

SPS

# De Trinitate

Slimbridge, St. John

Purton, St. John

Sharpness, St. Andrew

JUNE 2021



50p

## **MINISTRY TEAM**

**VICAR: Revd. Bill Boon** Email: bill.boon@btinternet.com  
The Vicarage Sanigar Lane, Newtown (01453) 811 360 *Day off - Monday*

**COMMUNITY CHAPLAIN: Revd. Mary Tucker**  
Hinton Cottage, Hinton. (01453) 811 105  
Email: marycountry12@gmail.com

**READER: Mr. Stilman Davis**  
Orchard Lea, Churchend, Slimbridge. (01453) 890 783  
Email: stilman.davis@tolutim.co.uk

**WORSHIP LEADERS:**  
(*Slimbridge*) **Mr David Carrington**  
Email: davidwsp1@yahoo.co.uk

(*Sharpness*) **Mrs Carol Bailey** (01453) 810 850

**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  
**Ms Katrina Bailey** (*Sharpness*) 8 Jubilee Way (01453) 810 850  
**Mr David Carrington** (*Slimbridge*) 8 Lancelot Court (01453) 890 031  
*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 Pamela Storey** (*Secretary*) The White Lion. Bristol Road  
Email: pamelastorey@btinternet.com  
**Mr Pieter Koole** (*Treasurer*) April Cottage, Shepherds Patch  
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# Parish Diary - June 2021

## **(1st) SUNDAY 6<sup>th</sup> - TRINITY 1**

9.00am	1662 Prayer Book Communion	St. John's, Slimbridge
9.30am	Morning Prayer	St. John's, Purton
10.00am	Holy Communion	St. John's, Slimbridge
11.00am	Morning Prayer	St. Andrew's, Sharpness

## **(2nd) SUNDAY 13<sup>th</sup> - TRINITY 2**

9.30am	Morning Prayer	St. John's, Purton
10.00am	Holy Communion	St. John's, Slimbridge
11.00am	Holy Communion	St. Andrew's, Sharpness

## **(3rd) SUNDAY 20<sup>th</sup> - TRINITY 3**

9.30am	Holy Communion	St. John's, Purton
10.00am	Morning Prayer	St. John's, Slimbridge
11.00am	Informal Communion Service	St. Andrew's, Sharpness

## **(4th) SUNDAY 27<sup>th</sup> - TRINITY 4**

10.00am	Benefice Communion	St. John's, Purton
3.30pm	Holy Baptism	St. John's, Purton

## **JULY**

## **SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup> - TRINITY 5**

9.00am	1662 Prayer Book Communion	St. John's, Slimbridge
9.30am	Morning Prayer	St. John's, Purton
10.00am	Holy Communion	St. John's, Slimbridge
11.00am	Morning Prayer	St. Andrew's, Sharpness

### **Special Notice.**

The funeral of Slimbridge Churchwarden, Roger Meredith, took place at the end of last year. Covid restrictions prevented a service in church and so a Memorial Service for Roger will take place at

St. John's, Slimbridge on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July at 12 noon –  
all welcome to attend.

## Updated rules for churches in England

The 30-person limit on funeral attendance in places of worship has been scrapped as part of the latest easing of lockdown restrictions in England. And groups of six people from different households can now sit together during worship. As part of the third stage of the Government's road map attendance at funerals is now limited to the covid-safe capacity of the building, allowing many more people to pay their respects in person.

Wakes and weddings of up to 30 guests are now permitted - up from six since the second stage of the road map began on the 12th April. The numbers gathering for support groups and parent and child groups have also increased to 30 people.

The number of those attending services for communal worship, ordinations, baptisms, and confirmations, remains limited to the capacity of the building and subject to a risk assessment. Mixing between households within places of worship, including mixing for private prayer, follows national restrictions, which means that groups of six people from different households can now sit together. social distancing rules still apply between separate groups.

Face coverings are still mandatory in places of worship and the administration of the communion cup remains suspended. The use of water during baptisms is permitted, provided the guidelines in Government hygiene measures are applied. Outdoor congregations are unlimited as long as they are spaced. Singing is permitted outdoors, however, it is still not permitted inside unless being performed by amateur musicians and singers made up of no more than six in a group.

Coffee mornings can now resume inside the building, although currently people are required to provide their own food. This means drinks at least can follow Sunday services.

The famous eighteenth-century Christian preacher, John Wesley, was an ordained priest of many years, and observed a deeply religious lifestyle.

He preached often but was not content with his own faith. Asking a friend, Peter Böhler, if he should stop preaching faith since he had no faith himself, he was told,

“Preach faith till you have it; and then because you have it, you will preach faith.”

This seems a curiously circular strategy but, as God would have it, just a few weeks later Wesley went to the fateful meeting at which he felt his “heart strangely warmed”. From then on Wesley spoke with new authority, the Methodist revival got under way and thousands of people raised their voices to praise God in the hymns of Wesley’s brother, Charles.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> June the Church remembers the birth of John the Baptist. To understand the story more fully we need to look back to an earlier time when John’s father, Zechariah, is visited by the angel Gabriel who tells

him that his wife will give birth to a son and he is to call him John. Zechariah and Elizabeth are childless and getting on in years so we may have

some sympathy with him as

he questions Gabriel’s word. But the angel declares that this word comes from the very presence of God and that since Zechariah has doubted it, he will lose the power of speech until birth occurs.

There’s some significance in this name as the Hebrew for John, “Yohanan”, means “God has been gracious” and relates to the idea of “prayer for mercy”. In the birth of John, God had indeed “been gracious” to Zechariah and Elizabeth, who no doubt had made many “prayers for mercy”, given their long childless state.

So, Zechariah, a man who had served God as a priest all his life but doubted God at one critical moment and lost his speech, has again shown his faith in the naming of his son. With his speech restored he immediately puts it to good use as he

# Parsonally Speaking

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST –  
*24th June*

praises God. But the neighbours, who had been so forceful over the name for the child (in the Jewish tradition a first-born son is named after his father) are left in a more reflective, and perhaps even fearful, mood.

So how might we apply this to our own lives? Well firstly we could reflect upon how often we have doubted God and what state we would be in if each time this happened we lost our speech!

But more positively we could make a link between Zechariah's story and that of the Wesley brothers. In both cases God worked in troubled souls to renew their faith and voice in such a way that God's praise was heard more powerfully than before. In the first case, Zechariah's own words of praise led into the ministry of his son John, who influenced the whole nation of Israel. In the second, the Wesley brothers' preaching, and music touched so many that England as a whole was a changed place. Both these events are what we might call Pentecost moments; both are manifestations of the Holy Spirit's work.

In our own lives we can often have many difficult questions about God's being and actions. Like Wesley, we can also feel that our own faith is weak and so we have trouble commending the Christian faith to others. While all our questions may not be answered – indeed there are many questions about God which cannot be fully answered – it is encouraging to remember that many people have made mistakes in their Christian lives, have doubted God and doubted the validity of their faith, yet God has kept faith with them. The theologian William Temple would often respond to those who said to him “I don't believe in God”, with, “It's just as well then that God believes in you”. Who knows when God may meet us in an unexpected way and use us, as he used Zechariah, to speak out God's praise?

In many ways Peter Böhler's strange advice to Wesley is spot on: even in moments of doubt, hold on to God and give him time to call you back to renew your faith... and who knows what may follow?



## Environmental attendance

*Dr Peter Brierley considers just who it is that goes to church.*

When we think of analysing church attendance, we usually do it by denomination, churchmanship or people's age. But there is another way. We should also consider the *environment* (catchment area) of where people attend a church.

The most recent *Rural Digest* was issued by the Government Statistical Service in March of this year, comparing the rural and urban populations in England. Those of us living in rural towns, villages and hamlets are one-sixth, 16%, of the total population, while those of us living in urban areas (major and minor conurbations, cities and towns) are 83% of the population. (The remaining 1% are living in what are called "sparse settings," mostly remote rural areas.)

Churchgoing analyses have different classifications, but broadly speaking, those living in commuter rural areas are 10% of all churchgoers, and those in remoter rural areas (which would include sparse areas) are a further 7%, and the total of these two is 17%, the same as the total in the general population. Urban and suburban churchgoers form the remaining 83%.

Over the past 20 years, Inner City church attendance has dropped just ~4%, the smallest decline of all environments. Why? Because this is the area where so many Pentecostal churches are located. However, there are three environments where their proportion of all churchgoers in 2020 is greater than in 2000 – City Centres (growth mainly growing larger churches), Inner City (growth due to the planting of many Pentecostal churches as well as congregational growth) and Suburban areas (also where many church plants have taken place). Both factors are important for growth.

## 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. 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 June 1947*

*\*Slymbridge is the old-fashioned spelling for Slimbridge.*

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My dear People,

### ***Parish Notes:***

#### ***Ascension Day***

The Ascension festival was observed by more church people this year and both on Ascension Day and Whit-Sunday there were more communicants this year than last. It was a real joy and great honour too, for our Bishop to be with us for Evensong on Whit-Sunday and we felt his sermon was direct and convincing with its strong appeal to all of us to put foremost in our lives the observance of a Christian Rule of Life. There was a large attendance and judging by many remarks heard, the service was greatly appreciated.

#### ***Empire Youth Sunday***

There was a large attendance of the Youth Club and others at Evensong on Empire Youth Sunday. The lessons were read by Mr. Brian Olpin and Mr. Joseph Wherrett and the Rev. R. J. Mansfield, Diocesan Youth Chaplain who preached a very suitable sermon.

#### ***Honorary Chaplain***

The Rector has been commissioned by the Bishop as an 'Honorary Chaplain' of Gloucester Cathedral, which means he will be on duty at the Cathedral one day in every month.

#### ***Free will gift day***

At their last meeting, the Church Council decided to hold a 'Free Will-Gift-Day' towards church funds sometime in July. Someone will be appointed for each district of the Parish and every household will receive an envelope in which to place their gift. All gifts will be of-



ferred to God at the Altar on a date to be announced later. More will appear about this next month.

### *PCC Meeting*

The next meeting of the PCC is fixed for Friday evening, June 13<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm.

### *Sunday afternoon teachers*

We appeal again for Sunday afternoon teachers. We want to more. Our numbers have increased and the children attend very regularly. Anyone who feels that he or she could do this kind of church work, should notify either the Rector or Mrs Thomas.

### *Annual outing*

A whist drive to raise funds for the children's Annual outing to the seaside is to be held in the Church Hall on Wednesday June 14<sup>th</sup>. If you want the children to have an enjoyable day please support this effort by your presence and *(or)* gifts.

### *Mother's Union*

Mothers please note that the M.U. outing is on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> in Bristol where the festival service will take place in the glorious Church of St. Mary, Redcliff. The Coach leaves Cambridge at 1pm.

### *Young Wives Group*

The Young Wives Group have also decided to have an outing this year with their small children under school age on Thursday June 19<sup>th</sup> to Bristol Zoo. Coach leaves Cambridge at 1pm. Return fare: Adults 5/- (Five shillings ~ 25p). All names of those desiring to go on this outing must be handed in to Mrs Thomas, without delay please.

*Your friend and Rector*

*Rev W H Thomas M.A.*

*Our archives containing these magazines can be viewed by mutual arrangement with the Vicar, Church Warden or any member of the PCC but not to be taken away.*

*David Carrington*



*May saw the first wedding in the Benefice for over 9 months and hopefully opens the way back to welcoming more couples to be married in our churches as lockdown eases. This month's poem is based on a very popular wedding Bible reading - the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.*

*(You might want to look it up and read it for yourself).*

## *Charity*

*Charity or love what's in a name?  
The King James Bible translates them the same.  
Corinthians 13 tells the great theme  
Of love everlasting, everyone's dream.*

*Loved by all brides on their wedding day  
The verses they all want the preacher to pray  
The wonders of love that overrules all,  
That holds on believing whatever befalls.*

*Love always trusting always prevails  
Enduring, protecting, love never fails.  
Faith hope and charity, virtues all three  
But love is the greatest and ever will be.*



*Megan Carter*

# From the Registers - April 2021

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Gift Aid</u>	<u>Envelopes</u>	<u>Cash</u>
<b><u>Sharpness:</u></b>	<b>24</b>	<b>£183</b>	<b>£155</b>	<b>£126.90</b>
Donation: <i>(General)</i>				£104.00
Bonus Ball:				£236.00
PCC Fees:				£ 90.00
Fabric Fund:				(£96.00)
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)	
<b>For the Month:</b>	£894.90	£298.72	+£596.18	

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. Andrew's has received **£972.01** more than it has spent

<b><u>Purton:</u></b>	<b>60</b>	<b>£60</b>	<b>£70</b>	<b>£135.00</b>
Funeral:				£275.00
Donation: <i>(General)</i>				£ 50.00
PCC Fees:				£ 90.00
Fabric Fund:				(£ 40.00)
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)	
<b>For the Month:</b>	£680	£202.35	-£477.65	

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. John's has received **£34.73** more than it has spent

<b><u>Slimbridge:</u></b>	<b>62</b>	<b>£395</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£647.65</b>
Donations: <i>(General)</i>				£150.00
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)	
<b>For the Month:</b>	£1,192.65	£1,793.25	-£531.30	

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. John's has received **£2,725.80** more than it has spent

*Thanks to all of you who continue to support  
our three churches during these difficult times.*

## **WEDDINGS:**

*We joined together in Holy Matrimony:*

ANDREW BUTT & JENNIFER SEALEY (*Purton*) 20<sup>th</sup> May

## **FUNERALS:**

*We commended to the Lord's keeping:*

MERVYN JAMES DELVE (*Slimbridge*) 4<sup>th</sup> May

ELIZABETH DIANA HUGGINS (*Slimbridge*) 12<sup>th</sup> May

## **ASHES:**

*We laid to rest the remains of:*

BRIAN REES DAVIES (*Slimbridge*) 28<sup>th</sup> May

## Close Attention to Text

Written by Donna Lazenby

### **Romans 1:1-17**

*Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,*

*To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:*

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that with-*

*out ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, asking that by God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you. For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you? or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as I have among the rest of the Gentiles. I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish? hence my eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome.*

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'The one who is righteous will live by faith.'*



What is your first word?

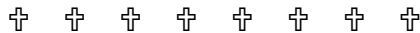
As children, we had a first word. There was a moment when we grasped something meaningful in this strange new world around us. We assigned a word to a person, place or thing, staked our signpost, and began to get some orientation, to find a way. Adults likely got excited when our first clear word rang out! It signaled a new and special phase in our growth in understanding. A child's first word can intrigue us; we wonder if it's an insight into their personality or perspective - why that word? It can also be a cause for humor - or even shock if they mirror back something less than ideal in the adult world around them!

First words matter. They say something about our priorities, something that we've noticed about the world, something about how we are getting orientated to life. In this reading, from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans – written about 50 AD - we have his opening address to the church in Rome. This church has erupted at the center of political power. How dearly Paul longs to visit these saints! (The name given to all members of the early Christian Church). But all he has for now is words. So, he begins with God, and a summary of the gos-

pel, and introducing himself must be done in terms of, and with reference to, that gospel.

What is your first word? With what words and attitudes do you greet the day, do you greet life? What do your words, your posture towards life, tell others about who you are and who you're serving?

O Lord, from whom all good things come;  
grant to us your humble servants,  
that by your holy inspiration  
we may think those things that are good,  
and by your merciful guiding may perform the same;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



## NOTICE

### **Slimbridge Annual Church Meeting**

Will be held at

St. John's Church

on

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June

At 7.30pm

All Welcome.

## Red Letter Days

**Ephrem the Syriac, prolific hymn writer - 9<sup>th</sup> June**

Here is a saint for you, if you have ever been touched by the words of a song.

Ephrem the Syriac was born 306AD in Nisibis, Turkey. Baptised in 324, he joined the cathedral school in Nisibis, where it was soon obvious that he had an outstanding gift for writing both music and lyrics.

Ephrem would have agreed with St Paul about the value of using music to express our faith in God. In an age of widespread illiteracy, he saw that hymns could be powerful carriers of orthodox Christianity, even when sung by uneducated people.

And so Ephrem wrote – and wrote. His poetry was so powerful, and his melodies so evocative, that soon his hymns were spreading far and wide across the Roman Empire. And wherever they went, his hymns took the Christian gospel along with them.

Some of Ephrem's hymns were written to refute heretical ideas, while others praised the beauty of the life of Christ. To Ephrem, everything around us could become a reminder of the presence of God, and thus an aid to worship.

Ephrem became the most prolific and gifted hymn-writer in all of eastern Christianity. His hundreds of hymns influenced the later development of hymn-writing in both Syriac and Greek Christianity.

Ephrem was also a well-respected Christian theologian and writer, always keen to defend orthodoxy from the widespread heresies of the time. Ephrem stressed that Christ's perfect unity of humanity and divinity represented peace, perfection and salvation.

After Nisibis fell to the Turks in 363, Ephrem fled to Edessa, where he continued to work. But plague struck the city in 373, and while nursing others with the plague Ephrem finally died of it himself on 9<sup>th</sup> June. But his music lives on - more than 500 of his hymns still survive today.

## Smile for a While!

### Neighbourhood Watch

In one small rural village the local vet also led the local Neighbourhood Watch group. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"He is, but tell me, do you need him as the vet or the Neighbourhood Watch?" the wife asked.

"Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it!"



### For sale

An estate agent's board outside a redundant church:  
FOR SALE.

Suitable for conversion.



### Friend?

Arriving at church to attend a wedding, a formidable looking lady in a large hat was greeted by the usher. "Are you a friend of the groom?" he ventured.

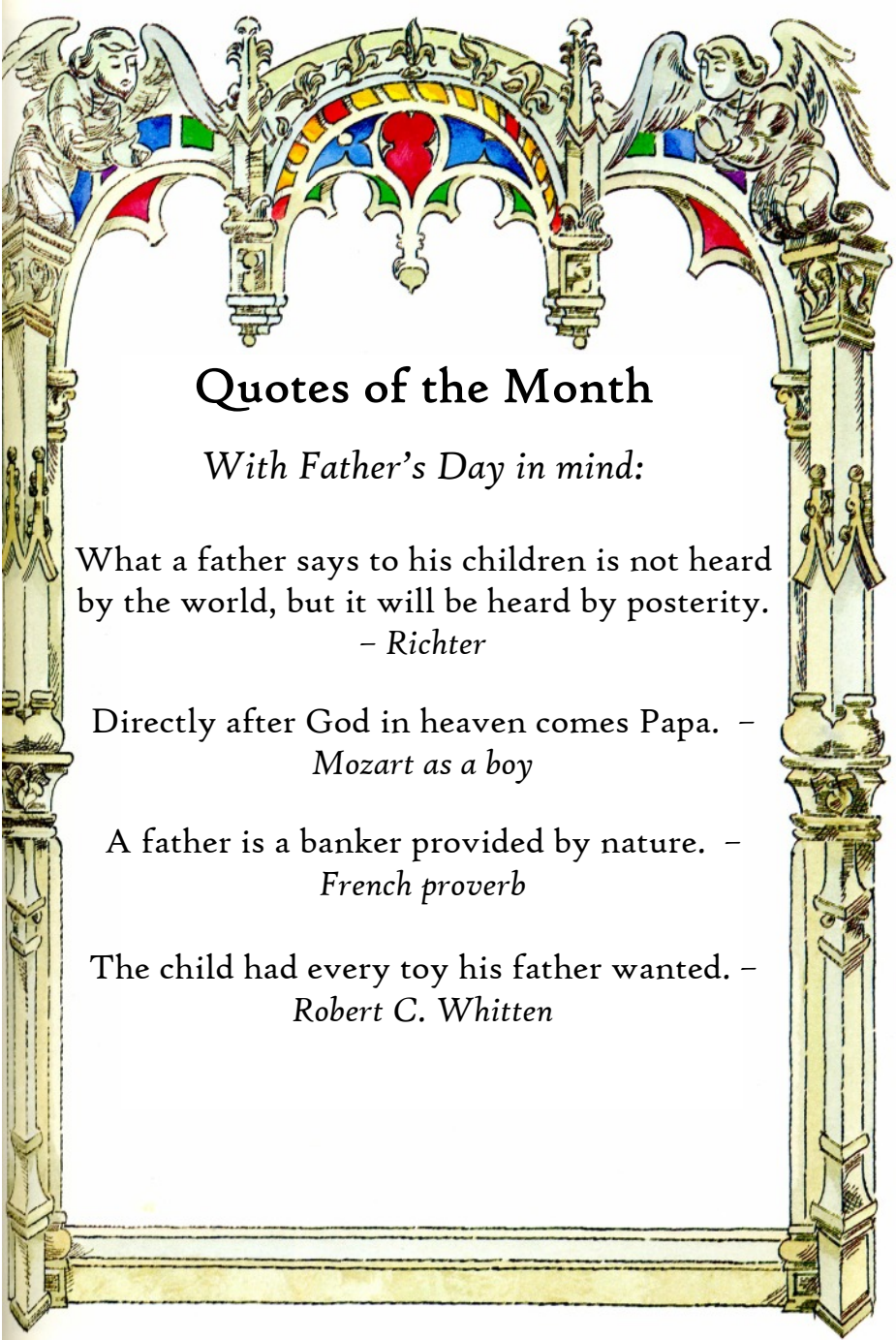
"Certainly not," she said indignantly. "I'm the bride's mother."



### Retirement

As the old vicar was preparing to retire from his church, a parishioner asked him what he thought had been his main contribution to the life of the parish after twenty-plus years. He replied: "People here didn't know what sin was until I came!!"





## Quotes of the Month

*With Father's Day in mind:*

What a father says to his children is not heard  
by the world, but it will be heard by posterity.

– *Richter*

Directly after God in heaven comes Papa. –

*Mozart as a boy*

A father is a banker provided by nature. –

*French proverb*

The child had every toy his father wanted. –

*Robert C. Whitten*

## Marriage Registers go Digital.

The first marriage to take place in the Benefice for nine months happened at St. John's, Purton during May. Under covid restrictions the service had a slightly different feel about it as numbers we're limited to 30 and hymns were not allowed. However, another significant change was taking place that many of those present were not aware of – there were no wedding registers to sign!

This was no oversight because marriage registers - a legal requirement for churches since 1837 - closed on the 1<sup>st</sup> May as new regulations came into force which replaced them with a single electronic register. Clergy no longer have responsibility for registering the marriage in church but are required to complete a Marriage Document which is returned to the registrar, who will enter it onto a digital database. Once registered couples can obtain a marriage certificate by applying online to the local register office for a fee of £11 - £35 if you want an express copy.

A Home Office statement said that the new system was “simpler and more efficient eliminating the need for data to be extracted from hard copies”. It's not paperless, however. Clergy will complete the marriage document before the service - they are encouraged to check the details with the couple at the rehearsal. It must be signed during the service - by the couple,

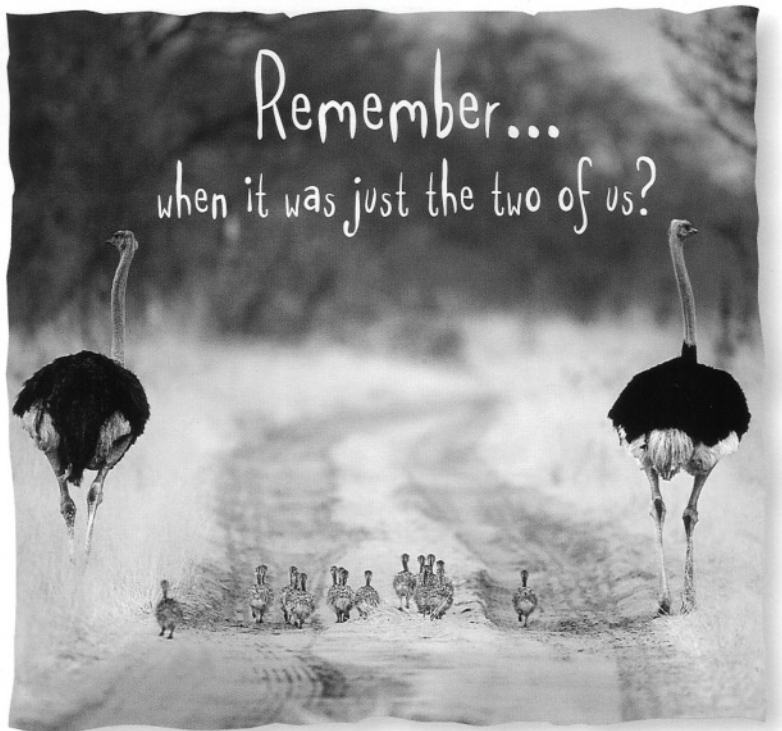


their witnesses, and the person taking the wedding - and returned to the register office within 21 days.

Gone are the old green landscape certificates and in their place is now a certificate which is A4 portrait shaped. The new marriage certificate also allows the names of mothers to be added alongside those of fathers as well as stepparents if appropriate.

Regulations under the Marriage Act 1949 dictate that a priest who solemnizes a marriage must also record certain details in a register of marriage services. This will ensure that a historical record is maintained which can be searched by future generations.

## Creature Feature



## Out of the Silence . . .

*The monthly journal of the journey of a Priest, Contemplative and Community Chaplain.*

If there's nothing else the last 15 months or so have taught us there are things in this life we cannot control. One is our weather – famously in this country we are constantly surprised by it (despite the fact that it has been constantly surprising us throughout history!). This however has been a boon over the last year as my husband and I have walked the same old routes day after day after day and have met the same old (?) people – we have never been short of subject material for a brief chat and 99 times out of a 100 it's been the weather. As I write we are nearing the end of one of the coldest, wettest Mays many of us think we can remember (maybe by the time you read this we'll be in drought and heatwave!) but this morning the sun is shining and the forecast promises some slightly less arctic temperatures – it's amazing how it lifts my spirits. And that brings me to the second thing that often seems out of our control – our moods and feelings – some days, like this I wake full of the joys of spring – others, and often for no good reason, I'm all doom and gloom even if the sun is shining! What a joy then to know that though we feel out of control our God is not and one of the ways of dealing with both bad weather and bad moods, I find, is to turn to him, so here, from 2018, is a day when that certainly seemed true.

### Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> 2018

Hard to believe it's midsummer tomorrow as I sit here in my woolly 'jamas and furry slippers with the fire set and ready, having just left the warmth of bed and hot water bottle! The cold yesterday was also in my heart and soul – a caustic mix of anger, frustration and selfish desires with a deep pain and sadness and a huge wish not to feel that way, not to give in to the sin in any word or action. The answer, as always, was prayer – muttered and continuous, repetitive and desperate, "Help me and forgive me. Help me and forgive me. Lord hear me, Lord graciously hear me." And of course, Lord, you did, you heard, you helped, and in no small way.

Yesterday's 'thought for the day' was one of my favourites from the, now rather battered and stained little book my prayer partner Susan gave me so long ago. It's a poem by Madelaine L'Engle and describes

both the pain and the release from it, the sin and the peace that follows repentance, request for help and redemption.

“Peace is not placidity: peace is  
The power to endure the megatron of pain  
With joy, the silent thunder of release,  
The ordering of Love. Peace is the atom’s start  
The primal image: God within the heart.”

It is the words ‘silent thunder of release’ that so perfectly describe the feeling I had within hours of my first desperate prayer. You are a great and glorious God and intervene so patiently and practically at our request in the petty problems of those of us for whom ‘the megatron of pain’ is something of an overstatement (though it doesn’t feel like it at the time.)

I’ve taken to inserting the first prayer from Compline into my daily Morning Prayer as I have always regretted the lack of confession and absolution in the daily round of worship as set. These words from that prayer perfectly sum up yesterday’s experience which continues into today as a deep, if exhausted, peace and warmth in my heart on this cold ‘summer’ (?) morning.

“Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ.”

Psalms 8, used as today’s canticle also says it all.

“O Lord our God,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
. . . .When I consider the heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and stars that you have ordained,  
what are mortals, that you should be mindful of them,  
mere human beings that you should seek them out?”

and yet you do . . . and how!

It’s a shame I don’t have a lyre to hand (!) like the Psalmist, as I am filled with thankfulness and praise to you, Lord, who . . .

“ . . . heal the broken-hearted  
and bind up their wounds . . .  
and delight in those who fear him,  
who put their trust in his steadfast love.  
. . . Sing to the LORD with grateful praise;  
make music to our God on the lyre.”

Trinitate 22

What would I do without you, lord?  
“If I spread out my wings to the morning,  
or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
your right hand shall hold me fast.”

Psalm 139

“Lord, you will guide me with your counsel  
and afterwards receive me with glory,  
for I am always with you:  
you hold me by my right hand.”

Psalm 73

And just to complete my joy and laughter you send a young squirrel to head-butt the window beside me as it skitters up and down along the window-sill trying to get in to join me. It's probably cold – it being midsummer and all!!!

*More next month*

*With love and many blessings*

*Mary Tucker*





# Bible Bite

## A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
2 Sam 6: 1-10, 2 Chron 13, 15:1-28

Copies of God's laws for the Jews were kept in a special holy chest - the Ark. It had been stored at Keriath Jearim for 20 years...

When King David made Jerusalem his capital, he decided to bring the Ark there.



David brought his soldiers and a huge crowd came too



They put the Ark on a new cart and set off down the hill.



The oxen stumbled, and Uzzah thought the Ark might fall off the cart.



He forgot the Ark was holy and held on to it.



David was very angry with God that Uzzah had died



Then he thought of God's power and was very afraid.

So he left the Ark stored at the house of Obed Edom.



David realised that they had not treated God's Ark with respect.



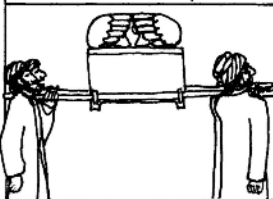
He talked to the Levites, the tribe that God had chosen to be His priests.



They organised musicians and trumpeters, and people to carry the Ark.



God's holy Ark was treated with respect.



Everyone cheered and sang as the Ark was carried into Jerusalem.



## **THE WAY I SEE IT!**

*Philip North reflects on 'Pentecost Peace'*

The Burnley I see out of my window right now is a calm and peaceful place, nestled between the dramatic hills of the Lancashire Pennines. Twenty years ago it was anything but calm. For several days in 2001 the town was rocked by serious disturbances with white and Asian gangs, stoked up by far-right groups, fighting Police, burning cars and looting shops. For me that sudden outburst of violence demonstrates something of the fragility of relationships.

People who one day were each other's neighbours suddenly became enemies. It's as if the potential for violence is an ever-present danger, lurking just beneath the surface of human interaction. We saw the same phenomenon in the recent outbreak of communal violence in some Israeli towns. In the past it has been demonstrated to a far greater extreme in the vicious civil conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda. Ethnic and religious differences which one day seem to be accepted can suddenly turn murderous. It's easy to respond to this danger with pious platitudes. Well-meaning people, often far from the action, will speak airily of tolerance and respect. But it takes rather more than that for people to live together with difference.

Christians have just kept the feast of Pentecost, the day when we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit who is the enduring presence of Christ in his world. The Bible records that, through the Spirit, the disciples were miraculously able to speak to an international gathering each in their own tongue. The symbolism is clear. The human race, once dispersed, is reunited in the power of the Holy Spirit who breaks down boundaries and makes people one. But importantly, the foundation of this unity was not an empty pietism. The disciples used their gift of tongues to speak of 'the mighty works of God'. The unity that the Spirit brings is rooted in a new narrative. Words are not enough. Unity needs shared lives and shared stories.

Burnley is a very different town from 20 years ago. Recently when a 'White Lives Matter' banner was flown over a football match, the



condemnation of the perpetrator was widespread, led by the team's impressive captain, Ben Mee. But this continuing work of reconciliation is not being achieved with anodyne sentiments. It takes hard work, honest conversations and the intentional building of friendships across divides. Genuine social cohesion requires more than values and good intentions. It also needs shared lives. It needs people whose commitment to each other is so great that together they can tell a new story.



## **St. John's, Slimbridge**

**Coffee Mornings are back!**

Our first event will be held in the churchyard

On

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June**

**10.30 - 12 noon**

*From the 3<sup>rd</sup> July Coffee Mornings will resume on  
the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month in the Village Hall*

**Everyone Welcome**

# Continuing Rhyming History of Britain

## House of Stuart

### 1603 - 1714

While wanting France and Spain divided,  
The English had by now decided  
To merge with Scotland, a supporter  
Of James, ' the king over the water'.  
If he returned to Scotland's shore  
He'd bring the French, and start a war.

James III

The Act of  
Union 1707  
Created  
Great Britain

The Scots were happy to partake  
Of England's economic cake,  
And liked the thought of being freed  
From customs duties at the Tweed:  
But they would ever more resent  
The loss of their own Parliament.

In Europe, Louis' hopes we're wrecked.  
He signed the Treaty of Utrecht  
With Britain: we did not confer  
With our great partner, Austria  
And picked up far more of the share  
Than other Allies thought was fair.  
Both France and Spain gave up possessions,

Nova Scotia  
Hudson's Bay  
Newfoundland  
Gibraltar  
Etc. . . .

As well as valuable concessions  
(Including one that really paid:  
Suppliers to the Slaving Trade).  
And since so much went now by boat  
We had the finest fleet afloat

*James Muirden*

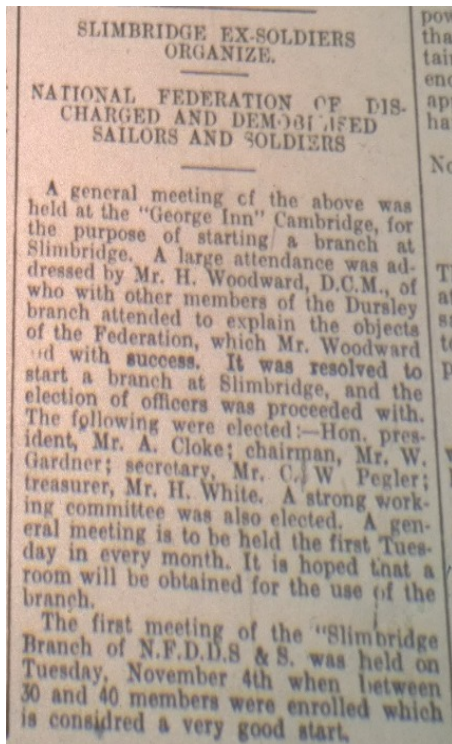
## The Birth of the British Legion

*Following on from last month's article celebrating 100 years of the British Legion Pamela Storey reflects on Slimbridge's involvement. . .*

In autumn 1919 servicemen of the village established a branch of the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers (NFDSS).

This national organisation had been formed in 1917 to protect the interests of servicemen who had been discharged or demobilised, but found themselves being subject to re-conscription.

An inaugural meeting took place at The George with over 30 members enrolling. It met regularly each month at the Cambridge school-room.



Over the course of the next year it became the Ex-Service Men's Federation and by February 1921 it had 95 members.

In its first year it was instrumental in obtaining £50 in gratuities for members and secured pensions for two who had been given no award. With assistance from the Parish Council and others, it converted the old school room at Cambridge into a centre for the men.

This opened in 1921 as the 'Ivy Leaf Club'.

It was to be open to everyone and offered a reading room and recreational facilities including billiards.

In 1921, the Ex Service Men's Federation merged with several other similar organisations to form the British Legion of the Empire. The first branch in Slimbridge was formed with William Peake elected chairman with George Fryer as vice chairman.



## **BONUS BALL SWEEPSTAKE**



### **May WINNERS**



**Dot Beard 14**



**Fay Thomas 15**



**Joy Hewer 50**



**Rhoda Palmer 07**



**Sandra Smith 44**



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

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



**ALL NUMBERS ARE IN PLAY**



**THANK YOU!**



**LETTERS TO UNCLE EUSTACE***On getting to church at a social distance*The Rectory  
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Since your parishioners mostly live in an area of half a square mile, where their only concern in getting to church is whether to take the underpass, or to risk a dash across the ring road, you may have little understanding of the problems our folk have in travelling our long country lanes to church, especially as we are keeping our social distance from each other.

Several parishioners have decided that they can't possibly share cars even with their own spouses, as in their 15-room homes they have successfully (and in some cases, happily) avoided each other for months. So the lane outside the church has filled up each week with Mercedes nudging Audis, and Land Rovers easing in between Bentleys.

Others arrive on horseback. But they are careless about leaving their horses to graze in the churchyard, and I have had to remind them twice that flowers in memorial vases are not fodder. The horses do help to keep the grass down, but unfortunately our verges now objects to standing outside during Mattins, holding the reins of half a dozen horses. He says it is not part of his job description, which only confirms my view that there is entirely too much fuss these days about having job descriptions at all.

Major Crompton's devotion to his new sit-on lawnmower has inspired him to travel to church on it. Since he is unable to uncouple the mowing apparatus, the tarmac on his two-mile drive is acquiring interesting patterns. His drive at two miles per hour along narrow lanes means he arrives leading a procession of cars with drivers given the opportunity to exercise the Christian virtue of patience.

Mrs Pendleton, on the other hand, leads a small but select group from the Mothers' Union who are all keen cyclists. They all arrive on a whoosh of fresh air, their hair in total disarray, but with pink cheeks glowing with health. Nobody in church minds sitting near them, as anyone who can manage to peddle an old three-gear bicycle up the hill to our church is most unlikely to be sickening for anything.

Finally, of course, the majority arrive on foot, having negotiated fields, stiles and assorted cattle on the way. The countryside may well praise God, but one does wish they wouldn't bring quite so much of it into church.

Your loving uncle,

# WORD SEARCH

h	j	f	j	c	e	s	c	g	m	q	c
o	u	a	e	h	o	t	a	a	u	s	r
l	z	l	r	e	r	u	r	n	s	s	o
y	z	l	u	e	g	m	t	g	i	l	w
c	a	u	s	r	a	b	l	r	c	h	d
a	h	j	a	e	n	l	x	y	i	o	t
p	s	o	l	d	i	e	r	s	a	b	p
i	h	k	e	h	s	d	i	g	n	e	e
t	r	u	m	p	e	t	e	r	s	d	j
a	f	r	a	i	d	a	v	i	d	h	o
l	e	v	i	t	e	s	t	o	r	e	d
r	e	s	p	e	c	t	l	a	w	s	b

capital

cheered

tribe

Jerusalem

crowd

laws

holy

angry

Levites

hill

soldiers

Ark

respect

stored

cart

organised

Uzzah

Obed

fall

trumpeters

stumbled

David

afraid

musicians



# **Sue Gibson School of Gardening**

**Shepherd's Patch, Slimbridge**

## **3-Term Courses in:**

- **Garden Design (beginners)**
- **Garden Design & Management (improvers)**

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- **Pruning Shrubs, Roses & Perennials (summer)**
- **Growing & Training Fruit in Small Spaces (summer)**

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# Backpage Picture



David Carrington has been busy during these last couple of months restoring the frame of a painting kept at St. Andrew's Church (see inset photos). The frame suffered badly when it fell from its hanging. If you look closely at the picture, you will see that it portrays Jesus stood on a boat facing a crowd on the shore. Mark records this event in his fourth chapter as Jesus tells the story of the Parable of the Sower. The artist is Bryan Organ - famous for his portraits.

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A an electronic version of this magazine is available in pdf - contact Bill Boon for details.