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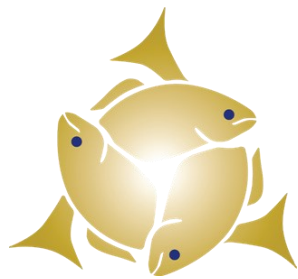


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'Tis said that one sign of Shakespeare's genius is that he had a quote for every thought in one's mind and every event in one's life.

In "*The Two Gentlemen Of Verona*" he wrote:-
".....to walk alone, like one that had the pestilence".

Sent to magazine by Ruthie Copeman.

Editor - Revd Patrick Taylor

Design Editor - Felicity Howlett

Features Editor - Judith Dorricott

Associate Editor - Anthony Woollard

Subscriptions & Distribution - Carole Askew &
Paul Lageu

Advertising - Karen Hollis

Email: karen@klpbookkeeping.co.uk

PCC Representative - Ruth Poulten

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Please note that views expressed in Trinity Times are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Parochial Church Council.

The next magazine will be the **June 2020** edition

The copy date is 15 May

If any item is left until the very last minute, or received after the copy date, there is no guarantee that it will be able to be included in the magazine.

Please send any contributions of articles or pictures as attachments to:

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Paul Lageu (01789 298 302)

or paullageu@hotmail.co.uk

Carole Askew (01789 266 940)

#HolyTrinityonsocialmedia



Front cover :- Easter Sunday livestream - photograph by Andrew Dow

Holy Trinity Team



Revd. Patrick Taylor
Vicar



Revd. Steve Jarvis
Associate Vicar



Revd. Kay Dyer
Associate Priest



Phil Harper
Children & Families Minister

EDITORIAL

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair..."

These wonderful opening lines appear in the first paragraph of Charles Dickens' 'Tale of Two Cities', and my goodness, how they strike a chord with everything that is going on at present, with all that we have been able to take for granted having been turned on its head.

And we have been witness to the extremes – the selfishness of those who think nothing of travelling hundreds of miles during lockdown to visit the South Coast or travel to the Lake District for their "exercise". The stupidity of those congregating at surreptitiously arranged house parties, putting their own and the health of others at risk. The selflessness of NHS staff and carers, who risk their own health, and those of their own families, to provide the frontline care, often palliative, in difficult conditions and circumstances. The dedication and diligence of food distributors and supermarket staff, in making sure we can all shop safely, and largely source what it is we came to buy.

We are seeing glimpses of the best of our humanity, but also sadly, still evidence of the worst. Maybe we are being led to face-up to realising the importance of a return to the creator's default settings? That what God requires of us is to simply "...do justice, love mercy and walk humbly" with him (Micah 6:8). And it is my sincere hope that we do revert to a better version of ourselves as humanity through living through this pandemic. It was something brought home to me on reading the following quote by Dr Ira Byock, a passionate advocate of palliative care, founder of the Providence St Joseph Health Institute for Human Caring. Reflecting on the first sign of civilisation within a culture, Dr Byock shared a story about the great anthropologist Margaret Mead.

"Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she considered to be the first sign of civilization in a culture. The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks or clay pots or grinding stones.

But no. Mead said that the first sign of civilization in an ancient culture was a femur (thighbone) that had been broken and then healed. Mead explained that in the animal kingdom, if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river for a drink or hunt for food. You are meat for prowling beasts. No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal.

A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell, has bound up the wound, has carried the person to safety and has tended the person through recovery. Helping someone else through difficulty is where civilization starts, Mead said."

We are at our best when we serve others. Let us be resolved always to be civilized!

Presently, we find ourselves still caught up somewhere in between the juxtapositions Dickens once described. This has been a first Easter and Ascension in living memory where we have found ourselves locked out of our buildings, and unable to receive communion within the community of our church congregations. However, such in-betweenness, as is perhaps the nature of the time between Jesus' ascension and the Spirit breaking through at Pentecost, can create for us a liminal space – an opportunity to discern the risen Jesus, the Christ, in new ways, and in different places. Jesus is risen and ascended – if we cannot "go to church" then where are we to find him?

The priest and poet, Malcolm Guite seeks to address this question in a new poem written this past Easter Day, simply entitled "Easter 2020". I leave it with you, as we reflect and discern ourselves where we each encounter the risen Christ during these present times.

With every blessing this Easter season.

Steve Jarvis

Find poem on page 5

"Easter 2020" by Malcom Guite

And where is Jesus, this strange Easter day?
Not lost in our locked churches, anymore
Than he was sealed in that dark sepulchre.
The locks are loosed; the stone is rolled away,
And he is up and risen, long before,
Alive, at large, and making his strong way
Into the world he gave his life to save,
No need to seek him in his empty grave.

He might have been a wafer in the hands
Of priests this day, or music from the lips
Of red-robed choristers, instead he slips
Away from church, shakes off our linen bands
To don his apron with a nurse: he grips
And lifts a stretcher, soothes with gentle hands
The frail flesh of the dying, gives them hope,
Breathes with the breathless, lends them strength to cope.

On Thursday we applauded, for he came
And served us in a thousand names and faces
Mopping our sickroom floors and catching traces
Of that virus which was death to him:
Good Friday happened in a thousand places
Where Jesus held the helpless, died with them
That they might share his Easter in their need,
Now they are risen with him, risen indeed.

WORSHIP NOTES

If our churches continue to be closed during this month, then we will maintain the current pattern of live streaming services of Holy Communion each Sunday and Wednesday at 10am. Morning and Evening prayer will be posted each day, Monday to Friday, and can be viewed via our You Tube Channel. Services of compline will also be available, usually on a Friday.



Ascension Day is Thursday 21 May. There will be a live stream Holy Communion service at 10am (this replaces the Wednesday service that week)

Pentecost Sunday falls on 31 May. This important feast in the church year (also called Whit Sunday) will be marked with the usual 10am live stream Holy Communion.

For those who are unable to access worship via the internet, we are offering spiritual support and prayer via the telephone for those who would appreciate this. Please let us know if you are in this position and would like someone to ring you.

Patrick



NEVILLE BEAMER RIP

We're still in shock after hearing of Neville's sudden and unexpected death. His funeral service took place in Holy Week, attended by only a small number of immediate family. I know many of you will have been holding Sheila in your prayers and I encourage you to continue to do so. There will be an opportunity for the many people who knew and loved Neville to express their thanksgivings for his life and our sadness at losing him when a full Memorial service takes place in Holy Trinity. We don't know at this stage when this will be but it is something we will want to arrange as soon as we can once the church is open again.

Neville seemed to me to be part of the fabric of this town. Although in later years his ministry was focused mostly in the Barford group of parishes, where he played a significant role, he remained a member of the Ministry Team in this parish and was particularly active taking funerals. His network of relationships across many organisation and societies in the town was remarkable, and requests for him to take a wedding, funeral or baptism were commonplace, as families with a long connection with Neville sought his continuing ministry and kindly pastoral care.

Martin Gorick, who was vicar until 2013, remarked after hearing of his death, "Neville was such a supportive and sensitive presence in church and community and I'm sure will be greatly missed". Indeed Neville had played an important role at Holy Trinity over the years. I was especially grateful for his knowledge and experience of who was who in the town and knew that if I wanted to get something to happen, he would tell me who I needed to speak to!

Neville, as those of us who knew him will recall, had a kind and cheerful personality. He was always pleased to see you and would waste no time in sharing news or advice that he knew would be helpful. He was a natural apostle, in the sense that he would reach out and connect as a priest very happily with people who weren't part of the church community. He mastered the art of the chaplaincy, having the role of chaplain (either formally or informally) to many groups, among them Stratford Town Football Club and the British Legion to name just two. He saw his work as a District Councillor to be as much a part of his Christian ministry as taking a service in church. He was an inspirational role model for being a Christian who lived out their faith in the world.

Having served his Lord and Saviour faithfully here on earth, we rejoice that he now celebrates at the eternal feast in heaven with all the saints and angels. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Patrick

My one abiding memory of Neville will always be the oomph and enthusiasm he put into 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord'. No one ever comes close to his delivery of that simple line.
Paul Lageu.

A TRIBUTE TO NEVILLE BEAMER

To say that the unexpected announcement of the Reverend Neville Beamer's death came as a shock to the church and civic community is an understatement. Inevitably we are all sad, very sad at the passing from our midst of so radiant a personality as Neville.

Although Neville and I had political differences we were united in our love of humanity and concern for the common good and, although both of us were officially retired, we entered local politics more or less at the same time and were able to support one another in treading the delicate line between church and politics. We believed that politics properly understood concerned everything connected with ourselves as citizens, ourselves-in-community and as members of society with all its social, economic and administrative structures.

As a Conservative Ward Councillor and Chairman of the District Council he exercised an understanding and respect for all political persuasions earning him the trust and friendship of all councillors irrespective of party allegiance. Neville was loyal. He supported, not by agreeing, but by offering friendship. His constituents found that he took their opinions seriously and he took them seriously with follow up cards and letters. He was simple, direct and very honest in his dealings. He had a remarkable sense of public duty and obligation. No one's counsel was ever more widely sought and valued. Neville was a man of many enthusiasms who delighted in politics and in keeping himself informed about all the significant happenings of the day. His amazing vigour, his quickness and openness of mind, his affectionate concern for people of all ages, never deserted him to the end.

As a churchman I have never known, and never shall know, any one more fully used as a Minister of Religion than Neville. Although attached to Holy Trinity church as an Honorary Assistant Minister, latterly he was fully committed by the diocese in a rural ministry as well as his chaplaincies to the British Legion, Stratford FC and the Shakespeare hospice. He knew that his personal ministry was at the heart of his vocation. Neville was a gentle man – and reticent, in a kind and thoughtful way; and wise.

Neville had a huge gift of simplicity. He preferred to reduce the Mystery to a size he thought that he and many of the congregation could "manage". He could speak with marvellous simplicity at Baptisms and with equal simplicity at Marriages and at the hospital bedside to those who were sick and dying, and to those who were nursing them; and out of his own experience, at funerals of infants and of the aged. What a gift with words! What simplicity! What we will all remember in common was his immense kindness, his generosity of heart and spirit, and what tremendous fun it was to be with him. He was a very humble man, quite unaware of the unusual personal charisma he possessed. His sense of fun was boundless. His enthusiasms were unflagging.

Our troubled world is the poorer for losing a man of such grace and courage, of such charm and gaiety.

Neville was without doubt, prodigal in his gifts, lavish in his generosity, wide in his interests, abundant in his energy and holy in his dedication. To Sheila and all the members of her family we offer our loving sympathy at a time of great sadness when so bright a light has gone out for them all.

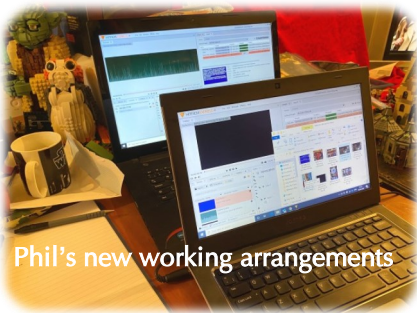
But life is eternal and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Dr. Roy Lodge MBE
Former Mayor Stratford upon Avon.



Neville and Sheila in the Shakespeare procession.

KEEPING CONNECTED



Just like life for everyone, the last few weeks have seen a great deal of change in the way the work with children and families has been done, especially over Holy Week and Easter. Like lots of others I've had to learn new skills, one of those being how to edit videos. I've become very grateful to the people who have uploaded YouTube videos giving guidance on different computer software.

It's been very encouraging that the work we do has been able to continue. Across Holy Week I put together a series of videos re-telling the Holy Week story. On Good Friday itself we couldn't hold the *Journey to the Cross* service in church. Usually this service has a selection of Prayer Stations around the church building, each telling a part of the Holy Week story and an opportunity to pray in an interactive manner. Instead this year we had a service online, using objects people could find around the house to remember the story. All the videos produced can be found on the church YouTube channel. If you're reading this online copy and paste this link into your internet browser www.youtube.com/channel/UC1PLMAPs94R_cY1aEjvcl2w or search online for "Holy Trinity Church Stratford youtube" and your search engine will bring up the page as one of the results. On the channel there are also copies of the services that have been live streamed and Morning and Evening Prayer.

We've set up a Facebook group, called 'Holy Trinity Families', where families can share ideas of keeping their faith alive during the Lockdown and to support one another. What has been lovely to see are the different



ways people have been trying to encourage others by putting pictures in the windows. Following the suggestion from Coventry Diocese to put a cross in the window on Palm Sunday. After Easter, putting colourful pictures of eggs in their windows, so people on their daily exercise can do an egg hunt.



The last few weeks have reminded us all how much church is the people, not a building. I pray that in the coming weeks we will continue to strengthen the links we all have.

Phil Harper



Sebastian Bengo
with his Palm Cross.



Hilary Newman's
Easter Cross.

FROM THE REGISTERS APRIL

Christenings

Weddings

Funerals

1 April Leslie Ballanger
7 April Reginald Timms
8 April Revd Neville Beamer
17 April Brian Miller



AN IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

This is Judith Dorricott's favourite prayer

GOD BE AT MY CENTRE

God be at my centre.
Be my path. Be my guide.
God be at my centre.
In my thought and understanding.
God be at my centre.
In my actions and my caring.
God be at my centre.

This is Felicity Howlett's favourite Prayer

Perhaps you could send in your favourite prayers as an inspiration at this difficult time.

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IN THE CARIBBEAN - 1



The Amazing Grace

Among the palatial liners which cruise the Caribbean the *Amazing Grace* seemed like a little tug boat of the fondly remembered past. She was built in 1955 and named the *Pharos*, a supply vessel carrying supplies to the lonely keepers who manned the lighthouses round the wild coast of Scotland before automation. In 1988 she was refurbished and renamed to carry provisions to the tall ships of 'Windjammer Barefoot Cruises' up and down the Caribbean, carrying eighty-five adventurous passengers just for the ride. The passengers had to be prepared to put up with shared washing facilities and the challenge of wading ashore from the launches. No posh dinners on board. It was all shorts and T-shirts. We joined the *Amazing Grace* by flying via Miami to Trinidad before beginning the adventure of calling on eleven islands where, among other interests, we were keen to take the temperature of the Christian faith.

Why name our little schooner the *Amazing Grace*? In the 1990's it became fashionable for tall ships to sail off into the sunset to the accompaniment of the then popular bagpipes version of John Newton's hymn. It also seemed appropriate as John Newton, the author of the hymn, was himself a slave trader regularly running the triangular route from Liverpool to



John Newton

West Africa to the West Indies and back, trading chiefly iron goods for slaves and slaves for sugar. It was during a storm at sea when Newton cried to the Lord for help that he was converted and eventually became the vicar of Olney before moving to London where he preached to many thousands, joining William Wilberforce, John Wesley and others in pressing for the abolition of slavery. Most of the population of the West

Indies today are descended from the slaves John Newton helped to free.

We had a whole day in Miami and found the demonstrative Alfredo from Peru willing to give us a whirlwind tour in his minibus, just for the two of us, from Miami Beach to Coral Gables and Little Havana. It's a place where the

Church seems unfazed by blatant materialism. Throughout the Caribbean the Roman Catholic and Pentecostal churches still draw the largest congregations, probably because they are visually and emotionally expressive and make the strongest appeal to the poor of which there are many. The Catholic tradition derives from Christopher Columbus and the Spanish and French missions. Pentecostalism has developed from British Baptist and Methodist beginnings, though there are now Catholic charismatics aplenty.

The first people to side with the slaves were Methodist plantation owners who had come under the spell of John Wesley and had begun to form bible classes before they left England. When Methodist minister Thomas Coke set out for Newfoundland in 1786 his ship was blown so far off course as to land him in Antigua on Christmas Day where he preached to a thousand slaves already converted by Methodist laymen.

In Miami airport we were met by a bookshop at every turn, each with a prominent stand for Christian books which you would not see in Britain and the shoeshine boy was doing a brisk trade under his banner 'JESUS IS LORD'.

In the dying sunset we flew south over the 7,000 islands through which we were to sail slowly back during the next two weeks. When we arrived at Port of Spain we found ourselves in the midst of a taxi war. Jobs were very scarce. But we were whisked away in a minibus to join the little white ship which was to be our home for a wonderful adventure. At midnight we left the harbour to the strains of 'Amazing Grace'.



Piper

THE PACE OF CHANGE: MEETING THE CHALLENGE

by James Willetts

Covid-19 offers us an incentive to make changes and do things differently. No longer able, for the time being, to meet as a physical presence in a consecrated building, we *can* meet together spiritually, sharing our experiences through the transmission of services and video resources online – and many of us as individuals are in closer and deeper contact, by phone or e-mail, than ever before.

Change is often resisted because “it’s never been done before”. Well, by the time life gets back to “normal”, regular communication online *will* have been “done before”, and its benefits will be widely recognised.

I sympathise with people who have no experience of using the internet and little appetite for getting to grips with it.

Last month, Trinity Players invited me to record for the website their annual dramatized reading of St Matthew’s Passion Gospel for Palm Sunday. The six performers, prevented from meeting by the lockdown, were each encouraged to record their parts at home on their mobile phones and email them to me as audio files. I then trimmed and assembled the recordings, adding text and some music. At various points I stacked up individual voices in parallel tracks, to create the effect of a bellowing crowd. This served as a stark reminder that, even when we are part of a crowd, we should each be held responsible for our individual behaviour.

During Holy Week this memorable production was viewed more than 300 times (on two channels). Feedback included: “It came over brilliantly, with sound levels equalised, and the drama never over-the-top. In fact it was better than in church!” and “I was moved to tears by the reading”. Although the performers were isolated in their own homes, the impression was given that they were together in one place.

This response to an experimental but creative use of the internet should surely encourage us to keep trying out new ways of sharing experiences through digital media.



Live Streaming



A PEAL OF BELLS

Those of us who live near Holy Trinity Church have the pleasure of hearing the bells ringing on Sunday mornings, and can also enjoy the bell-ringers practising on Tuesday evenings. Bell-ringers themselves are often invisible, so two members of the team, Marion and Rhod Mitchell, tell us more about their hobby.

Marion explains that, when they returned to this area a few years ago, they were looking for a hobby they could do together, and they found that bell-ringing ticked all their boxes! She says it is a pleasure to provide the service for the community (one that is enjoyed by parishioners and visitors alike), it is great fun meeting new people when you visit other churches, it keeps their brains alert and the friendship within the group is a wonderful bonus.

Marion was first intrigued by bell-ringing when she saw a colleague studying a strange little book which turned out to be the bell-ringers guide to methods (the pattern or order of the bells). Marion and Rhod started bell-ringing four years ago, and at that time they attended the training centre for new ringers based in Kineton, where they were both taught the finer techniques of how to handle a bell safely; however, Holy Trinity Church has recently acquired a 'dumb bell', a silent training bell for teaching newcomers, and this is a great advantage. Marion admits that it was all quite daunting to start with, as the experienced ringers always make the sessions seem effortless. However she and Rhod are now able to fully take part in 'call change ringing' and are also beginning to learn other basic methods.

Bell-ringing is a regular physical activity, which is enhanced by a wonderful sense of teamwork. A bell-ringer does not necessarily need to be musical, but he or she needs to have both a good ear and sense of rhythm. A mathematical brain helps as bells are rung in various sequences, but, as the hands of a bell ringer are fully occupied pulling the rope, these mathematical methods need to be memorised. Teenagers often enjoy the challenge of bell-ringing, as this new skill can be used to good advantage as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

The six bells at St. Helen's Church in Clifford Chambers have been in a very poor condition for some years, but with vital funding raised through the Coventry Diocese Guild of Bell Ringers, necessary repair work has been completed. The bells at St. Helen's Church have a long draught (rope drop) which does make controlling the bells challenging. Mark Sayers, who is the training and safeguarding officer for the bell-ringers and the bell-tower, says that he is encouraging people from the village to come forward to learn. The teaching will start with the dumb bell at Holy Trinity Church and then, once proficient with handling, will progress to St. Helen's. Bell ringing appeals to both sexes and to all ages, and recruits will have an excellent teacher as Mark is the Coventry Guild Ringing Master. He has been ringing bells since he was eleven years old and has been teaching for over thirty years.

There are 104 bell towers in the Coventry Diocese, and the bells at Holy Trinity Church are considered among the top ten rings of bells in the country. Bell-ringers enjoy ringing in other churches and visiting bell-ringers are always made welcome. Usually cathedrals have twelve bells, and parish churches have eight, but at Holy Trinity Church there are ten bells, from the tenor bell to the treble bell (one octave plus two for musical folk!). The treble bell weights 300 cwt and the tenor bell is 1900 cwt - which explains why accurate timing and technique come with much practice!



Some of the bellringers
At Holy Trinity

cont.....

A PEAL OF BELLS cont.....



Some of the bellringers having just rung in the New Year

Many of us will never have climbed up the narrow stone stairs up the tower to the ringing chamber, which is a warm and welcoming room with ten ropes hanging in a circle in the middle, connected to the bells in the chamber above. The bells rest in the frame in which they are hung facing down, so the first task for the ringers is to raise the bells to the upright position ready for ringing. There are about fifteen members of the group, but only ten of them can participate at any one time.

Charles Wilson, the Tower Captain, is delighted that the training bell has been installed, and he is looking forward to welcoming some new faces to the tower in the very near future. Charles was taught to ring at Alcester in 1970, and he has been a member of the ringing band at Stratford since moving to the town in 1973. He explains that the bells are frequently requested for weddings throughout the summer, and very occasionally for funerals. For a funeral, the bells are sometimes half-muffled (when a leather pad is attached to one side of the clapper that strikes the bell) making the sound of the bell both loud and soft. The bells are rung on Remembrance Sunday, for Ascension Day (an early morning start 6:30am) and for other special occasions, such as national commemorations and royal weddings.

It's worth remembering that during World War II, all bells were silenced, and ringers were instructed that bells could only be rung if an invasion occurred. To everyone's relief they stayed silent! Sadly because of the current coronavirus outbreak, our bells are silent again, and therefore will not be rung, as planned, on Friday 8 May, to mark the 75th anniversary of VE (Victory in Europe) Day. However Stratford residents can look forward to hearing the sound of the bells across the town, hopefully in the not too distant future, once the current restrictions have been lifted.

by Judith Dorricott

JUST LOAFING AROUND

Logan McDougall with his loaf of bread.

Marie McDougall is teaching her sons to cook during the lockdown.





Most of us, I guess, have been doing a lot of looking out of our own windows in recent weeks, on to a world that has been greatly changed. And much has been written, from newspaper articles to private e-mails, about that world and where it may go next. What can I add?

Perhaps this is another chance to reflect on how inter-connected our world has become – for good or ill. An infection in one Chinese city can go on to affect dramatically and fatally just about every nation, carried by huge volumes of travel and trade. Is this proof that our global inter-dependence has gone too far? Might it be better to pull up the drawbridge and become more locally self-sufficient? We may well learn some lessons about self-sufficiency, not least in food – and this could help our planet as we face the ongoing crisis of climate change. Maybe we should stop taking for granted all those movements of people and goods which contribute so much to global warming.

But we are still inter-dependent, whether we like it or not. Travel may need to be cut down drastically – but if travel broadens the mind, does reducing it condemn us to increasing narrow-mindedness? Maybe not, in an age where the internet makes so much “virtual” travel possible - though the culture of the world, and not just our local economy, needs people to visit Stratford! But there may be a particular temptation to close the doors on immigration. The climate crisis could lead to increasing movements of people from parts of the world that become uninhabitable. Do we just turn our back on them? How can we square that with the Biblical injunction to “welcome the stranger”? And where would we be without the NHS heroes (including many who have given their lives) from overseas, or those who play key roles in food supply?

We must remain inter-connected in many ways, even if this carries health or other risks. And we do need to keep those risks in proportion. This pandemic, unusually infectious and invisible, is a uniquely terrible destroyer; the numbers of deaths are tragic for those who have lost loved ones, and frightening for the rest of us. But other killers are still around. Air pollution contributes to 40,000 deaths a year in this country – and one blessing of lockdown has been that air pollution has been greatly reduced, and many lives could be saved by that. Then there are the thousands who are killed on the roads; again, with less traffic, that number could reduce. And climate change may not yet affect our country much directly (though what about the winter floods?), but it is already causing millions of deaths elsewhere. So many people, above all frontline health workers, have stepped up to the plate on Covid-19, and I salute them; it would be good if these various other “plagues” were taken equally seriously.

Perhaps this crisis will help us to re-balance our lives just a bit more towards the local, the simple, the truly essential. We have splurged our desires all over our precious environment – and it has come back to bite us. There is much in Christian spirituality which could help us in this re-balancing. Which is why I also salute those who have kept our church life going, in streamed worship, prayer and practical service, at this terrible time. We have a chance to make a new world which is better than the old. Let's take it.





NEWS FROM TRINITY PLAYERS

We planned to start rehearsing *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* immediately after Easter ready for our Show on 20 June. Sadly, that cannot now take place, but we trust that this is just a postponement. Roald Dahl is as much fun for the cast as for the audience so we look forward to laughing together again.

We very much hope that *Murder in the Cathedral*, with rehearsal starting in September, will go ahead as it is important for us to mark the 850th anniversary of the murder of Thomas Becket whose veneration was important to the history of Holy Trinity.

You may recall our production of *The Roses of Eyam*, the story of the villagers who quarantined themselves during the Plague of 1665 that others might live, performed at Easter 2013 to remind us what sacrificing oneself for others means in reality.

However, Trinity Players have not allowed Covid-19 to disrupt our routine! We recorded the Passion Gospel on four separate phones and James Willetts magically brought them together. We have read *The Importance of Being Earnest* via Zoom, surprisingly successful with minor glitches adding to the fun. Then, more confident with this new medium, eighteen of us read and sang favourite pieces, many relevant to the current situation. We are especially grateful to our proficient and urbane Zoom Host, Tim Raistrick.

The plan now is to record and share our Shakespeare Birthday Celebration on 23 April. The Players have always read a Shakespeare Play and drunk a toast to the Bard at my house as well as presenting *Coffee, Cake & Shakespeare* in Holy Trinity. Unfortunately, Lockdown was announced just as plans to film *Coffee, Cake & Shakespeare* were completed so we will have a virtual party with readings and songs. Look out for details on the church website of where to find the recording.

Our very best wishes to all our loyal supporters

Ursula Russell and Trinity Players



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Our features editor Judith Dorricott reflects on

THE NEW NORMAL



Constant companionship! Long walks! Our dogs are the happy if surprised beneficiaries of the coronavirus pandemic. But for their human owners, life is much more difficult. While parents struggle with working online and supervising lessons, what do retired people do all day? Should we practise yoga, learn a new language, finally match the right birds to their songs? This might be the opportunity to clear out attics full of junk or to put decades years of photographs into albums. Books that have been gathering dust wait accusingly to be read - but will we pick them up?

What do we all miss most? It must be family and friends and, for many, growing grandchildren. Real-life culture is also unavailable - no more films, concerts or theatre visits, let alone visits to London to see exciting new exhibitions. And the third thing many of us miss is church; especially over Easter time, we would have loved to go into Holy Trinity Church, pray and take communion together.

While we wait for the virus to pass, let's try to count our blessings:

Firstly spring has arrived! Never have the flowers and the blossom appeared so beautiful, never has the dawn chorus sounded so sweet, and never have we followed the progress of spring into summer so avidly. We are lucky to live in a beautiful part of England where, last month, I counted violets and celandines, spotted a swooping barn owl and even watched a brown otter twisting and turning as it played in the River Stour.

We are also lucky that social media is so advanced. For those of us who remember the days of telegrams and blue airmail letters, social networking groups are life-saving if sometimes daunting! We can stay in touch "virtually" with our loved ones through innumerable social media sites, and older people are learning to be as tech-savvy as the younger generation. What a pleasure to chat and laugh with a relative or friend even if it is only on a screen.

Our caring church community and thoughtful neighbours show us how fortunate we are. Many of us have been touched by the offers of help from those we barely know, while old resentments and petty disagreements fade into the past. The war against coronavirus has brought out an incredible kindness from many around us, uniting our society in its efforts to combat the pandemic.

As I walk my dog through fields early every morning, I try to embrace this slower pace of life, and thank God that we are still healthy. We know the pandemic will pass, but our world will never be the same again.



Judith and her dog Barney.

News from Tom and Verity Clare

CMS partners in East Africa supported by Holy Trinity

Hello everyone - Praise God.....

We made it to Arua!

We arrived in Uganda on 5 March after an exhausting but mostly trouble-free journey. It was the most tired we've ever been! Having stayed in a guest house for a few days in Kampala, we then attended the CMS Uganda People in Mission conference at Lake Nabugabo near Masaka before braving the nine-hour car journey up to Arua.

Thank you for all your support and prayers. It was a **very** long journey but we are thankful to God for getting us here safely (and even without the need to self-quarantine, such was the perfection of God's timing).

We are now settling in to our new home and Tom is starting work - although as coronavirus begins to grip Uganda, he'll now mostly be working from home.

Anyone for 11:45pm breakfast?

The overnight flight to Nairobi was as exhausting as we'd anticipated it would be. Combinations of an upset baby, excitement from the older two at being able to turn the screen on in front of you whenever you liked, two year old tantrums from Simeon mid-flight and being woken up (when they were all finally asleep!) at 11:45pm for breakfast, meant that we got no sleep at all. We fumbled our way through Nairobi airport and onto the connecting flight to Entebbe and somehow arrived in Uganda with all of our pieces of hold and hand luggage and all four children, so we felt pleased enough with the final outcome!



Our first few days were spent in a guesthouse in Kampala and we had the chance to catch up on rest and relax in the beautiful guesthouse grounds, easing the boys gently into the new culture.

Lake Nabugabo PIM conference

Our arrival just happened to time perfectly with a planned People in Mission Conference for those working with CMS in Uganda. It was great to join in with the conference over a couple of days in the tranquil setting of Lake Nabugabo. We were able to gain useful insights into the joys and challenges of the work of our CMS co-workers here in Uganda and the boys had a great time chasing chickens, playing at the lakeside and going for a swim with Steve, the CMS Africa Regional Director, in the warm, bilharzia-free waters!



The long road north

Having spent over a week in Uganda, we were eager to head up to Arua and start to settle in to our new home. The nine hour journey was thankfully less stressful than anticipated. Prayers for journey mercies are always offered with great sincerity here - the drivers have been quite baffled by our use of car seats and with no seatbelts in the back of the car, two of the seats were tied on with rope and the older boys were left to bounce around at will. We seemed very mean keeping a crying baby strapped into his car seat when the co-driver was offering to have him stand up in the front with him, to cheer him up, while we were driving along....

We passed vast stretches of remote countryside and were surprised to see so many thatched huts along the roadside. The boys were also very excited to see elephants and hippos at one of the Nile crossing points, as well as vervet monkeys and baboons.



It was such a joy and relief to arrive at our home, welcomed by the wonderful David and Heather Sharland, who've been working in this region with CMS for a good number of years and whose generosity with their time and effort to sort our house out before our arrival has blown us away. The house has great potential and the outside space has already been such a blessing.



Uganda house

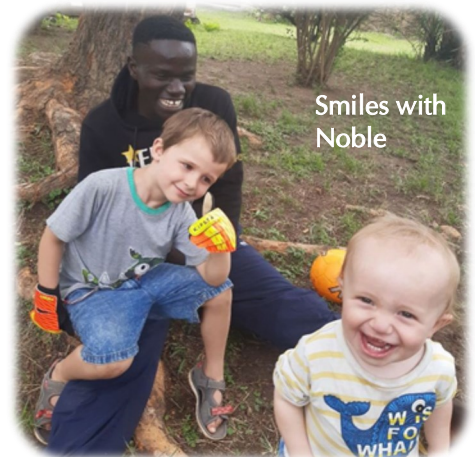
Settling in and locking down

Our attention has been somewhat divided as we've begun to settle in to life here whilst also keeping up with all the Coronavirus news back in the UK and now here, as the first few cases have been reported. We are getting to know people and beginning to figure out where to buy things locally but at the same time are very conscious of the uncertainty facing so many people we care about in the UK right now. We're very

thankful that we flew when we did - arriving in the country just a few days before they started quarantining travellers - but knowing that we now have no way of leaving the country makes us feel just that bit further away from loved ones back in the UK.

It's been almost three years since Arua was first mentioned as a possible place for us to call home and it feels so good to finally be here. We're looking forward to putting roots down here and are so thankful for the people we've met already - David and Heather, Noble (our lovely night watchman whom Ezra said was 'possibly the kindest person he's ever met') and Milly (who is coming to help us out in the house for a few hours each day). We're attempting to learn Lugbara, the local language, renowned for its complexity. With Tom's community health work opportunities limited due to Coronavirus social restrictions, we now have more of an opportunity to focus on language learning over the next few weeks.

The boys have all shown amazing resilience in this transitional period but have equally taken it in turns to have meltdowns at different times. Ezra is struggling the most, having left such a great group of friends at home and being most aware of having left close family behind. He cheered up over the last few days, playing football in the garden with a group of local boys but due to rapidly changing social restrictions we've now had to cancel this activity. Eli has engaged most positively with the culture and Simeon still insists it's called 'New-ganda' but loves coming to the market and riding in a tuk-tuk. Joel just continues to love being with people and has been charming everyone here with his cheeky smile and ever-growing appetite.



Smiles with Noble



Playing football

Prayer points

Uprooting a young family to a new country is not the easiest of tasks, even in peaceful times, without a global pandemic evolving daily. We are thankful that we serve a God who goes before us and behind us and we know that we are where he wants us to be right now. We are so thankful for

his perfect timing in getting us here, for the wonderful people he's already placed in our lives and the beauty of his creation all around us. We feel so privileged to be living here, looking forward to the adventure that comes from getting to experience life in a different culture.

Cont.....

News from Tom and Verity cont....

We are so thankful that we know God and have the light of Christ living in us and we pray that we'll be able to share this light with those around us here in Arua. We'll be praying for all of you back in the UK - please do be in touch with specific prayer requests. If you'd like to pray for us, here's a few specifics:

- **For friends!** We know it'll take time but we would love for all of us to make good friends here who we can journey with, especially in these more unsettling times.
- **For peace and grace** - to be reminded daily of God's love and enabling for both the big and the small tasks each day. To be a witness of God's love, firstly to the boys as they go through all the emotions of moving here, pointing them to Jesus as our source of protection, hope and confidence. And to share the reason for this hope and peace with those close to us, both here and in the UK, at a time when so many are struggling with fear.
- **For patience** as we look to learn the local language and learn it well.
- **For wisdom** as we try to keep up-to-date with daily updates of coronavirus restrictions- we've just heard that we're pretty much in lock down now and need to make decisions about food supplies, people coming to the house etc.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support.

With love in Christ,

Tom, Verity, Ezra, Eli, Simeon and Joel

Please pray for Tom, Verity and the boys and support them in their mission at this difficult time.

Lent Lunches 2020

Owing to the current situation, only two Lent Lunches were able to be held in the Parish Centre this year, on Fridays 6 and 13 March. I would like to thank the volunteers and home group members who enabled the Lunches to take place, providing a simple meal of homemade soup, bread and cheese. Each week about thirty of us enjoyed sharing this meal together and listening to David Ellis and John Hall-Matthews giving a "Thought for the Day" on each occasion. A total of £223.17 has been sent to Christian Aid from the generous donations received.

Chris Cottrell



The Green Corner
RENEWAL AND REBELLION

Faith, Economy and Climate

This was the title of the National Conference of the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) of the Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed Churches and the Church of Scotland. It was held on Saturday 7 March at the Riverside Centre in Derby and we joined the hundreds of people who attended.

After opening devotions there was a welcome from Rachel Lampard, JPIT's Team Leader. She reminded us that "our environment is in crisis and inequality is growing. Yet our economic system seems fixated on endless growth while politics is paralysed and coarsened by division. The challenges we face – to reach net-zero by 2050 or sooner and to do so in a way which brings justice for all people – can be daunting.

As Christians, the way we respond to the climate crisis is deeply connected with our calling to be Disciples of Christ. Responding to the greatest commandment, to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart...and your neighbour as yourself' impacts every area of our lives as people and as the Church."

Our first session was a Keynote Panel of a theologian, Anthony Reddie, an economist, Katherine Trebeck and a politician, Barry Gardiner Labour MP. It was chaired by Doug Swanney, Methodist Connexional Secretary. Anthony Reddie reminded us of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden which illustrates the importance of restraint. We need to recover the concept of Sabbath, a day of rest from our constant activity. Katherine Trebeck pointed out that the original meaning of the word wealth was well-being and our economy should not be pursuing endless growth but the well-being of all people. Barry Gardiner had served as [Ed Miliband's](#) Special Envoy for Environment and Climate Change between 2011 and 2013. Fortunately he is still in Parliament pushing for more effective measures to combat Climate Change.

We then broke up into different workshops and we went to "Shaping a distinctively Christian voice in Climate Action" led by someone from Christian Aid. It's important that Christians stand up for Climate Justice and have the courage to be counter-cultural. The last speaker was Christine Allen, the Director of CAFOD. It was good to have a Catholic share Pope Francis' thoughts from his 2015 encyclical Laudato Si. The encyclical has the subtitle "on care for our common home". In it, Pope Francis critiques [consumerism](#) and [irresponsible development](#), laments [environmental degradation](#) and [global warming](#), and calls all people of the world to take "swift and unified global action".

A few days before this conference we found out that the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2020, entitled "[Saying Yes to Life](#)", was written by Ruth Valerio, a well-known speaker from A Rocha, the Christian Conservation Charity. The book consists of six chapters, following the six days of creation. The first chapter "[Let there be Light](#)" mentions the green measures Stratford-upon-Avon Methodist Church incorporated in the refurbishment as an example of a church taking practical action to save energy.

We finish with a quotation from the Archbishop's Foreword to the book. "Every single one of us has a responsibility as part of our discipleship to Jesus Christ to live a life that cares for God's world and its creatures".

PS Now just two weeks later our churches are closed because of the Coronavirus and we are isolated from each other but we must still [Say Yes to Life](#).

Lim & Evelyn Ho (Stratford Methodist Church)

HOWLERS!

A smile is a curve that sets everything straight (Phyllis Diller)

YOU WRITE...

Sir, It's good to see that Coronavirus isn't dampening the wit of our young people. I rang our 14-year-old granddaughter to commiserate on the lockdown.

GD: I'm bored.

Me: You could try some schoolwork.

GD: I am.

Me: What's six times seven then?

GD: I'm not doing maths today, grandad.

Sir, Doing my duty as a good neighbour, I rang the old lady down the road to say I was going to the village shop and to ask if she wanted anything. She said, "No, thank you, I think I've got all I need. No, wait: if they've got any fennel bulbs I'll have some." *Daily Drone website*

A letter writer to *The Guardian* recalling his favourite newspaper correction: Due to a mishearing on the telephone we reported that Mr and Mrs (name withheld) would be living with the bride's father. They will, in fact, be living at the Old Manse.

Headline from Midsomer Norton Weekly Journal: Break in at opticians. Did you see anything?

From *The Yoxmere Fisherman Parish Magazine in Suffolk*: Animal Service 11am. Everyone is welcome – even without a pet. When the service is over there will be a barbecue.



Compiled by Pat Pilton

The twins had been doing Messy Church at home

LAST LAUGH... A truck loaded with thousands of copies of Roget's Thesaurus crashed yesterday, losing its entire load. Witnesses were stunned, startled, aghast, taken aback, stupefied, confused, shocked, rattled, paralysed, dazed, bewildered, mixed up, surprised, awed, dumfounded, astounded, nonplussed, flabbergasted, amazed, confounded, astonished, overwhelmed, horrified, numbed, speechless and perplexed.

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This will only happen if things have returned to normal by then.

PARISH CONTACTS

*The Parish Office, Old Town
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Leadership Team

Vicar	The Revd Patrick Taylor	01789 508 155	vicar@stratford-upon-avon.org
Associate Vicar	The Revd Steve Jarvis	01789 296 590	steve@stratford-upon-avon.org
Associate Priest	The Revd Kay Dyer	07857 821 168	kay@stratford-upon-avon.org
Children & Families Minister	Phil Harper	07791 005 696	phil@stratford-upon-avon.org

Assistant Ministers (Hon)

The Revd Jenny Rowland	01789 415 548	The Revd Canon Andrew Dow	01789 417 852
The Venerable Brian Russell	01789 266 316	The Revd John Hall-Matthews	01789 414 182
The Revd Graham Wilcox	01789 551 759	The Revd Diane Patterson	01789 266 453
The Revd Roger Taylor	01789 778 471		

Staff

Operations Manager:	Andy Winter	01789 266 316	andy@stratford-upon-avon.org
Church Team Leaders:	David White, Sherron Guise, Ian Meeson and Sarah Cushing		
Parish Administrators:	Rebecca Rumsey	01789 266 316	rebecca.rumsey@stratford-upon-avon.org
	Sarah Cushing	01789 266 316	
Bookkeeper:	Wendy Steinheimer	01789 266 316	wendys@stratford-upon-avon.org
Director of Music:	Douglas Keilitz	07784 312 387	douglas.keilitz@stratford-upon-avon.org
Gift Shop:	Heather White	01789 264 598	heather.white@stratford-upon-avon.org

Church Wardens

Hilda Craig	01789 551 234	Paul Lageu	01789 298 302
Hilary Newman	01789 296 771	Rhod Mitchell	07983 985 474

Village Contacts

All Saints', Luddington	Jane Beeley	01789 269 618
St. Helen's, Clifford Chambers	Pat Woolvin	01789 264 256

Other Contacts

Head Server	Chris Cornford	01789 295 066
Bell Ringers	Charles Wilson	01789 295 467
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Safeguarding Officer	Jane Armitage	01789 297 652
Trinity Ladies	Gina Lodge	01789 204 850
Electoral Roll Officer	Tim Raistrick	01789 509 885
Friends of Shakespeare's Church	Alan Haigh	01789 290 128
Holy Trinity in the Community	Steve Jarvis	01789 266 316
Lay Chaplains	Keith Payne	01789 266 316
PCC Secretary	Miriam Dow	01789 417 852
PCC Treasurer	Mike Warrillow	01789 298 928
Friends of the Music	Josephine Walker	01789 266 316
Home Communion	Steve Jarvis	01789 266 316
Stewardship Officer	Chris Kennedy	01789 299 785
Trinity Players	Ursula Russell	01789 204 923
Trinity Tots	Phil Harper	07791 005 696
Pastoral Contact Co-ordinator	Gillian Nunn	01789 415 830
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EARLY MARCH

by Norman Nicholson

Norman Nicholson was born in 1914 at Millom in Cumberland and lived there all his life. Sea, countryside, town and heavy industry meet there and his poetry reflects his capacity to see how these factors impacted on modern life in the light of Christian religion.

We did not expect this; we were not ready for this;
To find the unpredicted spring
Sprung open like a broken trap. The sky
Unfolds like an arum leaf; the bare
Trees unfurl like fronds of fern;
The birds are scattered along the air;
Celandines and cresses prick pinpoints white and yellow,
And the snow is stripped from the fells.
We were not prepared for this. We knew
That the avalanche of war breaks boundaries like birches,
That terror bursts round our roofs; we were aware
Of the soft cough of death in the waiting lungs. But this
Has caught us half-asleep. We had never thought of this.

Sent to magazine by Angela Wylam, St Helens' Church, Clifford Chambers.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSIC

Hey, I'm Saul,

I am a member of Holy Trinity church choir. To me joining was one of the best decisions of my life. It lets me get closer to God and do the thing I love which is singing. I remember my first ever rehearsal with the choir back in 2016. I was a shy seven-year-old gathered around a piano with loads of strangers that would soon become my best friends. In 2015 Benedict and Rebecca hosted a Christmas Nativity. I heard of it through my school and I decided to join and sing. I always had a passion for singing. It would either be in the shower to all the shampoo bottles, or in the car with my family.

During a rehearsal for the Nativity one of the children that went to choir joined us. I started socialising with him, and we became good friends. He said he would love me to come with him and sing in the choir. I was hesitant with my answer as I didn't want to lose my Friday evenings and Sundays, but I said yes and asked Benedict if I could join. September 2016 I was in that church singing like an angel, I think.

In our choir rehearsals we would break off into groups and learn the music. Our group leaders were, Rebecca, Benedict, Rohan and Robert. I remember being with Benedict more, but had Rohan as well. Rohan and I got on very well. We were best buds. We would laugh and have a competition on who had the best joke. It was obviously me.

I remember the shock and hurt I felt when I was told that Rohan had sadly passed away. It had a big effect on me and the choir. Every time we sing, we always have Rohan in our thoughts and hearts. I think Rohan's death pushed me to do things I would never have done like learning piano and helping out with the vergers at the weekends. The Friends of Music very kindly contributed to the purchase of a piano for me, and for the tuning. This has helped with my music massively and I can't thank them enough. It has also pushed me on to learn guitar which I am enjoying. The Friends of Music host an awards evening where members of the choir can win trophies. This pushes us on to do many great things for the church. I have personally earned two engraved names on the trophies.

It was also a big impact on us when Benedict and Stephen were leaving. They had a massive impact on us, making the choir happy and sounding good as ever. We were all sad but excited for the new director of music. Rebecca was a massive help to the choir as she kept the morale high as Benedict wasn't here to do that. Rebecca also directed us for a few months. I could tell she was happy and enjoying being the director and she did an amazing job. Our new director of music was chosen to be Douglas. So far Douglas has done a lot with the choir and I am excited about the things he may do in the future.



Saul McDougall