Unless you could work, or were rich, getting food was a daily concern. Even if you were well off, the effects of the weather, or diseases of crops or animals, could mean starvation. So a prayer that people would have food was of the utmost importance.

Many of Jesus's hearers would have known the Old Testament books in detail (although the Bible as we know it didn't exist either).

They would have recognised how the words of the prayer would have been reflected in those books. They would probably all have known the Book of Proverbs and when they heard the words "Give us this day our daily bread" they would have recognised (surprisingly for Proverbs) a prayer.

King Solomon wrote the first 29 chapters of Proverbs in 970-930 BC, but a man called Agur wrote Chapter 30. Verse 7 of this Chapter reads:

Two things I ask from thee before I die. Put fraud and lying far from me; give me neither poverty nor wealth, provide me only with the food I need.

And then the writer goes on to explain this request:

If I have too much I shall deny thee and say "Who is the Lord?"

If I am reduced to poverty I shall steal and blacken the name of my God"

This simple prayer, reflected in the words "Give us this day our daily bread" highlights many of the problems of today's society just as it did 2500 year go. How many of us want more than we need? How many think everything is due to us, and God doesn't come into our lives? Consumerism, ownership and the physical possession of goods as status symbols become Gods themselves. And how many people have absolutely nothing and may even revert to crime to feed themselves and their families - could you blame them for wondering where God is?

Being satisfied with what we need - our daily bread - is the golden mean of Christian life.

Stephen Bryant

Raymond Nonnatus - patron saint of Midwives, amongst others..

'Call the Midwife' is a popular TV series with episodes often shown over Christmas. It is based originally on a trilogy of books written by Jennifer Worth describing her work as a district nurse and midwife in the East End of London during the 1950s. She later retired from nursing having been a senior midwifery sister in Reading and settled in Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead with her husband where for several years I was her general practitioner. She had taken on a new career as a musician and became a concert pianist and a 'local celebrity'. It was during this time that she wrote her first book and asked me to read it to correct any possible medical inaccuracies.



The books are based on life and events at Nonnatus House, the home of the Community of St. John the Divine, an Anglican religious and nursing order which focused on the work of the midwives and nuns coping with the many and medical problems in the deprived area of Poplar, a district of London's desperately poor East End.

The House is named after Raymond Nonnatus (1204–40) who was an appropriate patron saint. His holy day is 31st August. Officially he is the patron saint of childbirth, midwives, children, pregnant women, and priests defending the confidentiality of confession.

His life story begins when his mother died just before his birth. Raymond was somehow extracted from her dead body just in time to save him — Nonnatus means 'not born'.



"Nice idea, Amelia, but I don't think that the Angel of the Lord Zooming with the shepherds would have the same dramatic effect."

Raymond grew up in Portello, Catalonia and became a Mercedarian Order monk. Perhaps because of his gratitude for his own life having been spared, Raymond developed a passionate desire to see other people set free to live the lives God had given them. He made the difficult and dangerous journey to Algeria in order to redeem many slaves from a living death. On another occasion in Tunis he offered himself as a ransom for the liberation of 28 captive Christians.

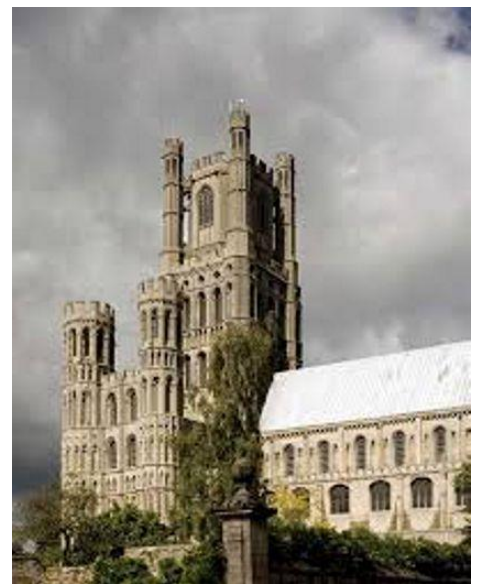
While in Algeria, Raymond preached Christianity to the Muslims, and was put into prison, before being sent back to Spain. The Pope sent for him, but Raymond was so weakened by his suffering in Algeria that he died on the way to Rome. But by then Raymond was content. Just as his life had been given back to him, so he had used it to give life back to others.

Michael Price

The Spiritual Railway

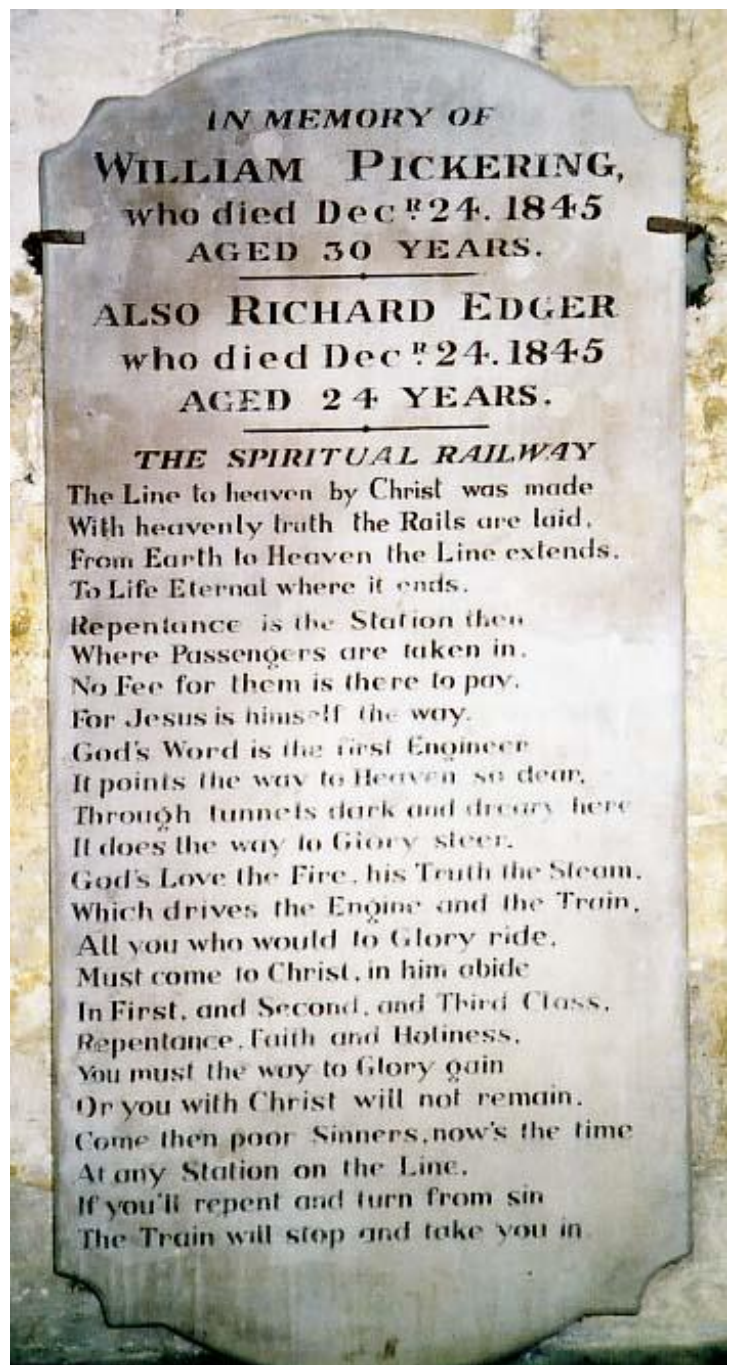
Peter Coles writes:

On Bible Sunday, I heard a Railway Chaplain talk about railways and railway stations. In his address he included mention of 'The Spiritual Railway'. This appears on a memorial in Ely Cathedral. It refers to a fatal railway accident on December 24th 1845. It is in memory of William Pickering, aged 30 years and Richard Elder, aged 24 years. The Google page adds that the names are incorrect. In fact it was Thomas Pickering who was the driver and Richard Hedger who was the fireman.



The Spiritual Railway

The line to Heaven by Christ was made
With heavenly truth the Rails are laid,
From Earth to Heaven the Line extends,
To Life Eternal where it ends.
Repentance is the Station then
Where Passengers are taken in.
No Fee for them is there to pay,
For Jesus is himself the way.
God's Word is the first Engineer
It points the way to Heaven so clear,
Through tunnels dark and dreary here
It does the way to Glory steer.
God's Love the fire, his Truth the Steam,
Which drives the Engine and the Train,
All you who would to Glory ride,
Must come to Christ, in him abide
In First, and Second, and Third Class,
Repentance, Faith, and Holiness,
You must the way to Glory gain
Or you with Christ will not remain.
Come then poor Sinners, now's the time
At any Station on the Line,
If you'll repent, and turn from sin
The Train will stop and take you in.



Reflection from the Bishop of Exeter, Robert

It has been a tough 12 months and, for many of us, 2020 will be a year we shall be glad to leave behind. The pandemic has cast a long shadow over the world and, although news of a vaccine is welcome, it will be a long time yet until we are out of the woods.

December is normally full of festive cheer, with Christmas lights, shopping for presents, parties and carol singing. It's a great time for catching up with friends and family, except that this year will have to be a different kind of Christmas.

Family gatherings, if allowed at all, will almost certainly be smaller. We may be joining in carols on Zoom or Facebook rather than in church. Already beleaguered local shops will suffer, as Christmas shopping is done online.

What does not change, however, is the story and meaning of Christ's birth: God with us. God is with us in the mess as well as in the good, in the disappointment and the difficulty, in times of sorrow as well as times of celebration.

Deprived of the things that brighten up the long winter nights, to quote the old carol, we badly need a dose of 'comfort and joy'. One shaft of light piercing the gloom is the way people are caring for each other, rallying round to give help, comfort and support, often going the second and third mile. These things are the antidote to cynicism and soften the abrasive edges of lockdown. They bring hope.

This December, hang onto the words of John from the opening of his Gospel: 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never overcome it'. God is with us. May we find in the birth of Jesus Christ both our comfort and our joy.

+ Robert Exon



- She was only a whisky maker, but he loved her still.
- A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
- Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
- A hole has been found in the nudist - camp wall. The police are looking into it.
- Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.



Giving is a Privilege

Stephen Mitchell is the Diocesan Mission Resources Adviser and was a guest speaker at Holy Communion services at Ipplepen, Denbury and Woodland in October.

After growing up in Australia, Stephen and his wife moved to England in the 90s. He taught English and Drama in secondary schools for over thirty years before joining the Diocese in 2019. He lives in Crediton.



I read recently that 30% of Anglicans never give money to a church. After picking myself up off the floor and checking I had read it correctly, I wondered why.

The report said the main reason for not giving is they don't think the church needs it. Why are churches so terrible at communication?

However, my next reaction was to feel sorry for them because they are missing out on a great privilege. Let me explain why.

Firstly, generosity is at the heart of God. The Bible starts with Creation, which we have been given to look after. But that pales into insignificance when we consider the greatest gift: God gave his only son to die for us while we were still sinners. He took what was most precious and sacrificed him for us. When we give we show we are grateful. We say thank you to God for what he has done for us. We know we have been saved and we recognise that.

Secondly, giving to the Church is sharing in God's joyful and exciting mission. We are helping to bring the kingdom of God to where we live. We're investing in seeing the Church grow. It's like being a season ticket holder for a football team. We're a serious supporter if we are generous. We want to be part of the fun.

Thirdly, when we give, we show where our treasure is and so where our heart is. If we give generously, we demonstrate our treasure is in heaven.

Fourthly, when we give we acknowledge God as rightful owner. Everything I have – house, health, family, life – has been given to me.

Fifthly, when I am generous I am saying I belong to God. If I belong to God, everything I have belongs to God – my time, my skills, my possessions and my life.

Giving isn't just about money. A friend said she gave little money to the church because she has so little herself. However, she didn't realise how generous she was being. She had spent the day helping at the local food bank and she has run the toddler group for forty years. She always gives so freely of her time.

God is asking us to take a look at what we've got and offer it cheerfully to him. He doesn't want ten pounds or ten per cent; he wants our whole lives. God doesn't need our money; he wants our hearts. He wants us to discover the joy and privilege of giving, and to grow as Christians through generosity.

When we give, we are imitating God.

Stephen Mitchell

Reflections as a GP - Dr Tom

Tom's talk given at St. Andrew's during St. Luke's as part of a service of evening prayer on Wednesday 21st October. Thank you Tom -Editor

My wife, Sue, and I met at Medical School in London. Anatomy dissection classes took up a large part of our time during the first 2 years and our relationship flourished over our dead body. We qualified in 1982 and were subsequently very fortunate to be accepted for training in General Practice here in the South West. I became a partner in a GP surgery in Newton Abbot in 1987.

General Practice is a vocation and, working full-time, it easily becomes all-consuming.

In my opinion, however, being a 'Family Doctor' is the best job in the world. I loved spending time with individual people across the broad spectrum of society, learning about their experiences, living through their highs and lows, helping them through their illnesses and learning from them how they managed to cope with major life events.

People like their GP to be someone who will listen and understand, who knows how to deal with a problem, whatever it is. A GP is available to them when they need help.

GPs, on the other hand, like patients who put their trust in them to do their best, are willing to believe that the advice given is for their benefit, even if it wasn't what they wanted to hear and understands that the GP can't be available 24/7.

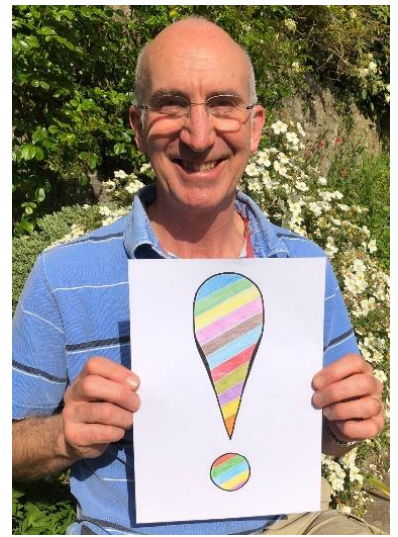
Continuity of care is really important for the development of a trusting relationship and I worry that young GPs may not be allowed that opportunity. Making oneself sufficiently available and giving each patient adequate time was and remains the greatest challenge.

When I started work, my practice had 6 partners looking after 12,000 registered patients every minute of every day. We controlled the organisation as well as running the business finance. The hours that a GP worked was undefined; we just "did the job" as best as we could amongst the 6 of us. The power was with the Practice and continuity of care was our responsibility.

During my 27 years in Primary Care, I experienced some major challenges that potentially undermined the Doctor/Patient relationship:

Barely a couple of years after starting in Practice computers were installed. Here was a massive opportunity to ease the burden of increasing administration. All sorts of audit reports could be made, alerts over drug reactions could be sent out to relevant patients at the flick of a switch. Initially, it was for everyone a significant distraction during the consultation while we feebly learned how to enter information, often with one finger. It was also the opportunity for Government to try to audit and closely monitor quality of care - indeed, were highly paid GPs giving value for money?

Fund-holding was introduced in 1991. This was where GP practices were given budgets to purchase hospital services, bringing market forces into healthcare. A huge amount of power was given to Practices who accepted large sums of money to enter the scheme. Inevitable friction arose between GPs and their local Hospitals - Purchasers vs Providers. Not all GP practices took the plunge and Fund-holding was abandoned in 1997 after a 2-tier healthcare system had been created with some practices showing a £200,000 annual surplus compared with others who had a £100,000 deficit thereby denying their patients hospital services.



Reflections - continued

The Patients' Charter was introduced by John Major 1997, with all good intentions of allowing patients the right to insist on a basic standard of good overall care. Unfortunately, it didn't take long for newspapers to fill their front pages with reports of GP reception staff receiving verbal and physical abuse from individual patients demanding their personal rights without consideration of others. Power had been given to those with the loudest voice.

In 2004, GPs were allowed to relinquish the 24 hour care commitment for their patients resulting in the development of private Out-of-Hours organisations such as 'Devon Doctors On-Call'. Night duty on top of daytime work had become, for many, intolerable as a result of the increased number of night calls. Giving up night-duty was their salvation; for others it felt like betrayal.

All of these schemes, as you can imagine, required massive changes in organisation and mentality as the balance of power shifted around. They were seen by some as golden opportunities, yet by many others as threats to that fundamental relationship between the GP, the patient and their family.

Politicians have always struggled to measure the quality of medical care in the Primary Care setting. Target led incentives have been introduced where Practices benefit financially from reaching goals. Frustratingly, we all know that nobody can put a price on a GP spending a whole consultation just listening, not prescribing, going over-time, arranging a follow-up chat where no appointments are available - that doesn't put a tick in any box.

The vast majority of doctors, nurses and healthcare workers do the job because they care for people. That has and will always be the case. What I witnessed, again and again, was how the profession managed to work together through these major events while still keeping the focus on the patient.

In 2014, I decided that I would retire from full time General Practice but, realising that part-time GP work would not suit me, I made the very painful decision to leave Primary Care and a list of patients with whom I had lived through major life events, good & bad. I had delivered some of their children and sat with them through bereavements.

Fortunately, I was accepted to work as a Speciality Doctor in the Dermatology department at Torbay Hospital. This wasn't a RASH decision. The scheduled three and a half days per week, working 8-5 and leaving the department with an empty in-tray was refreshing. However, I rapidly realised that my basic GP knowledge of skin disease was simply "scratching the surface" of a really fascinating and complex organ, the largest organ in the body!

Seeing healthcare from the District General Hospital perspective while receiving referrals from and communicating with my GP colleagues gave me a valuable insight into the relationship between Primary and Secondary Care. It helped to understand the very different pressures experienced by each side.

I retired after the most wonderful few years with the Dermatology department in January 2019, only to be re-registered by the GMC and invited back to my old job 15 months later as the country entered Lockdown. Going back it was clear that, in such a moment of crisis, the desire to help and care for others was as strong as ever and was quite humbling. It was comforting to hear the appreciation that our frontline NHS staff received for their heroic work.

So, as we face the threat of further worsening of the COVID pandemic, it seems obvious to me that we have the capability to pull through as long as we trust the experts in all of the various fields to do their best and give their best advice for the benefit of individuals and the wider communities. Good, basic communication is fundamental to everyone's understanding. It is our responsibility to follow the basic advice and keep focussed on the reason why we are doing it, not just for ourselves, but for everyone.

We must protect our precious NHS.

Next year's Lectionary – Mark

The new lectionary year begins on the First Sunday of Advent. For the next year our readings will principally come from the Gospel of Mark. This article is to give you some background information and some of the major themes of this gospel.

Mark's gospel is the shortest and the oldest of the four gospels. Church tradition is that it was written by John Mark, who was a companion of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. He was also closely



associated with Peter and the traditional view is that Mark wrote his gospel using Peter's eyewitness account as his source. It was written somewhere between 65 and 75 AD in Rome. This was during the time of the first persecution of Christians by Nero and the escalating violence between Rome and Israel which led to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. It was probably written for a gentile audience of believers as it often explains Jewish customs and translates

Aramaic words.

Mark's gospel is not like a modern biography but is similar to ancient biographies which tended not to dwell on a person's early years but start from the point where the person arrives on the public scene. In Mark's case there is no story of the nativity but his account starts from Jesus's baptism by John the Baptist. Another similarity to ancient biographies is that they concentrate on a person's death as a way of illustrating their life. Some people have often described this gospel as "a passion narrative with an extended introduction". Certainly Mark tells the story of Jesus's life and death through the lens of the events of Easter.



The gospel has long been associated with a lion. This is because Mark begins his gospel with a reference to Isaiah, which made the Jewish people think of a lion roaring in the desert. The pace of writing in Mark's gospel can also be described as being like a bounding lion. This is seen in the way he frequently uses the Greek word "euthus" typically translated as "immediately". He also doesn't focus on

dialogue or Jesus' teaching nearly as much as he focuses on Christ's actions."

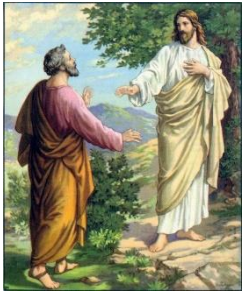
It is Jesus who is important and other people come into the gospel to illustrate something about him. Mark also focuses on the terms "power" and "authority" to show that, as he states in the very first verse, Jesus was the Son of God. Throughout his gospel, Mark focuses on Christ's power over demons, illness, nature, and even death. More than half the gospel is devoted to giving an account of the remarkable deeds that Jesus performed and describes more miracles than any of the other gospels.



Mark follows an established literary form which can be describe as a sandwich when he wants to develop a theme. He breaks up a story and inserts a second, seemingly unrelated, story into the middle of it or bookends two stories on the same theme. The middle part nearly always provides the key to the theological purpose of the sandwich.

The Gospel of Mark - continued

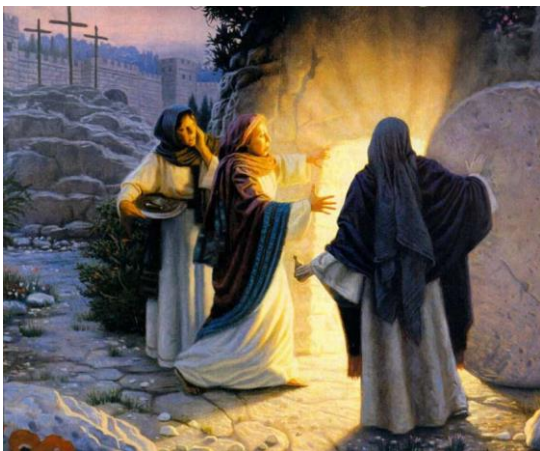
There are many instances in the Mark's gospel where only demons, women and other socially marginal characters, not the disciples, seem to understand who Jesus really is, and Jesus warns them to remain silent. This is referred to as the messianic secret. There is deliberate irony when the figure who recognises his true identity is a Roman soldier at the crucifixion. One explanation is that Mark wants to tell his readers that it is Jesus' desire that we might come to know him personally. Other people can tell us about Christ but no one can open our hearts to him for us. It gives the message that belief in Christ should be a personal decision.



The structure of Mark's Gospel provides the key to author's purpose. The first half of the gospel concerns the identity of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. The second half concerns the mission of Jesus where everything points to the need for Christ to suffer, die and be resurrected in order to accomplish this. Peter's confession, chapter 8:27–30, that Jesus is the Messiah thus forms a pivotal point.

Outline of Mark's gospel:

- Prologue: Events preceding the ministry of Jesus, 1:1-13
- Proclamation of the kingdom in Galilee 1:14-7:23
- The ministry outside Galilee, 7:24-8:26
- Peter's Confession 8:27-30
- The journey to Jerusalem, 8:31-10:52
- The ministry in Jerusalem, 11:1-13:37
- The death of Christ, 14:1-15:47
- The resurrection, 16:1-8
- Epilogue: the disputed ending as it is not found in the earliest manuscripts, 16:9-20



In Mark's original ending there are no appearances of Jesus following the visit of the women on Easter morning to the empty tomb. There are no resurrection stories but it can be assumed that the readers knew this as Jesus predicts his suffering and resurrection three times on the way to Jerusalem. There has always be speculation as to why Mark leaves the women in bewilderment, fear and silence. Maybe this ending made later Christians feel uncomfortable and so they felt the need to add the epilogue. But maybe this was how Mark wanted to end it as to him his gospel story was not the end, but the beginning as he states in his opening sentence. Maybe he wants to put us in the same place as the women, wondering what do, whether to tell or just to run?

Hillarie Griggs

How to start reading the Bible – Hillarie Griggs

“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.” 1 Timothy 3:16-17

The Bible is the written revelation of God to his people so it is an important source of our knowledge of him. It records the history of Israel, Jesus and the early church. Through reading it we learn about God, about his world, about ourselves, and about how they fit together. Even today the Holy Spirit works through scripture by challenging us. Through reading we not only gain knowledge but wisdom and we will mature in our faith. It begins to shape how we think and act as we look for the coming of God’s kingdom. This is why as Christians we are encouraged to read scripture. We don’t read out of a sense of pious duty in a hope that God will love us more. We read it so it causes us to love God more and to do his will. It also enables us, as we know it better, to share scripture and our faith more confidently with others.

The bible is not like a novel which must be read from cover to cover, probably only once. It is something we should read often and it is preferable to read it in small parts, slowly, rather than quickly trying to race to the end. It is a library full of many books of different genres. It contains poetry, wise sayings, history, letters, prophetic writings, and apocalyptic literature. It is also not to be read like a magazine where we flip to the section we like and ignore the rest. Nor is it just an instruction book. It is a revelation of God written at a particular time and in a particular context and we need to interpret it and apply it to our life today. It is all too easy to pick individual bible passages and use them in a way that can cause hurt to others without proper regard for their interpretation and looking at the bigger picture.

It doesn’t matter which version of the bible you read, so chose your favourite. There are three main types of bible:

1. **Word for word** translations that follow the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts most accurately. Examples of these include the **King James Version** and the **New Revised Standard Version**.
2. **Thought for Thought** versions convey scripture in its most understandable wording. Ancient colloquialisms are replaced with modern ones that can be easily understood by today’s reader. These include the **New International Version** and the **Good News Translation**.
3. **Paraphrased** versions are the least accurate to the original text. Authors are given a great amount of freedom in interpretation, so some passages may stray slightly from the original meaning. However, they are very easy to read in modern language. A popular paraphrased bible is **The Message**.

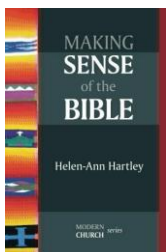


How to start reading the Bible – continued

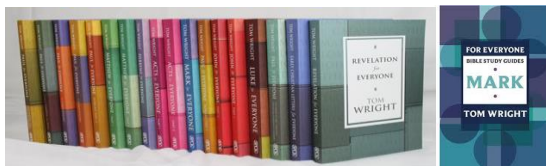
There is no real set place where you must start reading the bible as it is a library but it is probably easier to start with the New Testament, especially one of the gospels. You can find daily readings on the weekly notice sheet. Below are two ways to go deeper into the readings, one is more academic in the sense that we are looking for meaning and the other is more spiritual in that we are trying to allow God to speak to us through the passage into our lives today. It is helpful to pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to learn from, and inwardly digest scripture before we start reading.

Reading scripture for meaning: a traditional bible study

1. Before reading the passage find out what genre of book it is from. This will help in interpreting it. We would interpret poetry very differently from a historical document.
2. After reading it through, notice/observe (you may not be able to answer all of them for all passages):
 - Who is in the passage?
 - What is happening?
 - Where is it happening?
 - When is it happening? Its place in the bigger picture.
 - Why is this happening?
3. After Now you can start interpreting using these steps:
 - Look at the historical context. When, where and to whom was this passage written?
 - Look for cross references to other passages in the bible. Does it remind you of other stories or sayings of the bible? Does it fit with the overall message of the bible?
 - Make a conclusion. Using all this new understanding you should be able to make a preliminary statement of the passage's meaning.
4. A final and important step is to consult. Reading books called commentaries, written by Biblical scholars, help us to grow in our understanding. Some recommended books:



Making Sense of the Bible: Helen-Ann Hartley



For an accessible commentary with a good balance of biblical scholarship and application. For Everyone Bible Study guides by Tom Wright

How to start reading the Bible – continued

Reading scripture devotionally/prayerfully: based on the monastic tradition of Lectio Divina

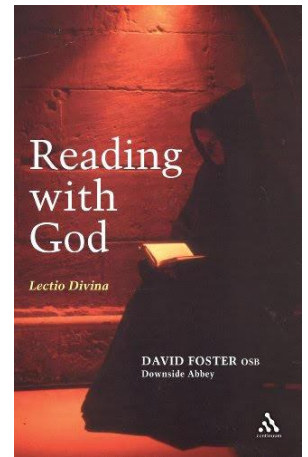
1. You may want to read the passage through first to familiarise yourself with it.
2. Now read the passage slowly noticing any words or phrases that catch your attention.
3. Read the passage again slowly, trying to identify where and how it connects with your life today. This time you are asking God why these words are speaking to you. Try looking for a new or different light so you don't always drift back to our own thoughts, assumptions and prejudices.
4. You may like to read it again before thinking about what God may want you, in light of what you have heard, to change or do.
5. End the time in prayer asking God's help in helping you to change or do what you have heard.

Recommended book:

Reading with God *Lectio Divina* : Dom Foster OSB Downside Abbey

There are lots of other ways to read the bible and I would encourage you to find what suits you. Begin by setting aside some time over the week to read scripture and see what happens.

Hillarie Griggs



Notes

Pointers for Prayer - from Andrew

Advent

We pray... That the Church will be ready for the coming of God... That the nations will be subject to the rule of love... That the broken will find healing from God...

Christmastide

We pray for... The Church, especially in places of conflict... Rulers, especially in the Holy Land... Children, especially refugees and the vulnerable...

Epiphanytide

We pray for... The unity of the church... The peace of the world... The healing of the sick...

See also the website for guidance on prayer <http://www.missioncommunity.org.uk/prayer/>

Intercessions for the Mission Community – December and January

Sunday	Mission Community	Ipplepen	Denbury	Broadhempston	Woodland
Dec 6 th	Those who decorate the church	Churches Together in Ipplepen	The Union Inn	Community Shop	Library
Dec 13 th	Baptism ministry team	The Wellington Inn	Denbury Primary School	Radfords	Parish Rooms
Dec 20 th	Vergers & sextons	The Post Office & Co-Operative Shop	Fairfield Farm	Beaston	Levaton Farm
Dec 27 th	Our churches	Ipplepen Primary School	Community Groups	Downe	Bremridge
Jan 3 rd	Wardens & Deputies	Ambrook & Dainton	The Union Inn	Knowle	Waye Farm
Jan 10 th	Secretaries	Barn Park & Barn Park Cottages	The Manor	Hemsford	Gurrington House
Jan 17 th	Treasurers & finance/stewardship committees	Beech Drive & Orchard Drive	Fairfield Farm	Village Hall	The Old Parsonage
Jan 24 th	Safeguarding officer & reps.	Biltor Road & Conniford Lane	Community Groups	Monks Retreat & Coppa Dolla	Lake Farm
Jan 31 st	PCCs & Rector	Parish Council & local businesses	Parish Council & local businesses	Parish Council & local businesses	Parish Meeting & local businesses

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Mrs Geraldine Dennis

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☎ 813386

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Mr Clive Tompkins

☎ 813695

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Mrs Vanessa Bevan

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☎ 812092

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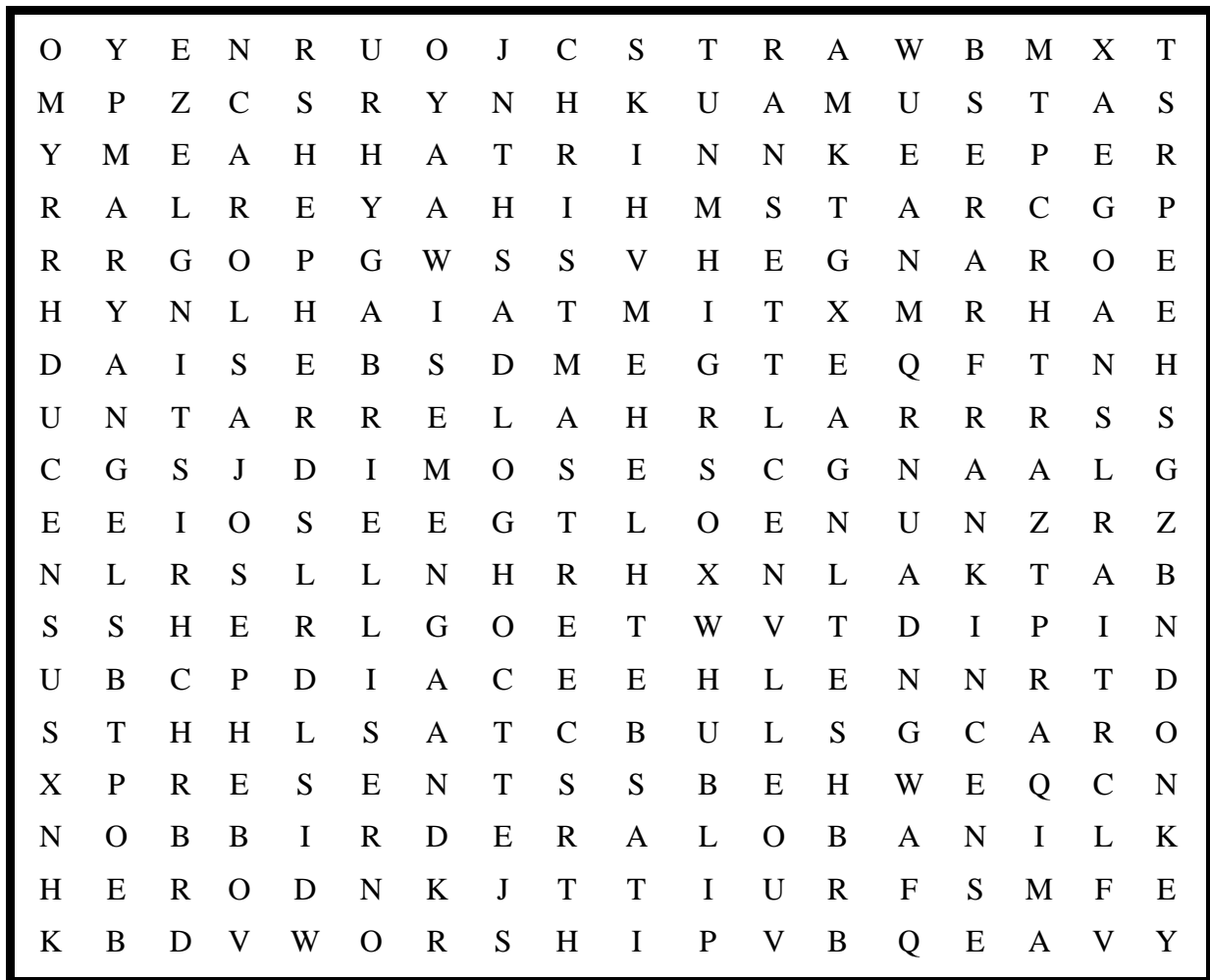
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Wordsearch



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|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| ANGELS | GOLD | REDRIBBON |
| BETHLEHEM | HAY | SATSUMA |
| CAMELS | HEROD | SHEEP |
| CANDLES | INNKEEPER | SHEPHERDS |
| CAROLS | JOSEPH | STABLE |
| CENSUS | JOURNEY | STALL |
| CHRISTINGLE | LIGHT | STAR |
| CHRISTMASTREE | MARY | STRAW |
| CRIB | MYRRH | SULTANAS |
| DONKEY | NATIVITY | TINSEL |
| FRANKINCENSE | NAZARETH | WISEMEN |
| FRUIT | ORANGE | WORSHIP |
| GABRIEL | PRESENTS | |

Answers to crossword on page 33

ACROSS: 1, Depend. 4, Canopy. 7, Beak. 8, Irritate. 9, Zedekiah. 13, Ate. 16, Job's comforter. 17, NAE. 19, Lang Syne. 24, Blockade. 25, Five. 26, Enigma. 27, Drench.

DOWN: 1, Debt. 2, Peaceable. 3, Drink. 4, Curia. 5, Nuts. 6, Put it. 10, Excel. 11, Is man. 12, Hoofs. 13, Attention. 14, Ezra. 15, Ijon. 18, Aslan. 20, Abana. 21, Greed. 22, GCMG. 23, Leah.

Sudoku

Hard

		2				8		
8				3				9
			7	8	9			
		8				5		
7				1				6
6								7
			3	7	2			
	8						2	
2	6						9	5

Hard

2			8	5	7			3
4								5
			2		4			
	7			1			6	
1				6				8
			4		8			
				2				
	5			8			1	
9		2				5		7

Medium

				5				
4	9	8		3		7	2	5
			2	9	4			
8			9		2			4
				6				
		6	4	7	8	1		
7		3		2		8		6
	5						1	
	8		1		6		3	

Easy

2		1		5		4		3
4	9	8	6	3	1	7	2	5
5			2	9	4			1
		5				3		
1			3	6	5			8
3			4	7	8			9
7		3	5	2	9	8		6
6				8				2
			1	4	6			



A picture to colour for Christmas. Colour in one star each day as you count down to Christmas!
Read the Christmas story in Luke 1:1 - 2:21

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