

June 2020

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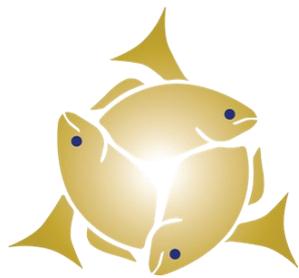


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Celebrating VE day during the lockdown has been difficult but there are some stories included in this magazine which show the resourcefulness of people.

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Remember we love to receive articles and photographs for the magazine which can be sent to the e-mail address below. However, we reserve the right to edit anything that is sent to us and the editor's decision is final.

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 **July/August 2020** edition  
**The copy date is 12 June**

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:  
**timestrinity@gmail.com**

The Annual Subscription to Trinity Times for 2020 is £8 and runs from January to December. Anyone taking out a subscription part way through the year will be charged on a pro rata basis. If you are interested in taking out an

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#HolyTrinityonsocialmedia



Front cover :- "Knock and the door will be opened" Matthew 7:7

## Holy Trinity Team



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Vicar



Revd. Steve Jarvis  
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Revd. Kay Dyer  
Associate Priest



Phil Harper  
Children & Families Minister

## THINGS ARE CERTAINLY UNCERTAIN



Three months ago if you'd asked me what Zoom was, I'd have said it's an ice lolly. Furlough – what you get when ploughing (spelling and comprehension was never my strong point), Corona – I'd be split between beer or a soft drink brand. Of course now, Zoom is an online platform for hosting meetings over video. Furlough a Government scheme to cover people's wages and Corona, a virus which has literally changed our world. What we don't know yet is what we'll go back to and how much has permanently changed.

The one certainty is that things will be uncertain, at least for a while. And that gives us a choice, do we follow the tradition of “wailing and gnashing of teeth”? Or do we have some “stiff upper lip” and make the best of things? In all honesty, I think we need a bit of both. As we navigate our ways through the changes we need to accept that there will be times to be sad and times to be proactive. Recently the one Bible passage I have found myself returning to repeatedly is from the beginning of Ecclesiastes chapter 3 “Everything has its

time”. A passage made more famous by the The Byrds turning it into a song *Turn, Turn, Turn*. Please feel free to hum the song as you remind yourself of the Bible passage.

*“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:*

*a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.”*



*(Ecclesiastes 3. 1-8)*

The words “a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;” seem particularly apt! I know that personally I've experienced different parts of the reading over the last few months, even in a twenty-four hour period I can experience both pairs of some of the lines.

At times of uncertainty, we often try to stabilise ourselves through the familiar. As Christians that familiar can be found through our worship, but in the current situation we have lost that familiarity. Some are lucky to be able to engage with it through our online services. It is a very different experience, but there is one particular moment I enjoy in the services, and that is the sharing of the peace. Being isolated in our homes you would think it impossible for people to shake hands and share the words, well we may not be able to shake hands, but the sharing of the words continues. During the broadcast people can add comments about the live stream and when the President speaks the words “Peace be with you” the comments light up with a flurry of peace be with yous. Each time that moment reminds me of the Christian community we are all part of no matter where we are or how close we are to each other.

*Things are certainly uncertain cont.....*

If you struggle accessing the services live on Facebook, it's much easier to view the services on YouTube after they've been on live. You can find the page by searching in your internet browser for "Holy Trinity Stratford upon Avon YouTube". You don't need to sign up for YouTube to view the videos.

I realise for those who don't have access to the internet it can be frustrating, but I hope you've been able to use the free to call *Daily Hope* phone line 0800 804 8044. This offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

Like a lot of things, our ways of worshipping will be changed for a while. At the beginning of June we're asking for people to complete a survey to help guide the leadership team in how worship will be done in the coming months, knowing that we can't offer things as they have been in the past. Hopefully, as it evolves, there won't be too much wailing and gnashing of teeth and each of us can find ways to still receive the same comfort and reassurance.

We don't know what the new "normal" will be in any of our lives at the moment. What we need to focus on now is the journey we are on, to allow ourselves to be sad, but also to celebrate what we can. The Bible is the history of people on a journey, not just physically, but a journey with God and the one certainty for each of us is that God is with us in every time.

*Phil Harper*

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## NEVILLE BEAMER REMEMBERED

Neville was a great friend and support during my years in Stratford. We were both scousers by birth. He was a Blue and I a Red which was always an enjoyable source of debate, as long as Liverpool were winning that is! Neville was an experienced and insightful priest who noticed what was going on, and could always be relied upon for wise and often humorous counsel. He and Sheila contributed to both church and town in so many different ways, and were much loved in the villages too. They were inspirational leaders of Trinity Tots, and helped many families to feel welcome at Holy Trinity, and who can forget Neville leading hymn practice while Waiting for Jesus on Christmas Eve? He was tireless in his work as a local Councillor and many will have cause to thank God for his life and work. I'm sure he will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace, and rise in glory.

*With every good wish*  
*Martin*

*A memorial service for Neville will take place in Holy Trinity Church when this becomes possible and details will be publicised once arrangements have been made.*

The Rt Revd Martin Gorick  
Bishop of Dudley



Photograph by Harry Lomax

## Worship Notes

As I write this in the middle of May, it's difficult to predict where we will be with worship in June. But I shall try to give some guidance on what may lie ahead, even though the timing is difficult to predict. I am told that the general consensus within the Church of England is that the coming out of lockdown will be significantly more complex than the going into lockdown. We are all looking forward to the time when our church buildings can be used again for:

- Weddings and funerals
- Private prayer by parishioners
- Public Worship



Although we don't know the precise timing for this, the latest advice from the government suggests that it will happen in stages. It's also likely to happen in the sequence listed above – but there is no guarantee about this. In the meantime the plan is to continue to live stream Sunday and midweek services, in addition to the daily recordings of Morning and Evening prayer. We shall be focusing on one act of worship across the parish on a Sunday, but aim to express within that service (and across the weeks) the full range of styles of worship and music we are used to, from formal and choral to informal and instrumental. This is actually a great opportunity to involve more people in leading our worship and to include a broader range of ages and backgrounds than we are perhaps used to. If this makes us less reliant on the clergy then that is a good thing, especially as we have been so dependent on our retired clergy who are all over seventy! We value your views on what you are finding works for you and so will be circulating a questionnaire after Pentecost to help us shape our future worship.

Thank you for all the encouragement you have given us and please bear with us (and pray for us) as we enter this uncharted territory!

*Patrick*

### LOOKING FORWARD TO SOUNDBITES AGAIN



Every Wednesday in Holy Trinity Church we had a wonderful treat in store. From 1pm–1.30pm each week, very talented musicians entertained us. Some local, some attached to Holy Trinity music team, whilst others came from the Birmingham Conservatoire or from the Royal College of Music, London.

The ages of the performers ranged from Primary school children to the retired age group and the programmes included singers, organists, pianists, woodwind players, quartets, choirs and even ukulele players.

The music suited all tastes and was always of the highest quality and standard. The artistes were so gifted and performed to make us all feel their enthusiasm and joy with the music.

It was a lovely opportunity to meet friends, have a chat and enjoy a sandwich and cake with a cup of tea or coffee before the performance. No need to make lunch that day!

We were very privileged to have the opportunity to hear such beautiful music so expertly played. We owe the Friends of Music, and particularly Benedict Wilson and Rebecca Mills, a huge thank you, for introducing and providing us with such a weekly delight. I was so very grateful to those who organised it all.

I look forward to Wednesdays, after lockdown, in anticipation. It's a wonderful, lovely way to spend a lunch time.

Mrs. E. Mulryne.

**Please Note:** The Friends of the Music will present a virtual Soundbites recital on Wednesday 27 May at 1pm featuring a pre-recorded song recital by talented Birmingham Conservatoire Students Helena Townsend and Jonny Budd.

## Valued Volunteers

In our series on Valued Volunteers within our community, this month we hear from Teresa Kristunas from All Saints' Church, Luddington.

*In what areas of church life do you undertake voluntary work?*

I am currently Honorary Treasurer for both All Saints' and St. Helen's Churches. In addition to maintaining the financial records I also deal with any planning or faculty applications for both Churches. The grounds surrounding both churches are in conservation areas and many of the trees at All Saints' are subject to TPOs. I am also one of two Communion Assistants at All Saints' and occasionally act as vergers.

In common with many of our congregation I am on the reading and cleaning rota. I am also on the flower rota but only for the Advent Wreath....I am too fussy to be able to arrange a large number of flowers! Ikebana is more my thing. I also prepare the posies for Mothering Sunday and the Christingles.

*How long have you been a volunteer?*

Since sometime in the late 1990s when I assisted at All Saints' Sunday School which was held in the Village Hall. I then joined the All Saints' Team and everything else just followed.

*What originally motivated you to become a volunteer?*

It's just in my nature. In my teenage years I undertook the role of server at Christenings. Following on from being a Brownie and then a Girl Guide I became a Young Leader. Then, still a teenager, I became a Brown Owl....starting my own Pack, 3<sup>rd</sup> Faversham Brownies.

*In what ways do you think that volunteering supports our parish mission?*

It is difficult to imagine parish life without the presence of volunteers. This is very evident in the villages where we are also dependent upon the support of the wonderful retired clergy.

*What aspects of your voluntary work give you the greatest pleasure?*

The contribution that it makes to the lives of others.

*How long have you been a member of the congregation?*

Since early 1990s following a home visit from Canon Cyster.

*What attracts you to our church?*

The fact that I can walk to All Saints'. I know this may sound weird but my family home in Kent adjoined the churchyard of the church (St Mary of Charity) I attended, hence I walked to church. I was going to walk to church on my wedding day but my Uncle insisted on chauffeuring me on a journey around the town to approach the church via another road. St Mary of Charity is at the end of both Church Road and Church Street, Faversham. I cannot imagine attending church on a regular basis having arrived by any other means.

St Mary of Charity, Faversham is the second largest church in Kent, birthplace a King Stephen. A bit different from All Saints', Luddington.

*Do you have a favourite hymn?*

'Lord of the Dance' by Sydney Carter.

*Is there a particular bible passage that uplifts you spiritually?*

Isaiah 8. 2-6



## *Valued Volunteers cont.....*

*Let's hear a little about yourself. Where were you born?*

I was born in Canterbury, and lived in Faversham, Kent, and am the oldest of four children. I gave my parents a couple of challenges during my childhood. After starting school, I developed meningitis. Then when I was nine, I was admitted to the Maudsley Hospital in London to have a hole in my brain sac repaired leaving me with no sense of smell. My world was no longer filled by the aroma of beer emanating from the two breweries in the town, Shepherd Neame and Whitbread Fremlins.

From a young age I have attended Sunday School, been a member of Scripture Union at school and attended church. I was confirmed by Michael Ramsey, the 100<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury.

My father died just before I became eighteen and my mother just before my twenty first birthday. Thankfully my Dad's sister lived in the neighbouring house so she was there to offer us support.

*Can you tell us a little about your family?*

My husband and I have two daughters, one of whom is married while the other still lives at home. My husband's family comprises just his sister and a cousin who lives in France. My two sisters and my brother still live in Kent.

The name Kristunas originates from Lithuania. My husband's family came to this country in the 1890s. Further members of the Kristunas family, at a similar time, moved to Pennsylvania in the USA. Anybody with any knowledge of Lithuania will tell you that, as a married lady, I am not spelling my surname correctly.

*Can you tell us about your working life?*

I currently work self-employed as an Internal Auditor for a Multi Academy Trust comprising eight schools and two single academy trusts. Prior to this I worked as the Director of Finance & Resources for a Midlands based charity. The majority of my career has been in local government. After working as the Chief Finance Officer for Redditch Borough Council I became a member of the Shared Management Team for Redditch and Bromsgrove Council where I managed Financial Services, Property Services, HR, Revenue Services, Internal Audit and the Benefits Service. I have also worked for Worcester City Council, Warwick District Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. I qualified as an accountant whilst working at Warwick District Council.

*Do you live in or near Stratford? If you weren't born in Stratford, what brought you here?*

I live in Luddington. I moved here in 1984 when my husband became Farm Manager at the Experimental Horticultural Station. I still miss living in Kent - Faversham is located on a creek within a cycle ride of the nearest beach.

*Do you have any hobbies or pets?*

I enjoy macro photography and handicrafts such as sewing, cake decorating and knitting. I also enjoy gardening, which is useful as I have a good-sized garden, and growing orchids. I did have a collection of around twenty orchids until a few months ago when they were invaded by mealy bugs.

*What are your tastes in music, books and films?*

I enjoy music by Leonard Cohen, Pink Floyd, Hozier, Justin Timberlake, Prince, George Ezra, Sinéad O'Connor, Terence Trent D'arby, Duffy...to name just a few plus the sound of pan pipes. I mainly listen to music when I'm driving.

Having spent many years working full-time and attending evening Council meetings, plus PCC and All Saints' Team meetings I've not read any books for a long time. The last book I read was Cold Comfort Farm.

Teresa Kristunas

## REFLECTIONS FROM A FURLOUGHED BASS

“O Lord Open Thou Our Lips...”

If only we could!

The opening words of Evensong are more than a spiritual invitation to the congregation – they are a Call To Action for choristers, young and old, to focus, pay attention and deliver our very best in leading worship during the coming hour. They have been part of my life for well over half a century and yet, I have never paused to consider their meaning until The Music Stopped (literally) two months ago. For all these years, the opening Preces have been the starting gun to muster the choir but now they take on a much more poignant meaning as churches throughout the land have fallen silent.

I find myself a furloughed bass with large holes in my weekly routine. A feeling of Itchy Feet on a Friday evening when, instead of learning new music and rounding off the working week with the singing of Compline, I flick the remote repeatedly. On Sunday morning, a strange sensation not unlike that I last experienced as an occasional teenage school truant who couldn't enjoy whatever forbidden fruit was on offer because I knew where I should really be at that time!

I miss church more than I could ever have imagined. The lead up to Easter has always been the most important time for me and this year, Holy Week without church and choir felt very different and sadly lacking.

I miss the proximity of my singing neighbours in the choir stalls – Sue on my left and Mark on my right – and then that wonderful feeling of being a working cog in the singing machine that is our choir. Instead, I listen to Radio 4 8.00am service, BBC 1 Morning Service from Hereford Cathedral and our own Holy Trinity streamed services. Instead of Evensong, I have a Zoom Meeting at 7pm with old friends from student years.

This plague has barred me from all manner of social interactions. I can't meet my new granddaughter Elsie, born 26 April, nor see my other granddaughter Isabella, who is nine months old. My daughter Frances has had to postpone her wedding, planned for the summer. I feel sad that we were not able to pay our respects through singing at Rev Neville Beamer's funeral. However, I have also seen that all of the prohibitions placed on us are necessary. My work neighbours in Bidford both contracted the virus – a successful husband and wife business with a lust for life, they both fell ill. She survived but he did not. Until then, the pandemic had seemed something that was happening elsewhere, in population centres, but not in cosy Stratford-upon-Avon.

For now, I allow myself to look forward singing together again, perhaps in preparation of Advent and Christmas. I pray for practical solutions to present problems (singing in a mask is not ideal) but after everything, I know that I will be ready to respond...

“And Our Mouth Shall Show Forth Thy Praise.”

*Malcolm Robinson*



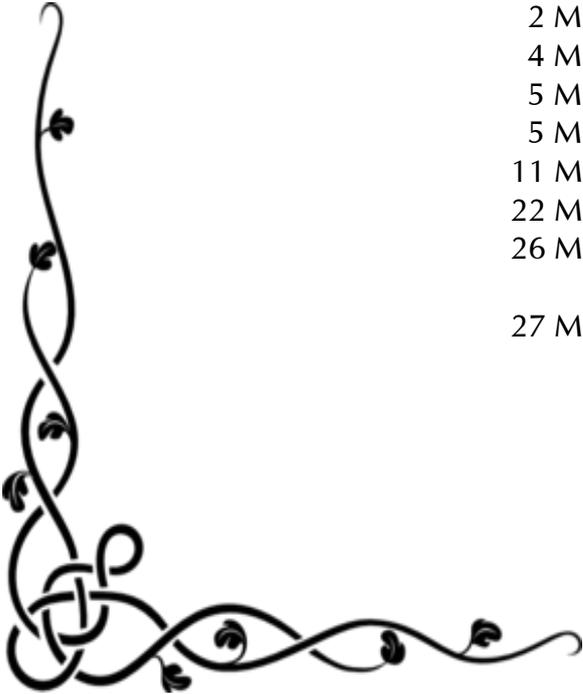
## FROM THE REGISTERS APRIL/MAY

### Christenings

### Weddings

### Funerals

28 April	Betty Tyler
29 April	Olive Whitehouse Kathleen Pozey
2 May	Bob Schofield
4 May	Ann Smart
5 May	Rosemary Vowles
5 May	Raymond Hall
11 May	Frances Greatrex
22 May	Rex Clingan
26 May	Bernice (Benny) Jones Ivy Radbourne
27 May	Paul Moseley Diane M J Cole



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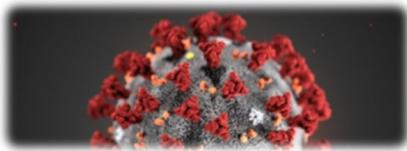
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*The death rate from Covid-19 has come as a huge shock across the world. The Rev Andrew Dow sets out the uniquely Christian perspective on what eventually must come to us all:*

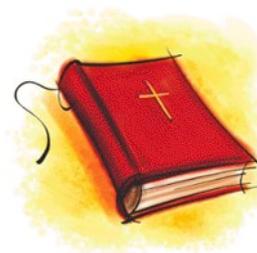


The rapid spread of Covid-19 has confronted us all with our frailty and relative powerlessness in an unpredictable world. It has also brought to the fore the normally taboo subject of death: the neighbour, relative, colleague, or friend who has tragically fallen to the virus – it could have been me, struck down by this invisible, ubiquitous foe. So how should

the Christian believer respond to the stark reality, the ultimate statistic, that one out of every one person will die, and sometimes with no warning or time to prepare?

The key is the resurrection of Jesus following his death and burial – a bodily resurrection, not just a remarkable resuscitation; a one-off factual event in a known location (Jerusalem), in a well-documented period of history, an extraordinary happening for which the circumstantial evidence is overwhelming\*. Without the resurrection, the Christian Faith disintegrates, into a pious fantasy at best, at worst a dangerous hoax.

Even if fact, a question remains: how can a miracle two thousand years ago, however unique, affect my death now? Answer: because Jesus' resurrection is not just an ancient story that Christians believe, it is an ongoing cosmic-wide event in which we share! The Bible tells us that when we, by repentance and faith, commit ourselves to Christ, we move to a position of being "**in him**", that is inseparably linked to him, fused with him. So just as death could not hold him, could not prevent him emerging from the tomb into a radically new mode of existence, neither can a Christian's death hold him or her; rather it becomes the gateway to a whole new world, one day to be incorporated into God's promised new creation.



Think of it this way: in the days before the Channel Tunnel, there was only one way a motor car could access the European mainland – by being immersed deep within the bowels of an ocean going car ferry.

Only such a unique, purpose-built vessel could transport the car safely through the watery depths. In the same way, only Christ, death's conqueror, can carry the frail and guilty sinner (that's all of us, by the way!) through the waters of judgement that bar the way to eternal life. Christ is our "car ferry", or ark as in the story of Noah, and the Christian is by repentance and faith immersed deep "**in him**". Jesus put it this way, "*I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever lives and believes **in me** will live, even though he dies.*" (John 11: 25) St Paul wrote to the Colossians, "*your life is now hidden with Christ **in God.***" (Colossians 3: 3)



For the Christian, having such a promised hope, will not necessarily diminish the trauma of the journey towards death, but it can give a profound sense of peace, and certainly a deep rooted assurance that our eternal destiny is secure. No

wonder the New Testament joyfully proclaims, "*There is now no condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus***" (Romans 8: 1). Or again, "*Blessed are the dead who die **in the Lord***" (Revelation 14: 13)

If the dead can be regarded as "blessed", then perhaps death, and indeed a promising life cut short, need not be viewed - as it is by so many - as an unmitigated, total disaster. So Covid-19, even when you do your worst, you may be able to kill our mortal bodies, but that's all!

*\*to examine the evidence, read "Your Verdict on the Empty Tomb", by Val Grieve. EP Books [www.epbooks.org](http://www.epbooks.org)*

# One of the Lucky Ones

I'm sat here while the paramedics do the tests. The oxygen mask is on and I hear 'SATS\* are right down'. I'm now too ill to focus on what that means but what comes to mind is how I am going to get down the stairs. It's a couple at a time and then stop.

I'm in the hospital now.

When the curtain goes round and the square of blue is all you can see, the world suddenly seems very small.

What happened to the rest of it? But that no longer matters, the only thing I need to concentrate on is getting that next breath. The hiss of the oxygen mask and the constant clang of the bin as another set of PPE is disposed of. Sounds that became a focus without me even realising it. Sounds but unable to see.

Then things took a turn for the worse, SATS were too low and not rising, three doctors in my little space, being told to consider going to ITU.

NO said in an instant NO! NO! NO! Then the one doctor whose name I do remember said you have one last chance. Sit bolt upright and don't go to sleep.

Then back on my own.

That's when the real fear gripped me.

God PLEASE HELP! Why was I asking for his help, he was there with me I just needed to look. My daughter phoned and yes I was crying. 'Mom you need to live in the moment. Don't think about anything else'

The call ended and God had already answered my prayers.

Why did I doubt him, he was there right beside me.

Now sit bolt upright, breath, believe....

Slowly very slowly days later SATS improved. Thanks to the wonderful care I received at the hospital and a faith in you God.

As the title says, I am one of the lucky ones.

## From a Survivor of Covid-19

\*Editor's Note: SATS refers to the degree of oxygen saturation in the haemoglobin. Haemoglobin is the element in blood that carries oxygen to organs, tissues and cells in the body. When the oxygen level in the blood falls below certain levels it puts vital organs in danger and, if the level can't be raised, can ultimately lead to death.



## ST HELEN'S CHURCH GATE

St Helen's started posting a daily poem and prayer or bible reading in Holy Week.

For many years now (at least eight) Jessie Potter and I have been growing cut flowers for use in church. Since the church has been closed Angela Wylam decided to fix a small trough, with vases in so that we could display the flowers, on the church gate.

We also used the church gate for a palm cross on Palm Sunday and a floral wreath on Easter Sunday. Angela was responsible for the cross and Sarah Hosking for the Easter display.

*Sally Abell*



St Helen's church gate decorated with flowers.



Flowers growing on the allotment.



Easter Wreath



Palm Cross

Photographs courtesy of Sally Abell

# St Helen's Church Gate

Decorated for VE Day

A poem or prayer is published each day on the noticeboard on the left hand side of the gate.



## Help Yourself To Happiness by Helen Steiner-Rice

Everybody, everywhere  
seeks happiness, it's true,  
But finding it and keeping it  
seem difficult to do.

Difficult because we think  
that happiness is found  
Only in the places where  
wealth and fame abound.

And so we go on searching  
in palaces of pleasure  
Seeking recognition  
and monetary treasure,

Unaware that happiness  
is just a state of mind  
Within the reach of everyone  
who takes time to be kind.

For in making others happy  
we will be happy, too.  
For the happiness you give away  
returns to shine on you.

## Scaffolding by Seamus Heaney

Masons, when they start upon a building,  
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;  
Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,  
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.  
And yet all this comes down when the job's done  
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.  
So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be  
Old bridges breaking between you and me  
Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall  
Confident that we have built our wall.

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## Friday 8 May VE Day 75th Anniversary Celebrations



Uncle Walter

On Friday 8 May, I wanted to celebrate my Uncle Walter's survival of his time in German POW camps. He was taken prisoner, in Crete, early in the war and returned after VE Day, walking up the lane and into my grandparents' farmhouse in Gower unannounced. During this time, when there had been no news from my uncle, my grandmother continued to believe that Walter was still alive.



It was good to have a different focus last week. On Friday morning we put up the decorations in the garden and a trestle table ready to offer portions of celebration cake, individually wrapped, to neighbours and those who passed by in the afternoon. As we sat listening to wartime music, it was good to chat, at a distance, to those who stopped and to exchange wartime stories.

We can be thankful for the hardships which the wartime generation endured and the hope which sustained them. We, too, are challenged to keep faith and hope alive at the present time.

*Christine Cottrell*



Photographs courtesy of Christine Cottrell

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### VE Day

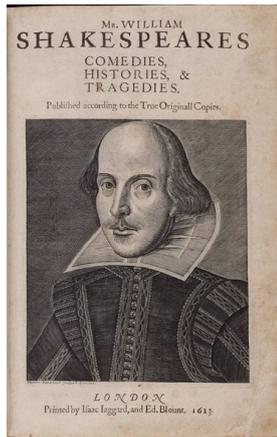
by Gillian Nunn

To some of us VE Day was very real. We had lived through the war. I was fortunate as we lived just south of St Albans and were north of London and just far enough away not to be evacuated. We had very few bombs in the immediate area though I spent many nights sleeping in the cupboard under the stairs because of air raid warnings. My father, who had served in France in 1917 and 1918, was in transport which was a reserved occupation. Several nights a week he would get home from his office in Kentish Town, north of the centre of London, have his dinner and go out again for ARP or warden duties.

On VE Day he went to work as usual though my two elder sisters and I did not go to school. One of the taxi drivers in his company told him to take his wife and the girls up to town the next evening. So we were met by the taxi at Kentish Town station and driven round London to see the crowds and the lights – I could not remember street lights. Then we parked somewhere near Buckingham Palace and joined the crowds and saw the King and Queen on the balcony!

An amazing experience for a ten year old who had never been part of a crowd like this, all rejoicing and singing,!

I also remember that everything I was wearing had been passed down to me. The first coat that was bought new for me was when I went to university!



Normally this edition would be full of reports and photos of the Shakespeare birthday celebrations. Not this year. We can only reflect on a truly strange weekend, whilst thanking all those – in our church family, at the Birthplace Trust and elsewhere – who still managed to put on a remarkable online celebration of “the Immortal Memory” of our town’s greatest son.

Greg Doran’s address during the Shakespeare service, on the relevance of *A Winter’s Tale*, was surely a highlight, reminding us that the Bard was far closer than we normally are to the realities of plague, suffering and death. Covid-19 would have been no surprise to him, and he knew all about lockdown; some

believe that one of his greatest and darkest plays, *King Lear*, was written during one of many periods when the plague closed the theatres for months on end.

But he was also closer than we usually are to nature, and the Spring miracle of resurrection. Patrick in one of his online sermons reminded us that creation and redemption are all of a piece, and that we have a unique opportunity to encounter God in nature in this time when our world is so quiet and our opportunities for so many activities – including corporate worship – so restricted. As Greg in turn reminded us, *A Winter’s Tale* ends with a kind of resurrection, which demands that our faith be awakened, and which never fails to move audiences. We may come to see that resurrection in unlikely places.



So how do we respond to this unending daily nothingness? Awareness of nature is certainly part of it. The 19th century Jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, speaks of the mess that humanity has made of the natural world, and then reminds us that: “For all this, nature is never spent/There lives the dearest freshness deep down things” and that there we can still find the Holy Spirit at work.

But equally we can be surprised by the Spirit in other people. We continue to see amazing generosity in so many, alongside the selfishness and folly which any of us can display (and a few do) at a time like this. One question which has been exercising me is what this time will do to the relationship between the generations. Pope Francis recently spoke about how “the roots” and “the shoots” – the old and the young – need each other. There is a temptation for the young (whom our society and our economy need) and the old (who can sometimes look “expendable”) to see response to the pandemic as some kind of competition, rather than a situation when we depend on each other as never before. Surely this is a time to explore afresh that inter-dependency, and for the energy of the young and the wisdom of the old (we do have some!) to support each other.

And the future? We don’t know. Perhaps the pandemic, combined with the threat of climate change, really is “apocalypse now” for the human race. Shakespeare had every reason, in his own dramatic and threatening times, to face up to such possibilities, and we may find in his work much which could help us to face it also. But that strangest book in the Bible, Revelation, points to “a new heaven and a new earth” beyond the apocalypse. That, too, though far beyond the imaginings of most of us, can be glimpsed here and there within Shakespeare’s infinite vision. Perhaps, like Miranda in *The Tempest*, those of us who survive this time may end up crying “O brave new world!”





**“It is required you do awake your faith”.**  
**A “sermon” for the Shakespeare Birthday Service 2020,**  
**by Gregory Doran,**  
**Artistic Director of The Royal Shakespeare Company.**

When the Reverend Patrick Taylor, Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, asked me if I would deliver the birthday sermon, at the Sunday service as part of the annual celebrations of William Shakespeare’s birthday, I thought he was pulling my leg.

My name is Greg Doran, and I am the Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company. I run a theatre, with actors, who are often thought of as a rather heathen bunch of rogues and vagabonds, and frankly, many of us probably are.

I am always happy to give a talk, but am resistant to giving lectures. So the idea of delivering a sermon; and that I would have any moral or religious truth to express, or share, seemed a bit of a stretch.

Raised a Catholic, who fell out with his church over its doctrine on sexuality, my faith, once fervent, is now at best dormant. But since I properly discovered Shakespeare, as a teenager, I have derived a great deal of spiritual sustenance from his work. Where Shakespeare derived his profound compassion for humanity from is of course the source of endless speculation.

I like to say along with Sartre, in regards to our secular age, that like many I have a God-shaped hole in my consciousness, but that I have filled it with Shakespeare and that seems a good fit. In truth both respond to the same need for explanation, and for consolation to be provided.

Whether it is a parable from the gospels or a scene in a Shakespeare play, both strive to articulate the challenges of existence, and question the choices we make. Both help us work out why we are here, what the point is, and identify behaviour we recognise and which we have in common with our species.

And as both theatres and churches are shut at the moment, we are probably all sharing the same sense of loss, the need for company, for congregation, for sharing experience.

It so happens that one of the plays we should have been performing this spring, and which will now open later in the year, is Shakespeare’s late play “The Winter’s Tale” directed by my deputy artistic director, Erica Whyman. It has to come close to being my favourite play, but it must be (to me at any rate) his most profoundly spiritual play. I might go so far as to say his most Christian play, with its message of hope, its requirement of a reawakening of faith, and its suggestion that second chances are possible, and re-creation available if repentance is sincere, that forgiveness and reconciliation are ambitions common to all humans.

So, as must be fairly obvious by now, I accepted Patrick’s invitation on these terms: That I can share my thoughts about why this play, among the last that Shakespeare wrote, moves me so deeply, and inspires me with hope, and requires that I awake my faith.

Forgive me if I make too many assumptions here, imagining that you know the play. I am sure many of you do, but for those that may not, a brief summary.

Leontes, king of Sicilia, falls into a sudden fit of jealousy imagining that the child his pregnant wife Hermione is carrying is not his own, but that of his friend Polixenes. He throws his wife in prison, where she gives birth to a daughter.

*cont.....*

*Shakespeare Sermon cont.....*

The redoubtable Paulina fetches the child to present to Leontes, certain that the sight of it will make him see sense. Instead the jealous king has one of his courtiers take the child away, to be abandoned on a remote shore, and prey to wild animals.

Meanwhile to prove his actions justified, Leontes has sent to the oracle at Delphi. When the judgment arrives it declares Leontes a tyrant, his wife chaste and Polixenes honest. Leontes refuses to accept the oracle at which point we suddenly hear that his young son Mamilius has died of grief. His mother collapses and is removed from court.

Amidst this consternation, Paulina appears to inform the king that his wife has also died. Rocked by the sudden loss of his entire family Leontes crumples and promises to follow Paulina's jurisdiction. He will visit the bodies of his dead queen and son, and tears shed there he says, "shall be my re-creation". His choice of word encompassing both daily recreation, but perhaps eventual re-creation.

And that's the first half.

On the page the play can seem far-fetched. In performance the domestic violence the audience witness seems to root the fairy tale story in a reality that is all too painfully recognisable, and horribly familiar.

But the scene now shifts. To Bohemia. It is sixteen years later and the child left on the sea shore has been rescued by an old Shepherd and has grown up to be a beautiful young woman named Perdita. The lost one. She has fallen in love with a young man, called Florizel. They want to marry.

And guess what, Florizel is a prince, and the son of none other than Polixenes, the man whom Leontes accused of adultery. There is a sheep shearing feast. King Polixenes turns up, in disguise, and forbids his son to marry the shepherd's daughter. So the young couple run away.

And guess what they turn up back in Sicilia.

Paulina has ensured that King Leontes has continued to observe his daily act of penance, and has rejected all demands that he remarry. The young couple arrive before the king, and he welcomes them with one of those lines that have the power to delight with their simplicity whenever you hear them. He says:

Welcome hither as is the spring to the earth.

The next generation hold the promise of rebirth, the green shoots that relieve the sight after the long days of winter.

But all is still not well. Polixenes has followed his son and his would-be bride. Shakespeare leaves the moment when the two kings meet, the true identity of Perdita is revealed, and the fathers and their children are reconciled, off stage, recounted by a group of astonished and unnamed gentlemen.

Because Shakespeare now transcends drama and moves into an act of worship, of congregation and reconciliation that works on our collective imagination, by challenging our credulity, our capacity to suspend cynicism, and believe the impossible.

Paulina has suddenly announced that she has a statue of Hermione. As if to give greater credibility to this information, the sculptor's name is mentioned, and he is a real artist, the Italian painter Julio Romano.

We meet the characters again as they arrive in Paulina's gallery to see the statue. As if to intensify the mood, and prepare us for the semi religious experience about to occur, Paulina invokes the power of ritual, and she will adopt the role of priest.

She has kept the statue "Lonely, apart". She draws a curtain to reveal it: a gesture which is at once both theatrical and ceremonial. The sight of the statue produces an awed silence among the concelebrants. Which she whispers "the more shows off your wonder".

Leontes admits the experience is "piercing" to his "soul", and acknowledges the strange mystery of the moment saying "There's magic in thy majesty, which has / My evils conjured to remembrance".

*Shakespeare Sermon cont.....*

Perdita asks to be forgiven if she is guilty of superstition, but begs to kneel before the statue of her mother and kiss her hand. Of course the scene is playing dangerously with what is acceptable here. The Protestant church had banned statues and the worship of icons since the Reformation, and perhaps this scene is playing on a nostalgia for banished rituals, or a longing for lost comfort whether Catholic or not.

When Paulina protests that the colour's not dry, many in the audience of the Globe would have been reminded that the new effigy of Mary Queen of Scots had only recently been finished, and removed to the new chapel that King James had built for his mother in the aisle of Westminster Abbey so she could lie together with her cousin Queen Elizabeth who had ordered her execution in 1587. King James had affected a reconciliation in death, and his mother's newly painted statue was the subject of considerable interest. Is Shakespeare cashing in on that response in this scene? Perhaps so.

When the king stricken with grief all over again, refuses to allow the curtain to be re-drawn, Paulina, insisting that she is not assisted by "wicked powers" reinforces the sense of a sacred rite being performed by what seems almost a slip of the tongue. She refers to her art gallery now as a chapel.

"Quit presently the chapel, or resolve you for more amazement".

And then she utters a line that always has an ineffable, unfathomable effect on me. It touches me more deeply than I ever expect.

She says:

It is required / You do awake your faith.

"It is required", it comes not as a commandment, or a regulation. But as a simple necessity.

It is required that you do awake your faith.

For someone whose faith as I described was once fervent, but is now dormant, it suggests that denial of the capacity to have faith is merely a state of sleep, from which one must awake. That refutation of faith is to continue sleepwalking through life.

It is required you do awake your faith.

Paulina then calls for music, music which both enhances the mood of wonder and anticipation but also establishes the viewers receptivity for the incredible.

Then, incredibly she calls upon the lady to descend. It shouldn't work, but in the theatre it always does. "Her actions shall be holy as you hear my spell is lawful". It's breathtaking. A wonder sealed by Leontes' awe, so simply expressed as he touches the statue and whispers "O, she's warm!

Hermione never speaks to Leontes, a fact that is open to interpretation in production. She does turn to her daughter and calls down divine blessing upon her:

"You gods look down  
And from your sacred vials pour your graces  
Upon my daughter's head".

Grace is a word, that is threaded like golden embroidery throughout the play. It is an aspiration, a virtue, a quality, and a demonstration of the unmerited favour and the unending bounty of god.

In telling this incredible unlikely fairy story, this "Winters Tale", Shakespeare may adopt the language of faith, or sacred ritual, of religious ceremony, to deepen the effect he strives to achieve, but I don't believe it is cynical. I believe it is powered by a desire to articulate our deep human need for second chances. For faith. For faith that what might seem impossible may be possible.

*cont.....*

*Shakespeare Sermon cont.....*

As we live through our lives of social isolation, and lockdown today, dealing perhaps with home schooling, with anxiety about our finances, or even grief at loved ones gone, we all need faith that this crisis will end, and we can return to our churches and our theatres, and commune once more, congregate once more. Hug once more, and celebrate whether in a play like “The Winters Tale”, or in the contemplation of the gospels, that we have the capacity to endure, to survive, and to love.

When we reopen the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, I can't imagine a better play than “The Winter's Tale” to watch, and as Hermione's statue comes to life, so will we all.

*Greg Doran*



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### **This Village Heart**

The day they stopped the clock  
Things were apprehensive;  
Some noticed it in seconds,  
Others were feeling rather pensive.  
Time momentarily stood still,  
Belying the busyness of the hour;  
When could it be restarted  
And who would have the power?  
In the summer sunshine  
The silence filled the haze,  
The more time seemed to stand still  
The longer the drawn out days.  
The people missed the pulse;  
The constant ticking that reassures,  
Waited for the chime to tell the hour  
And transience to return once more.  
Through this period, though paused,  
Few gained minutes but many lost much;  
To these, helpful hands were held out  
In the hope that they would be touched.  
The sentinel that has stood silent  
Was so wound up, it had to start.  
And once more, like in the years before,  
It beats again, this village heart.

Sarah Crang

St Helen's Church, Clifford Chambers.

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## IN THE CARIBBEAN—2

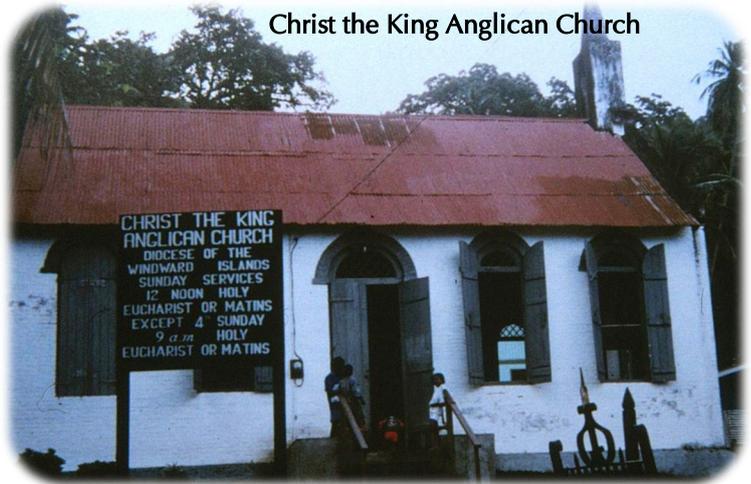


The Pitons

Continuing the story of sailing the Caribbean in a small schooner named 'The Amazing Grace'. On our first Sunday at dawn we approached the harbour of Soufriere on the island of St Lucia. The harbour is guarded by the spectacular twin peaks known as the Pitons. Rising 2,000ft sheer from the sea they are the jagged remains of an extinct volcano. On a calm day ships can sail around in the crater but having stopped to rescue a drunken yachtsmen in rough water in the night we were running late!

After breakfast we went ashore to find a church. We collared a tall young man in shorts, with sinewy legs, to guide us up the steep hill to the Church of Christ the King, the oldest Anglican church on the island, with a leaky corrugated iron roof. It stood at the head of a street of shacks where the people relied on one standpipe for their water. For a time the church fell into disrepair and became an illicit drug centre. To celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary it had been reclaimed and was being restored.

When we arrived children were sitting by the entrance but as the service would not begin for an hour we retraced our steps to the bottom of the hill where the Roman Mass was in full swing in a crowded church, full of colour, music and movement. We arrived just in time to be enveloped in one gigantic hug of Peace! The service at Christ the King drew only a dozen adults and, standing in for the priest until he arrived from across the island, the first part was led by the Reader, David Terry. Later, for a while, we kept up a correspondence with



Christ the King Anglican Church

him. He pressed me into reading the Gospel. When Fr Gregory arrived he found there was no communion wine, so a portly lady clutching a large feathered hat scurried down the street to fetch some. It was Epiphany and as our unaccompanied voices rose to sing, 'Brightest and best of the sons of the morning', a cock, which was sitting on the ledge of an open window, joined enthusiastically in the last line of each verse. In his sermon Gregory spoke of the visit of the Magi and how their vision turned a stable into a royal palace. Such a vision, he said, could do the same for that dilapidated little church.



Lady with large feathered hat

Back home we did some fundraising by selling greetings cards at slide-shows and contacted the Bishop of the Windward islands for David Terry's home address. The bishop's letter bore the sad news that the

young Gregory had died. David Terry's reply added that since our visit a hurricane had sent a huge tidal wave crashing onto the waterfront, destroying the Hilton Hotel and thirty houses. Happily no-one was hurt and the little dilapidated church up the hill survived. Gregory's vision was fulfilled with abundant generosity. It has now been replaced by a fine modern building.

David Terry wrote to us about the church's mission to the local people in the squatter huts. 'A Rasta was sitting on the bridge in front of the church and asked me if he could come into the service if he put on better clothes and changed his hairstyle. I told him those things didn't matter and that a Rasta girl was now taking a leading part in our worship. Maybe he was just curious or testing me, but you never know. From little acorns mighty oak trees grow.' It seems that they have.

## Coffee, Cake and Shakespeare

The traditional Shakespeare celebrations were definitely Not To Be this year: no milling crowds watching the annual procession through the town to pay homage, with flowers, to Shakespeare at his grave. However, with thanks to the organisation, flair and ingenuity of members of our church family, many of us were able to celebrate Shakespeare in different ways.

We accepted this year's invitation of the Trinity Players to enjoy, at home, the video of their virtual party of twenty-four readings, providing our own pot of coffee and fruit cake, and were entertained with a wonderful array of Shakespeare's works through our ipad. Readings, some well-known, a sonnet, some songs, poems, pictures and music kept us transfixed to the screen where many of the words were printed.



Tim Raistrick as Shakespeare

A musical introduction and Colin McDowall urging us to listen in Henry V's Prologue, led to Henry V's stirring *Once more into the breach, dear friends*, by Saul McDougall. Other famous speeches: Portia's courtroom speech in the Merchant of Venice, by Tricia Hall-Matthews, Tim Raistrick's Hamlet soliloquy, *To be or not to be*, and Mark Antony's oration at Julius Caesar's funeral - *Friends, Romans, Countrymen* - performed by John Hall-Matthews, were all potent and powerful.



Saul McDougall

No less engaging, were Helen Warrillow, playing another Portia, pleading with her husband, Brutus, to share his dark secret, in Julius Caesar; Orion Johnson as Emilia, expressing her questioning concerns for her mistress, Desdemona, doomed wife of Othello; Margot McCleary as Henry VI reflecting pensively on the simple

pleasures of a shepherd's life whilst Elena Pallone called on 'direst cruelty' to aid her as Lady Macbeth and Ursula Russell played the mocking Queen Margaret, in Henry VI Part III, with malevolent glee.



Helen Warrillow

These searching, challenging speeches, were interspersed with lighter, more tender readings, some praising love and nature, with two separate poems from Love's Labour's Lost: Graham Wilcox reading Spring's *When daisies pied*, and Margaret Wilcox reading *When icicles hang by the wall*. Orion Johnson sang *Where the bee sucks there suck I* from The Tempest, John Ryder recognised the power of love in Sonnet 29 and Chrissy Hofstetter spoke the romantic poem *Live with me and be my love*, by Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare's contemporary.



David Southeard

David Southeard and Mark Spriggs added the comedy, as did Ursula and Margot, with some wonderfully clever, relevant and acceptably light-hearted ditties comparing Shakespeare's times and stories with today's lockdown and financial position.



Orion Johnson

Photographs of Trinity Players from other productions.

cont.....

*Coffee, Cake and Shakespeare cont....*

David Souheard, conspiratorially, took us into his confidence with the Mechanical Snout's character, Wall with-a-chink speech, from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; a much-loved part, last seen in church played by Steve Newman with dead-faced aplomb in the 2018 Trinity Players' Dream production. Mark Spriggs entertained us with a rollicking Falstaff speech on the properties and benefits of his favourite drink, Sherris sack. He also, in more sombre mood, told us to *Fear no more the heat of the sun* from *Cymbeline*, and his singing of *Twelfth Night's When that I was a little tiny boy* with last lines

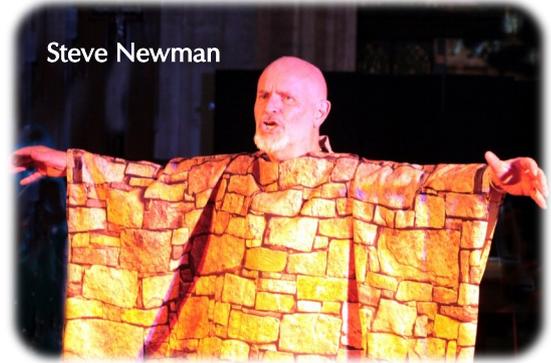
*A great while ago the world begun With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
But that's all one, our play is done And we'll strive to please you every day*

led to David Souheard, in final tribute, singing Happy Birthday, dear William.

It was indeed a pleasure, Trinity Players, and what a delight to hear so many well-said words. Are we not blessed indeed with these actors amongst us who breathe life and meaning into Shakespeare's words to give us understanding and belief?

Thank you all, including James Willetts, for your video production of *Coffee, Cake and Shakespeare*.

*Carole Askew*



Steve Newman



Mark Spriggs



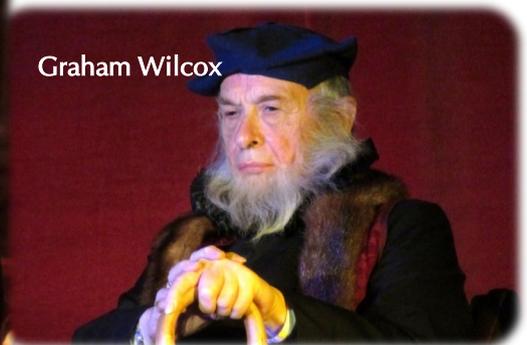
Ursula Russell



Elena Pallone



Colin McDowall



Graham Wilcox



## Novel Theology, *our church reading group*

About a quarter of a century ago, our then assistant vicar, Michael Goater, started a church reading group at his home in Maidenhead Road and named it Novel Theology. Nearly 300 monthly books later, despite this recent coronavirus lockdown, we are still going strong. Indeed it could be argued that Covid-19 has added greater strength by encouraging its members to email our thoughts and comments on the chosen book during our reading of it instead of waiting until we all meet together.



Michael's first chosen novel, *Chocolat* by Joanne Harris, had attracted much publicity and, being only recently available in paper-back, was ideal for what I think he had in mind for the group, which was that each month we all agree to read a well known or topical novel then meet to discuss its qualities or shortfalls and tease out any theological points it might contain. *Chocolat* was a perfect choice because it contrasted the powers of good and evil represented by the narrow teaching of the local

Roman Catholic priest in a small French town and the motivations of an openly agnostic young woman who tempted the priest's congregation by opening an attractive new chocolaterie near the church during Lent.

Very few novels are as clearly moralistic as *Chocolat*, and we've never constrained ourselves to topical or popular fiction which means our monthly choice of a suitable novel is wide open but should ideally meet certain criteria. Consequently, choosing an ideal book each month has often proved quite difficult. It's often down to one of the group recommending a book he or she has enjoyed; but it's very unusual for us to be unanimous in our appreciation of it.

So what makes a good choice? Is it the plot? the setting? characters? style? length? and what about that (often elusive) theological element? It's not easy to generalise but inevitably, after reading nearly 300 books for Novel Theology, I find some features stand out for me.

Characters and plot can usually be taken for granted although any reader might well dislike either or both. Length can be quite a problem; when the final volume of Hilary Mantel's Tudor trilogy appears in paperback it might well seem a good choice, but 900 pages can be quite off-putting.

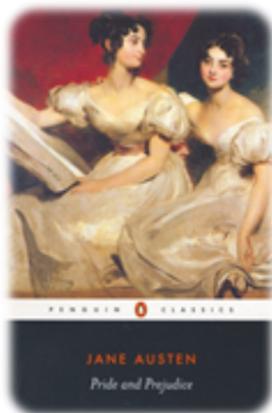
Our June choice will be Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley*. All of us will have happy memories of reading *Jane Eyre* but that's no guarantee that *Shirley* will be in the same league; but that's another great feature of any reading group: it's likely to introduce you to books you might otherwise never consider opening.



Our May choice (*The Sealwoman's Gift* by Sally Magnusson) was just such a novel. What at first appeared to be a bog-standard historical/romantic piece that I wouldn't normally pick up in Waterstones turned out to be a thought provoking insight into how a devotee of the narrow 17th century Lutheran Christianity could be affected by the viewpoints of a mature Muslim who taught that nearly all religions attempt to grasp mysteries such as the meaning of life before and after death and that these concepts are so great they can never be fully understood.

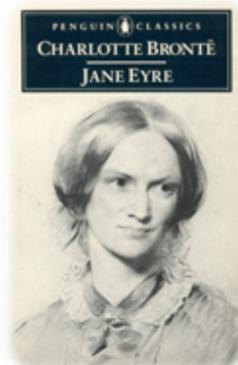
It's very interesting to note that, despite much advertising, our church reading group has always had fewer than ten members and three of these have been members since the very beginning. Perhaps that word 'theology' has seemed a bit heavy to some people, and perhaps the commitment of reading a new book each month puts people off. Or it could be that reading is seen as a private, personal experience not a group activity. Whatever the reasons, new recruits are very welcome but apparently not forthcoming.

*cont.....*

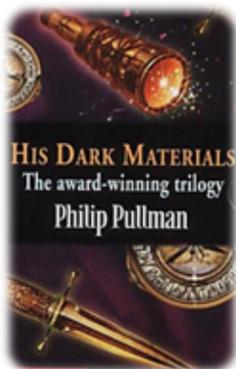


It's difficult to think of a favourite book although Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* seems to epitomise all those ideal qualities of style, characters, plot and length. When we discussed it I remember wondering what fresh point could possibly be made but Bill Hicks (of happy memory) pointed out that Elizabeth's mother, despite her apparent silliness, was actually the only one striving for her family's future security.

Another feature of *Pride and Prejudice* is Jane Austen's portrayal of the church in the shape of the odious clergyman, Mr. Collins. It's strange that one of the features of many of the novels we've discussed over the years is that although the church has always been a hugely important part of our culture, this doesn't seem to be reflected in the pages of many novels, and by and large the clergy seem to get a raw deal. *Jane Eyre* is another example of that.



Many writers struggle with their faith and this inevitably finds expression in their work. Dostoyevsky, Philip Pullman and C S Lewis come to mind; all brilliant and influential authors (Lewis, converting from atheism to become probably the 20th century's best known Christian writer). Then, on the other hand we have the likes of Graham Greene, P D James and Evelyn Waugh whose books continually reflect their Christian back-ground.



It's tempting to imagine that my faith might have been affected by reading either these atheistic or spiritual points of view, but I don't think this is the case. What is much more likely is that enjoying one book leads me to try another by the same author whether atheistic or not.

I'm not sure that I have favourite books, but I certainly have favourite authors, so if this coronavirus lockdown continues for the rest of 2020 I shall happily kindle anything by Alan Bennett, Evelyn Waugh, Richard Holloway, Philip Pullman, P D James, Henning Mankell, Clive James, Catherine Fox, Sally Magnusson et al, and I'm very grateful that I met many of these via my lengthy membership of Novel Theology.

Colin McDowall.



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## Thoughts from one small cog in the big wheel of the Church contacts group.

When we were all “locked down” and not able to come together in church every week, the contacts groups were extended to try and support as many people as possible; it has proved to be one of the very good things to come out of this time.

I am privileged to be involved and it is an extension of our role as Lay Chaplains, just “to be there.”

I have been so impressed and humbled to see that people really are amazingly resilient, and very quick to find ways to support each other.



We are fortunate to have Revd Jenny Rowland as a pastoral lead, and she has kept up our Contemplative Prayer Group, so that although we are separated physically, spiritually we can be together, around our candles at 7.30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month. This month’s meditation was Psalm 121 “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills” which is perfect for this time.

It is wonderful to know there is always someone there, at the end of a ‘phone or computer, to exchange a few words, a joke, or “an attachment”.

Then when we can all be together again, we will maybe know each other that little bit better, and appreciate our church, the building and the community, even more.

So a huge “thank you” to everyone for helping to make this difficult time a little bit better.

“All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well”. {Julian of Norwich}

Anne Blair

## Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
Where does my help come from?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
The Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber;  
indeed, he who watches over Israel  
Will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord watches over you—  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
the sun will not harm you by day,  
Nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life;  
the Lord will watch over your coming and going  
both now and for evermore.

# HOWLERS!

'Not every day is good. But there is something good in every

## JUST JOKING

A group of British passengers are flying home on a plane chartered by the government. The pilot's voice comes over the intercom: "We're flying at 35,000 feet. Visibility is good. The weather in London is fine and clear, at 15 degrees Centigrade. Oh, and by the way, today I'm working from home."

Barry Cryer, *The Oldie*

Thieves have made off with all the motorway signs in Yorkshire. The police are currently looking for Leeds.

A child in church for the first time watched the ushers pass the offering plate. When the usher neared her pew she said loudly, "Don't pay for me daddy. I'm under five."

THE passenger ferry service between Portsmouth and Hayling Island has been suspended over concerns about coronavirus. The skipper said it was important to remain calm as we are all in the same boat. *Portsmouth News*

*Small ad in the Halesowen Chronicle:*  
**For sale. Deep fat fryer. Excellent condition. No chips.**

Helpful sign spotted in the Marks & Spencer branch in Grafton Street, Dublin: "The rooftop terrace café is located on the top floor".

*Notice from the Devon Village, Facebook Group in Scotland:* **Has anyone found a hearing aid on the green. If you should come across one, please**



Compiled  
By  
Pat Pilton

*Mike composes all his sermons on his iPhone — he uses something called Predictable Text."*



During our priest's sermon, a large plant fell over right behind the pulpit, crashing to the ground. Acknowledging his reputation for long-windedness, he smiled sheepishly and said, "Well, that's the first time I actually put a plant to sleep."

Reader's Digest

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Ruthie Copeman thought that maybe this quote would be helpful at this challenging time.

In "Richard III" the question is asked,  
"But shall I live in hope?"  
To which comes the reply,  
"All men I hope live so."

WORDS

# PARISH CONTACTS

*The Parish Office, Old Town*

*Stratford upon Avon, CV37 6BG*

*Tel. 01789 266 316*

*Email: office@stratford-upon-avon.org*

## 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 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
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Director of Music:	Douglas Keilitz		
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Gift Shop:	Heather White	01789 264 598	heather.white@stratford-upon-avon.org
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## 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
Bereavement Support Team	Gina Lodge	01789 204 850
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 Communions	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
Welcome Team	Helen Warrillow	01789 298 928
Sunday Coffee organisers	Tina Hillyard	01789 551 739
	Diane Edwards	01789 296 396



I was walking along in front of the Arden Quarter Apartments, on the way to the Railway Station, where I saw a series of plaques in the path, depicting interesting items and places that tourists might like to visit. Of particular interest to me was this one that showed Holy Trinity Church as the burial place of William Shakespeare, also the Riverside Heritage Trail and the Chain Ferry, opened in 1937. There are several other plaques, which are well worth having a look at by strolling along the path.

*Roy Dyer*