

**SFS**

# **De Trinitate**

**Slimbridge, St. John**

**Purton, St. John**

**Sharpness, St. Andrew**

**MAY 2020**



**50p**

Trinitate 2

## MINISTRY TEAM

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The Vicarage Sanigar Lane, Newtown (01453) 811 360 *Day off - Monday*

**COMMUNITY CHAPLAIN: Revd. Mary Tucker**  
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**WORSHIP LEADERS:**  
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**For Baptisms, Confirmations, Home Communions,  
Wedding Arrangements etc...**

**Please contact the Vicar.**

**Benefice Website: [www.heuristika.co.uk/lfgdiscussion/](http://www.heuristika.co.uk/lfgdiscussion/)**

## CHURCHWARDENS

**Mrs Margaret Price** (*Purton*) The Mill House, Purton (01453) 811 250  
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*Vacancy - Slimbridge Warden*

## Parochial Church Council Officers

### *Sharpness with Purton*

**Mrs Carol Bailey** (*Secretary*) 8 Jubilee Way (01453) 810 850  
**Mr Peter Crews** (*Treasurer*) 67 Oldminster Road (01453) 811 370

### *Slimbridge*

**Mrs Jill Joyce** (*Secretary*) *Fieldview, St. John's Road* 07871732691  
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**Mr Pieter Koole** (*Treasurer*) April Cottage, Shepherds Patch  
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This is the second online issue of 'De Trinitate' due to the restrictions that are now in place. As with April's edition I am sending out a digital copy of the magazine to those on our mailing list who have the means of receiving it. Hopefully, some will find it helpful in these difficult times.

We have also made an attempt to keep a connection to our worshipping community through a Benefice website which has been set up by our Reader, Stilman Davis. You can find the address in the highlighted box on page two. Please do log on to it. You will find links to various local sites offering help and support, as well as links to worship in the Benefice and from the Diocese.

### **A prayer in lockdown**

*The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked.*

(John 20.19)

Ever present God,  
be with us in our isolation,  
be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness,  
be joy in our sadness,  
be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen  
and we are once again free  
to inhabit our communities  
we will speak of your goodness  
to an emerging world.

For Jesus' sake.

**Amen.**

The language of “up” can be troublesome for twenty-first century Christians. We fly in aeroplanes; we have seen images of people walking on the moon. We know about the movement and composition of clouds. We have powerful telescopes that search the sky and send back images of planets millions of miles away. This means that we can become a little embarrassed on the feast of the Ascension, - which falls on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of this month - or uncomfortable about the literal interpretations, the physical representations of Jesus going up - as if in a glass lift or attached to a slow-moving rocket - into the sky.

Previous generations of faithful people might have struggled a little with the ascension, but perhaps the sky was far enough away from their understanding that they could imagine it more readily. Certainly, in works of art, painters and sculptors have given us images of Christ travelling upwards, surrounded by bil-

lowing clouds, as disciples gaze in wonder.

However much we might struggle with “up”, the Gospel and the first verses of

the Acts of the Apostles are unequivocal about it.

Luke tells us that, once Jesus had blessed his disciples, he was “carried up into heaven”,

and in Acts, “he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight”. As he

leaves, two men in white robes speak to the disciples, asking, “why do you stand looking up towards heaven?”

Jesus, rather obviously, has to go somewhere. He needs to leave the disciples eventually. As he tells them, the Holy Spirit is coming to lead and guide them, and they have work to do carrying the good news away to the ends of the earth. The disciples will not be staying together in one place once the Spirit arrives and so Jesus, likewise, cannot

## Personally Speaking

“While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.” (Luke 24:51)

remain in one place. He must be, in some sense, everywhere, as the good news will travel everywhere. In the language of the Bible, the heavens, or the sky, was the place of God, and so that is where he goes. The cloud enveloping Jesus should remind us of the presence of God because in the Bible where clouds are mentioned there dwells God. It makes biblical sense for Jesus, returning to God, to be lifted up into a cloud. He needs to travel upwards.

Perhaps we might embrace the notion of “up” more fully. If we take ourselves outside, stand up and look up at the sky, then immediately we are reminded that something exists that is so much bigger than ourselves. If we stand outside and look at clouds, or at stars, then we meet with the vastness of the universe and the vastness of God. When Jesus ascends he invites us to wonder at God; by travelling upwards he directs us to contemplate the God who is so much bigger than everything else.

Looking up also helps us to put into perspective our current anxieties and troubles. The issues in front of us are important and real, but with the eyes of faith, with the eyes of those who, occasionally, look up, they might not be as all-consuming. When Jesus ascends he invites us to look at life with a greater sense of perspective.

When we stand and look up, we tend to stand a little straighter. We lift our heads and raise our shoulders, as well as our eyes. We find it hard to look up with our heads bowed. We stand as people worthy and dignified. When Jesus ascends he reminds us, as we gaze upwards after him, that we are people worthy of God’s love and protection.

We might find the imagery of clouds a little fanciful for our modern tastes, but it pays us, as Christians who carry the Gospel message, to look up from time to time and gain a fresh perspective on our lives.



## Historical Snippets

*Taken from the Parish archives  
held at St Johns Church Slimbridge;*

*Years ago, each of the local parish churches submitted their news to a publication called 'The Parish Magazine'. Contributors came from quite a large area including: Lower Cam; Coaley; Eastington; Frocester; North Nibley; Stinchcome; and \*Slymbridge. (Old English spelling) It was printed by: O. E. Hill, Cam, Gloucestershire, for the cost of 2d (tuppence) per copy.*

*This month's historical snippet is taken from **May 1938***

*-0-*

*Holy Baptism "Suffer the little children to come unto Me"*

April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1938 Brian Sidney Webb

*Burial "Blessed be the dead which die in the Lord"*

March 21<sup>st</sup> George Baker;

*Holy Matrimony: "Heirs together of the Grace of Life"*

April 16<sup>th</sup> Frederick Leslie Ward and Mary Louvaine Fryer

*Dates to remember:*

Is May 8<sup>th</sup> when the Bishop of Tewksbury will preach at evensong. Come and bring a friend and so give the Bishop a hearty welcome to our Parish.

May 28<sup>th</sup> is the date fixed for our Annual Church Fete in the Rectory Garden, to be opened by Lady Tubbs. There will be the usual stalls, competitions and other attractions and a dance in the Hall. Look out for a more detailed announcement on bills later.

*The Mothers Union Festival:*

Is to be held on Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup> at Cirencester. Tea will be provided at The Abbey. Will the members who wish to go to Cirencester please give their names to Mrs Thomas as soon as possible.

*Good Friday:*

The three hours devotions on Good Friday were conducted by the Rev. J D Berkeley, Vicar of Wotton Under Edge. Those who made the effort to attend this service were well rewarded and found the devotions and addresses most helpful.

On Good Friday evening members of our own choir were helped by members of the Highworth choir in the singing of the Sacred Cantata: "Olivet of Calvary." For several weeks past, the choir has been working hard un-

## Trinitate 7

der the leadership of the Rector, in order to make the rendering of this musical work possible. It was well done. Everyone including soloists and chorus entering with reverent spirit into the scenes of the Passion. The congregation too, were able to take a share by joining in the singing of the Hymns – the setting of “Just as I am”, seeming to be quite a favourite.

### *Easter:*

As is fitting for the joyous festival of Easter, our church was bright with flowers and our best thanks are due to those who gave their time to help in arranging them with such simplicity and good taste.

The Rector wishes to acknowledge with thanks the usual gift from the Parishioners of the Easter offering which, this year amounted to £4 4s 6d.

### *Acknowledgement:*

The gift by an anonymous donor of a Fair Linen Altar cloth for use on the Altar of the Side Chapel. As much of our Altar Linden, (Purificators, etc.) now needs renewal, this gift at the present juncture is particularly acceptable, and we should be very glad of the offer of any further gifts towards necessary replacements.

### *Ascension Day:*

Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. There will be services of Holy Communion as follows:

5, 7, 9 and 11am.

Children’s service at 4pm.

We hope that a good number of our men who have been confirmed will make the effort to communicate on this important Festival of the Church, before going to their work, and for this reason, I am again having the 5am celebration.

Rev Thomas.

Rector

*NB: Access to our Parish Archive records: Our records are not complete, this may be because the records were not strictly kept month after month, (bearing in mind there was a war on at that time) or sadly, some have disappeared for one reason or another. Therefore, anyone who may wish to view these archive records will be by supervised access by arrangement. Please contact the Vicar, me or indeed, any of the PCC members when access can be arranged but sadly, not to take away.*

David Carrington [Vicar’s Church Warden]

*May our kindness be witnessed by all*

*When the things of the world seem so dark and so grim*

*When disease and despondency call,*

*Rejoice in the Lord and the nearness of Him -*

*May our kindness be witnessed by all!*

*When the pillars of life seem to crumble and creak*

*When our walls seem to tumble and fall.*

*In prayer and petitions our Father we seek -*

*May our kindness be witnessed by all!*

*The tempest may rage, but His wondrous peace*

*Stills the storms that may rage in our soul*

*In our hearts and our minds shall the turmoils cease*

*And our kindness is witnessed by all!*

*By Nigel Beeton*



*in our villages, towns & cities*

## From the Registers - March 2020

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Gift Aid</u>	<u>Envelopes</u>	<u>Cash</u>
<b><u>Sharpness:</u></b>	----	£??	£??	£??
PCC Fees:				£ 89.50

	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)
<b>For the Month:</b>	*£??	£1,272.06	£??

*\*Church Closed - full figures not available*

<b><u>Purton:</u></b>	----	£??	£??	£??
PCC Fees				£ 89.50

	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)
<b>For the Month:</b>	£??	£1,008.39	£??

*\*Church Closed - full figures not available*

<b><u>Slimbridge:</u></b>	----	£455	£??	£??
PCC Fees:				£179.00
Fund Raising: (General)				£347.83

	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)
<b>For the Month:</b>	£981.83	£1,735.17	-£753.34

*\*Church Closed - full figures not available*

*Please note that cash and cheques donated to our churches cannot be processed in the current climate.*

# FUNERALS:

We commended to the Lord's keeping:

JOHN BARNETT (Berkeley Cemetery)

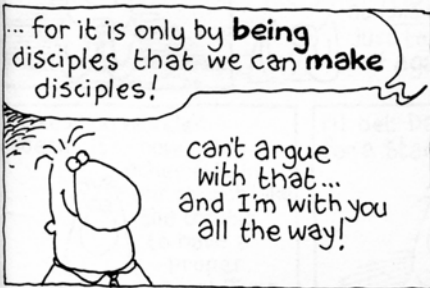
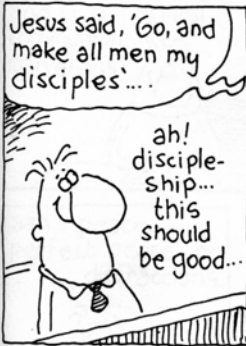
24<sup>th</sup> April

BRIAN TROTMAN (Westerleigh Crematorium)

27<sup>th</sup> April

\*Shortened funerals - Quarantine restrictions in place

# DISCIPLES...



## WORDS FOR TODAY

*Written by Bob & Debby Gass*

*'Do everything without complaining.' – Philippians 2:14*

### **Choose joy!**

Chronic complainers are almost impossible to help. You can never satisfy them but they won't let you stop trying, so you end up feeling trapped. Once you get a reputation as a chronic complainer, people avoid you like the plague, and you end up feeling lonely and unappreciated. And chances are you'll never really understand why! Attitudes don't just happen – you choose them. Paul writes, 'Rejoice in the Lord always' (Philippians 4:4).

Joylessness is something many church folks are prone to indulge in, and it's usually not the kind of problem that gets you thrown out of the choir or removed from the church committee. The psalmist writes, 'This *is* the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it' (Psalm 118:24). Notice that he doesn't say, 'Yesterday was God's day, how happy I was then,' or, 'Tomorrow will be God's day, I'll endure until then.' No, *this* day is a gift from God!

Complaining is often self-centred; it's about what *you* like and don't like. It is self-focused. Real joy is a choice. It comes to those who devote themselves to something greater than their own happiness. There are decisions you get to make every day, like what you eat, the clothes you wear – and the attitude you project. Paul was in prison with no hope of release when he wrote, 'Rejoice in the Lord always.' His *circumstances* didn't dictate his joy, his *focus* did! And the same goes for you. 'Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus' (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

So today choose joy!

## PENTECOST

*31<sup>st</sup> May - Not a Ghost but a Gift. . . says Canon David Winter*

We used to call it Whitsun – ‘White Sunday’ because long ago children marched to church in white on that day. No processions nowadays, and we’ve even changed its name. It’s now ‘Pentecost’, which is more accurate but needs explaining.

Pentecost marks a vital event in Christian history. It is celebrated 50 days after Easter. The year Jesus was crucified (which took place at the Passover), the remnant of His followers, just 120 of them, were together in an upper room in Jerusalem. They were afraid to show their faces in case the authorities arrested them. But on the day of Passover they had an amazing collective experience.

They described it in terms of wind and fire, a great surge of spiritual energy and confidence. Afraid no longer, they burst out on to the streets where crowds were gathering for the festival, led by Peter they began to tell them about Jesus and His resurrection. As they did so, although many of the people in the crowd were foreigners who spoke other languages, everyone heard them in their own tongue. Peter told them that what they were seeing was the fulfilment of an old prophecy when God would pour out His Spirit on the human race, men and women, young and old.

As a result of His words and the extraordinary spectacle, 3000 people believed and were baptised in the name of Jesus. They were the nucleus of what in 100 years would be a Church that would turn history upside down. For Christians Pentecost is in effect the birthday of the Church.

Many people find the whole idea of the Holy Spirit mysterious and elusive. It wasn’t helped by the earlier title ‘Holy Ghost’. The spirit is not spiritually a ‘ghost’ but a precious gift.

## From 'live' in the pulpit to virtual and streaming

Not being able to go to church is causing an awful lot of people to 'go' to church. It started in late March, when the Archbishop kicked off with the first ever national virtual service, recorded in the crypt chapel of Lambeth Palace. It was seen or heard by an estimated five million people. That figure included one million streaming on Facebook, and about two million tuned in to the 39 BBC local radio station broadcasts and BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship combined. The Facebook post had a further reach of two million and nearly 30 per cent of those watching online were under the age of 34.

That compares with average of 871,000 people attending services and acts of worship each week in 2018, the latest figures that are available.

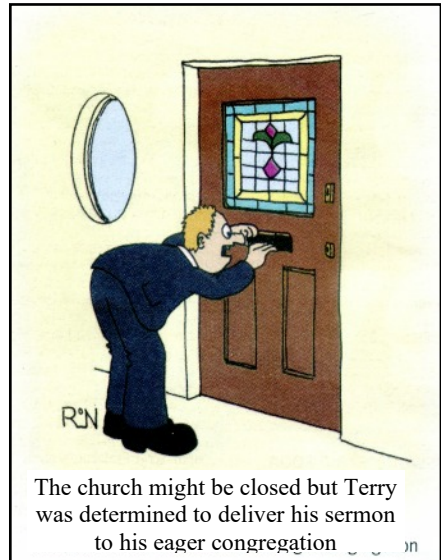
And the Archbishop was not alone – for on the same morning hundreds of churches and cathedrals that also had their first try at livestreaming services. Some attracted several thousand viewers on the stream and playback. As a spokesperson for the Church of England said: “The Archbishops said that church would have to be reimagined. Across the country, local congregations did just that.”

The second virtual national worship service (29<sup>th</sup> March) was led by the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu and recorded on an iPad in the drawing room of Bishopthorpe Palace. After opening with a traditional Ugandan call to prayer, which he delivered on drums, the Archbishop turned to Ezekiel, encouraging everyone to trust God in our current situation.

In a reference to the passage in Ezekiel – which recounts the prophet's vision of a valley of dry bones, the Archbishop told the virtual congregation: “At this present time of COVID-19 we are, as it were, set in death in exile.

“I believe the Sovereign Lord who knows it all by the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead to life eternal, the life creating power of God will bring us out of exile – out of the valley of death. Sovereign Lord we look to you to deliver us.”

See the services by searching at: [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org) As for the future, you can explore the full list of livestreaming taking place each week.



## Smile for a While!

A young monk arrives at the monastery. He is assigned to helping the other monks in copying the old canons and laws of the church by hand.

He notices, however, that all of the monks are copying from copies, not from the original manuscript. So, the new monk goes to the head abbot to question this, pointing out that if someone made even a small error in the first copy, it would never be picked up! In fact, that error would be continued in all of the subsequent copies.

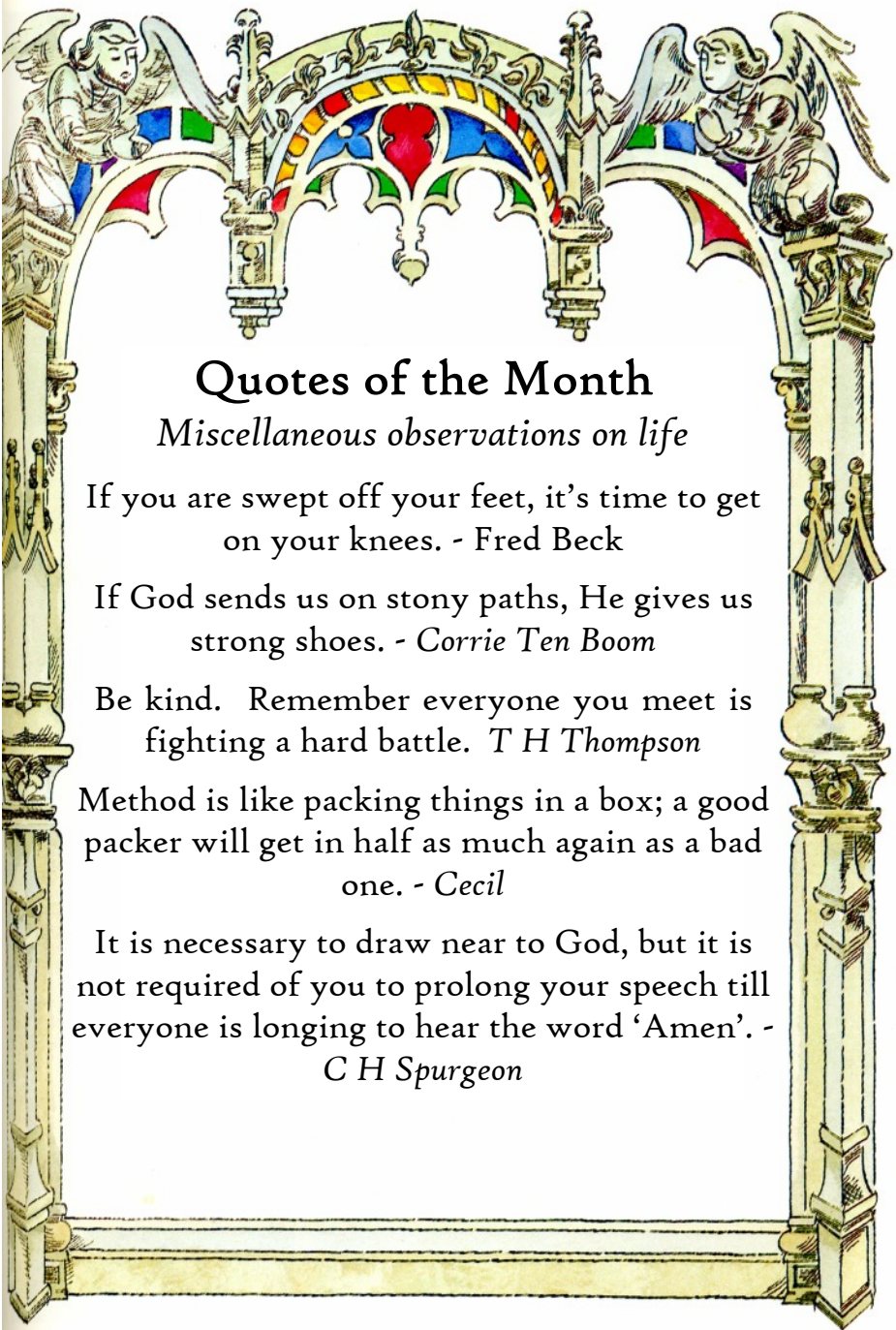
The head monk, says, "We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point, my son."

He goes down into the dark caves underneath the monastery where the original manuscripts are held as archives in a locked vault that hasn't been opened for hundreds of years. Hours go by and nobody sees the old abbot. So, the young monk gets worried and goes down to look for him. He sees him banging his head against the wall and wailing, "We missed the " R"! , we missed the " R"!"

His forehead is all bloody and bruised and he is crying uncontrollably. The young monk asks the old abbot, "What's wrong, father?"

With a choking voice, the old abbot replies, "The word was..."

**CELEBRATE!!!"**



## Quotes of the Month

### *Miscellaneous observations on life*

If you are swept off your feet, it's time to get on your knees. - Fred Beck

If God sends us on stony paths, He gives us strong shoes. - Corrie Ten Boom

Be kind. Remember everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle. *T H Thompson*

Method is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one. - Cecil

It is necessary to draw near to God, but it is not required of you to prolong your speech till everyone is longing to hear the word 'Amen'. - *C H Spurgeon*

## Remembering VE Day

*This month we celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day, and nothing should stop that, says David Winter*

I was 15 in May 1945, when Britain celebrated VE Day. It stood for Victory in Europe and followed an agreement by the Allied powers following the German surrender. Needless to say, although the war with Japan was not over, it was a noticeable moment. No more bombs, missiles and blitz – and the ‘boys’ would come home!

I have two very clear memories of the day itself. The first was the street party which took place in our road on a housing estate in North London. With official permission, the road was closed off, tables were set up, food and drink were served. We spent the afternoon in races and competitions. Dads, mums, teenagers and children then sang the wartime songs, and ‘Jerusalem’ and ‘God save the King’.

The other memory is an image of a sailor kissing a young woman - surrounded by happy laughing people. This iconic photograph was in one of the papers the next day, then on camera newsfeeds and is in just about every journalistic library. Somehow it captures the mood of the day – freedom, warmth, the good things of everyday life.

VE Day did indeed mark a turning point, though not everything was going to be easy in the post-war years. But the hideous shadow of war had gone and 75 years later it has yet to return to these shores, thank God.



## Out of the Silence . . .

*The monthly journal of the journey of a Priest,  
Contemplative and Community Chaplain. from lock down!!!.*

One problem with times like these (national or personal) is that they can come to dominate all thinking and action. Another is that when things go wrong, especially if it's a spectacular 'going wrong', it's easy to assume that God has somehow taken his eye off the ball, turned away, or even, hasn't noticed the trouble we're in. One of the things the Psalmists did (and it wasn't only King David who wrote these song-poems) was, as well as crying out to him, to look back at past times and see how God had acted in other times of trouble. This always turns out to be reassuring. If you don't believe me read Psalms 77 and 78. They start,

"I cry aloud to God . . . in the day of my trouble . . . I am so troubled I cannot speak.

then,

"I consider the days of old, I remember the long years past."

and end, after another 87 verses (!) with the words

". . . he shepherded them with a devoted heart, and with skilful hands he guided them."

God always acts, it's just that he doesn't always do exactly what we expect as you'll discover in the many problems, disasters, adventures and the final solution told in this epic.

With all that in mind I have turned my mind away from current affairs (!) and back just a year to see how God was making his presence felt then. (BC – before Corona!)

### Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Three months ago I greeted Paul at the airport with the news that we had water coming up through the kitchen floor! A month ago the total destruction of kitchen, bathroom and lobby began and for the last two weeks we've been living a strange camping life with the builders – much walking to fetch water, to do washing up, to do anything and everything in the garage but . . . today, the beginning of the third week of their work, something is beginning to rise from the ashes . . . It has been by turns exciting, hilarious, totally depressing, stressful and . . . wearisome! We still have weeks of work ahead but . . . you have strengthened and guided us through this worldly mire and are, as always, bringing us safe through. All this, of course, at the same time as

the normal round of ministry but you, Lord, my practical Saviour have everything in your hand and your presence continues palpable, especially in terms of the strains this situation puts on relationships. Looking back I see that so often things have seemed at their worst when I was relying on my own plans and organisation.

“Be not wise in your own sight,  
in all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight your paths.”

Proverbs 3

“. . . Lord, you hide your face  
when we trust ourselves,  
strip us of false security  
and re-clothe us in your praise. . .”

Prayer after Psalm 30

### Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019

The humanity and fallibility of Thomas Merton (early 20<sup>th</sup> Century monk and contemplative) in his journals, the way he can write deep and insightful things only to suddenly go off on a tangent and describe the weather or the landscape, his battles to do the right thing and his repeated failures as well as successes, fill me with a hopeful joy and give me great companionship on this road we are walking together. And as with Emmaus . . .

“. . . while they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.”

Luke 24:15

Some phrases from Volume II which have, amongst so many, given particular encouragement,

“Nevertheless, every day love corners me somewhere and surrounds me with peace without my having to look very far or very hard or do anything special.” p 196

“Good shepherd. You have a wild and crazy sheep in love with thorns and bramble. But please don’t get tired of looking for me! You won’t. For you have found me. All I have to do is stay found.”  
p 199

“My first trouble is [that] I insist on wanting to see. I want to have everything in the interior life tapped and under my own

control. Fundamentally it is a desire to be a contemplative without depending on God . . . O God, teach me to be satisfied with my own helplessness in the spiritual life. Teach me to be content with your grace that comes to me in darkness and works things I cannot see . . .” p 202

. . . but, Lord, protect me from using the joy of finding a fellow sufferer/traveller as an excuse – help me to continue to reach out into that darkness in your strength.

### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019

I wake, rested and restful, the latter not always true, especially at present where the early hours, these very early hours, have been invaded by preparations for workers, fetching filling and carrying water and cleaned crockery, opening gates and unlocking sheds and doors. It's not been unpleasant because we've been so fortunate with the weather, blessed in fact, but it's a busy start before any quietness. Today though is Sunday, a day of rest – one service, a fairly straightforward lunch, a bit of gentle ironing – things that, perhaps surprisingly, I find rest my mind and soul – gifts from you, Lord. My bookmark has a lovely prayer (unattributed).

“May the love of the Spirit enfold you;  
May the strength of the Spirit uphold you;  
May the peace of the Spirit refresh you;  
May the joy of the Spirit uplift you;  
May the light of the Spirit shine on you;  
May the holiness of the Spirit rekindle you;  
May the Spirit renew your innermost being. Amen”

Sundays should be a day of rekindling, repentance, redemption, rejoicing, refreshment. Whether one looks on Sunday as the first or last day of the week, all those re-peats are important. Six days is certainly long enough between days of relaxation and rest.

### Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

The pheasant squawks and postures as he and his current mate strut around their (our?! ) domain, beating the bounds with his thunderous wings. They are a joy and almost accepting now of our presence here (they're not so keen on the builders and their machinery!)

As the sunbeams reach round the end of the house and paint the tree trunks gold I find myself thinking of everything and anything but you, Lord; the coming day – it's plans and problems; those I've met in recent days – their needs, their problems; even the mummified rat the builders found somewhere yesterday and, kindly I guess, decided not to share with us; everything except what I should be rejoicing in and celebrating, and that is you. What gracious kindness it is that I know you accept even these, my distractions, self-centred and faithless as most of them are, as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Words from the prayer written to follow Psalm 147 in Common Worship Daily Prayer is also a gift to me and to those whose lives I share and am involved with.

“Compassionate God,  
as you know each star you have created,  
so you know the secrets of every heart;  
in your loving mercy bring to your table  
all who are fearful and broken,  
all who are wounded and needy,  
that our hungers may be satisfied  
in the city of your peace . . . “

*More next month on this website or just perhaps the magazine  
Keep safe, keep separate but remember you are never separated from  
the love of God or from the prayers of us all  
With love and many blessings  
Mary Tucker*

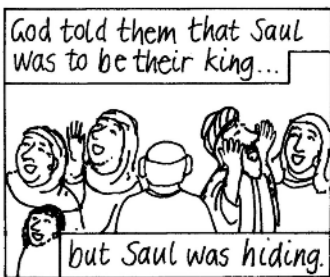
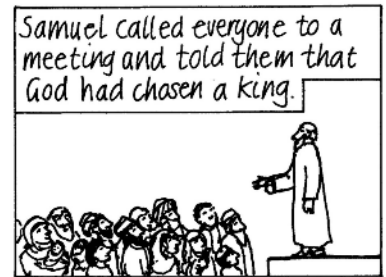
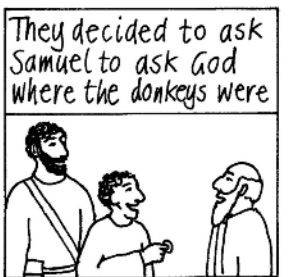
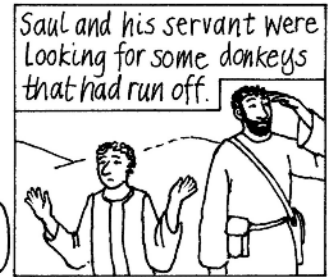
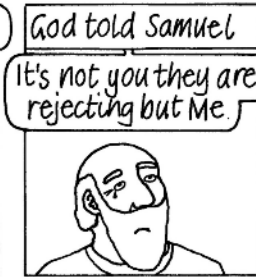


# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Samuel 8:1-10:1, 17-24

Samuel had been a good leader of Israel but he was now old. The leaders of the twelve tribes came to talk to him...



## **The Way That I See It**

*John Bell considers a better future. . .*

I have always been attracted to prophetic figures – whether they be ancient like Isaiah or contemporary like Martin Luther King or Nelson Mandela. If you look at the content of what they had to say, you can discern three strands: they analyse the present predicament they offer empathy and solace to the despairing they re-imagine the future.

At the moment we have quite a lot of analysis. Indeed we may be suffering from analysis paralysis. And there has been good support and encouragement for many from people close to us and from programmes on the media. But what about re-imagining the future? There's a growing clamour to be told when the lockdown is going to be eased. But what will the post lockdown future hold? Or what should it hold? No politicians ever imagined they would have to deal with a post pandemic world. Much in their past manifestos is now redundant; so what next? Some people just want to get back to normal. I desperately hope we don't. That would mean essential workers, particularly in private care homes, returning to underpaid oblivion. It would mean business, transport and industry recontributing to high levels of pollution. It would mean a return to underfunded health and social services, with experts only listened to in times of crisis rather than to prevent crises. It would mean a devaluing of the importance of the arts and of open spaces as essential for public wellbeing.

There's a moment in the history of the Jewish exodus when, wearied by travelling and uncertain of what was to come, the recently liberated slaves complain to God that they want to go back to Egypt. It was a case of mental myopia; they forgot that the past was not at all pleasant. So God declined their request and instead let them wander about aimlessly for forty years until they were open to embrace a very different future.

Maybe some of the things we are experiencing at the moment hold clues to the new normal we might aspire to... time to talk at length rather than in soundbites, the enjoyment of showing consideration for others, neighbourhoods taking initiatives, an awareness of how unless we help the poor of the world to get through this time, the virus might return to us with a vengeance, ecology as a partner rather than the servant of economics. Such things are not for political manifestos to determine, but for us all to discuss and discover.

## **Florence Nightingale – the founder of modern nursing**

*In light of the call on the NHS Tim Lenton looks back on a great lady.*

Florence Nightingale was born 200 years ago, on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1820. Best known as the Lady with the Lamp who saved many lives in the hospitals of the Crimean War, she was also a social reformer, a statistician and the founder of modern nursing.

She was named after the Italian city of her birth, but the family moved back to England the following year, and she was brought up in Derbyshire. Here – and elsewhere – she had several experiences that she believed were calls from God to devote her life to the service of others.

She never married, but among her several close friends was Sidney Herbert, who became Secretary of War and helped to make her work in the Crimea possible. Some claim that she reduced the death rate in hospitals there from 42% to 2%. She introduced hand-washing and other hygiene improvements, but she never claimed personal credit for reducing the death rate.

Her work inspired nurses in the American Civil War, and in 1883 she became the first recipient of the Royal Red Cross. In 1907, she was the first woman to be awarded the Order of Merit. She died in 1910. Her image appeared on the reverse of £10 banknotes issued by the Bank of England from 1975 until 1994.

It is a fitting tribute to her that the emergency hospital just opened at the ExCel Centre in London is called the NHS Nightingale Hospital.





**BONUS BALL SWEEPSTAKE**



**WINNERS**



***Currently suspended***

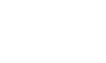


**YOU HAVE TO BE IN IT  
TO WIN IT!**

*Thousands of Pounds Won  
Thousands of Pounds Raised  
for  
Sharpness Church*



**THANK YOU!**



## SLIMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

### Notices

During this time, don't forget that Slimbridge Local History Society are collecting any stories or photos for their archives to record life during this period. Please do send them some information on the changes and effects this has had on your lives. <https://slimbridgelhs.com/events/news-today-history-tomorrow-slimbridge-the-coronavirus-chronicles>

Also, the Village Hall Committee are looking to hold an event that would be an exhibition of what people have created during the lock down. We have all the rainbows, for example. We are sure that the children have been busy painting, drawing, creating things and many people will have taken the opportunity to take up or rekindle hobbies and crafts. The committee are thinking on the lines of an open weekend once we know where we are heading with Covid 19 and socialising again. Details can't be confirmed at this stage but it would be good to announce the intention so that people can keep or create whatever they may want to contribute. Look out for more information on this soon.

### Community Resilience Fund

Slimbridge Parish Council have obtained a small amount of funding from Stroud District Council to help support the community through these uncertain times. If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance such as food or paying a phone bill for example, there is an application form on the parish website under the Covid-19 header to apply for assistance. We will then try to help to put you in touch with other services should you require longer term assistance with anything.

**LETTERS TO UNCLE EUSTACE**

*On the perils of a Scout camp*

The Rectory  
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

It seems that the basics of parish ministry are no longer taught in theological colleges. Don't you know anything about consulting your diary in public? When you are asked if you are free on a certain date, accepted practice is to open it so that the enquirer cannot quite see. You then shake your head sadly, saying you are committed to blessing a new tea urn, or on some other vital ecclesiastical activity that day. Then you regretfully give your apologies. You do not open the thing in full view of your enquirer, so he can see the blank pages! Really, it serves you right that you are now committed to going on Scout camp.

The last time I agreed to pay the Scouts a visit was when I found that there was a splendid restaurant only a mile away from their camp. I arrived and parked my car by the side of the river where they were all canoeing, wound down the car window and made encouraging noises for some minutes before explaining I had to find a garage for petrol.

Several hours later, after an excellent lunch, I drove to where they were now rock climbing, wound down the car window and made encouraging noises for some minutes before explaining that I had a standing committee to return to that evening. It was a splendid day.

You, however, will experience the charms of two days under canvas. Whatever site for your tent you choose, it will be the one that floods first. The early hours will undoubtedly find you wading about in water in the pitch dark, retrieving your sleeping bag and clothes – which you will then have to wear for the rest of the day. Watch out for the food, as well: all camp food contains grass and usually sheep droppings. This will make you ill, though for some reason Scouts thrive on it.

Whatever the weather and whatever activities you do each day, you will end up wet, chilled and bruised. At least your evenings will be warm, for you are bound to spend them at Casualty, with youngsters suffering from sprained ankles or dislocated shoulders.

My only advice is to use those hours in Casualty to practise the art of opening your diary in a way that only YOU can see it.

Your loving uncle,



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