

SFS

De Trinitate

Slimbridge, St. John

Purton, St. John

Sharpness, St. Andrew

AUGUST 2021



50p

Trinitate 2

MINISTRY TEAM

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Please contact the Vicar.
Benefice Website: www.heuristika.co.uk/lfgdiscussion/**

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Sharpness with Purton

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Parish Diary - August 2021

(1st) SUNDAY 1st - TRINITY 9

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

SATURDAY 7th

2.30pm	VINDI Reunion	St. Andrew's, Sharpness
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(2nd) SUNDAY 8th - TRINITY 10

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

(3rd) SUNDAY 15th - FEAST OF THE VIRGIN MARY

9.30am	Sung Communion	St. John's, Purton
10.00am	All Age Service	St. John's, Slimbridge
11.00am	Informal Communion Service	St. Andrew's, Sharpness

(4th) SUNDAY 22nd - TRINITY 12

10.00am	Benefice Communion	St. Andrew's, Sharpness
	<i>No Services at Purton or Slimbridge Today!</i>	

SUNDAY 29th - TRINITY 13

9.30am	Morning Prayer	St. John's, Purton
10.00am	Sung Communion	St. John's, Slimbridge
11.00am	Morning Prayer	St. Andrew's, Sharpness
2.30pm	Holy Baptism	St. John's, Slimbridge

Life is a constant patchwork of endings and beginnings and beginnings and endings (just ask the English football team – and didn't they do well?).

Endings and new beginnings resonate with our Christian faith and who God is – the alpha and the omega – the beginning and the end. And even now we look for that ending and new beginning when God's kingdom will come on earth as in heaven. I know I repeat this often, but I make no

apology because the coming of God's kingdom is what gets me out of bed in the morning. At the Diocesan Synod held last November I spoke about God doing a new thing – again and again and again – but never ignoring the past – or the pain – and always calling us to live each present moment.

In the Old Testament Book of Ruth (chapter 1) we encounter Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi. They know all about loss and bereavement. They know all about uncertainty and huge

question marks about the future; and they set out on a journey of return. Not a returning to

'what was' but a returning which is about turning and trusting and setting out, clinging to God

I wonder what your key experiences have been over this past 15 months. There

has certainly been loss of some sort for everyone, even if it's only been the loss of the familiar and close contact. For others it's been even deeper. And now we have a strong sense of return as we move forwards from the 19th July – But it is not 'going back' and it is not 'release' or 'returning to normal'.

Episcopally

Speaking

*Bishop Rachel
Bishop of Gloucester*

In Ruth's beautiful commitments to Naomi I see compassion and kindness and love – a 'with' and a 'being in it together'. What does that mean for us as we return to a different shape of doing and being church?

There will be those who are nervous and vulnerable; those who are shielding, and those who long to be back in the crowd. Those who want to sing loudly and those who are fearful of what that might mean. Those who want to wear masks and those who question their validity. This is the landscape we need to live well together and with one another as we faithfully return.

In every Eucharist, we turn and return – as we confess our sins and turn back to God once more; As we tell of what God has done for us in the *past* in Jesus Christ; and as we are nourished by Christ in bread and wine in the *present*; And in the present commit ourselves to shaping the *future* in the power of the Holy Spirit as we live and work to God's praise and glory. Ruth and Naomi didn't know what the future held but they set out. I suspect they saw

themselves and their story as pretty insignificant – just two women in a pretty broken place, yet decisive in the next step and living it together. Yet actually it's a deeply significant story and Ruth gets a mention in the family portrait gallery of Matthew chapter 1, because Ruth went on to marry Boaz, and Boaz became the Great Grandfather of David from whom Joseph, was descended – Joseph the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus Christ born in that little insignificant place of Bethlehem to where Ruth and Naomi returned.

Whatever story you are living, please know that it's not insignificant – Your individual story and the story of your local worshipping community and context, and the story of our diocese and who we are together.

Recently I have been really saddened and frustrated by some badly placed comments and reference to clergy and stipends as 'limiting factors' to mission. You may or may not have picked up this story following someone called John McGinley's comments at a recent

church-planting conference, and it's not a story I want to dwell on, but I do want to say that I'm sad because there has been an implication that clergy – and particularly parish ministry and that inherited pattern of church – is somehow now to be overshadowed and superseded by new ways of doing things – new lay-led worshipping



communities. And I'm sad because I certainly don't want people to hear that healthy parish ministry is to be done away with or downgraded to second place. Parish ministry is a gift I never want to lose. And so let me put on record now my thanks to our parish clergy – stipendiary and self-supporting – let me say thank you loud and clearly – And Thank you to clergy serving as chaplains and in other places too. I not only celebrate you, but I am also privileged to share in ministry with you alongside our Readers and Lay Worship Leaders.

May we all then continue to pay attention in the present, daring to return to something that as yet is unknown; and being willing to play our part in shaping the future, rooted in prayer



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 August 1947

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

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My dear People,

Parish Notes:

The appearance of the churchyard is again tidier. The Churchyard Sub-committee of the Church Council have had the grass cut and we are much obliged to Mr Howell for undertaking to this very necessary piece of work and for doing it so well. Now that the graves are put tidy, we appeal all who have graves to see that they are maintained tidy. An untidy churchyard is a heart-breaking sight, and all right minded people ought to be willing to combine to see that such a thing does not exist. If everybody would regularly attend to their own particular grave or graves, it would be a much easier matter to keep the whole of the churchyard tidier.

Sunday School outing:

The Sunday school outing will be to Weston, on Thursday August 14th. Coaches leave at 8.30am. Altogether, about 130 will be going.

Bell Ringers Outing:

The bell ringers outing is on Saturday 23rd August to Loughborough, Leicestershire via Warwick and Kenilworth. We have permission to be shown over the Foundry there where bells are manufactured. Also to ring peals on the works carillon. Various Towers will be visited on route. The service is to be held in Kenilworth Parish Church. Whilst writing of bells, does any parishioner happen to possess a copy of an old magazine or leaflet containing an account of the Slymbridge bells and their weights? If so, I should be very grateful to see the particulars, which are needed for a very special reason.

Sudden Death:

The sudden death of Benjamin Suttaby removes from the Parish a familiar figure. May God grant eternal rest to his soul. We tender our sympathy to Miss Hobbs, who has so recently suffered two unexpected shocks.

Marriage:

We offer our congratulations and all good wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Pegler on the occasion of their marriage. Mr Pegler used to be a very faithful server at this Parish Church.

Forthcoming Services:

The Rev. Canon Gilpin, (*Diocesan Missioner of Gloucester*), will preach for us at evensong on Sunday August 24th. I hope many will take this opportunity to hear him. There will be no 8am service on two Sundays, viz July 25th and August 3rd. Please note, all other services will be as usual.

PCC Meeting:

Members of the PCC please remember the meeting on Monday August 25th at the Rectory to receive your packets of Gift Envelopes for distribution in your allotted districts, in preparation for the preparation for the Gift Day on Sunday September 7th.

C.E.M.S:

An excellent address was given to members of the Church of England Men's Society at Stroud by the travelling Secretary. There was better attendance this year than there has been for several years. The Rev. B Prime also provided us with a very interesting report of the Manchester Conference.

Your friend and Rector
Rev W H Thomas M.A.

NB

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 Vicars Churchwarden

Annual Church Meetings

I'm very pleased to report that our Annual Church Meetings have now taken place and the legal deed is done! My thanks to those of you who took time to attend – as I always say ‘not everybody’s cup-of-tea, but necessary and legally compulsory if we want to keep our churches open! I also understand that this year was made more difficult due to the circumstances surrounding Covid.

From the meeting we elected at Sharpness & Purton. . .

Churchwardens: Margaret Price (Purton)
Katrina Bailey (Sharpness)
PCC Secretary: Carol Bailey
PCC Treasurer: Peter Crews
PCC Members: Beryl Varnam, Muriel Forward, Doris Church,
Julie Boon, Brendan Richardson.
Deanery Representative: David Carrington
Electoral Roll Officer: Peter Bailey

From the meeting at Slimbridge we elected. . .

Rector's Churchwarden: David Carrington
People's Churchwarden: Sue Gibson
PCC Secretary: Pamela Storey
PCC Treasurer: Pieter Koole
PCC Members: Huvin Thompson, Pat Cope, Eric Jones,
Ursula Toher,
Elizabeth Ferrigno (Parish Council Rep)
Deanery Representative: Anne Jones
Electoral Roll Officer: Pamela Storey

Maureen McIntyre has stood down after many years on Sharpness PCC. It has to be said that she has been a great servant to St. Andrew's Church, and I thank her for all that she has done to help keep the 'doors open'.

My thanks to all the above who give their time and commitment to the churches of this Benefice.

GRIEF

*Grieving is a personal thing
Days I feel like giving in,
A voice whispers: 'no carry on
Your time is not yet come'.*

*The broken cry from deep inside
Tears and sobs I cannot hide.
Some time the fog will shift,
One day the sorrow will lift.*

*All he suffered, I felt in my soul,
Wished I could wave a magic wand
And make him whole.*

*But be glad he was mine for a while,
Remembering the things that made me smile.*

Brenda Meredith



From the Registers - June 2021

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Gift Aid</u>	<u>Envelopes</u>	<u>Cash</u>
<u>Sharpness:</u>	32	£147	£80	£ 50.00
Tax Refund (<i>on Gift Aided Donations - 2020</i>)				£1228.89
Donations (<i>General</i>)				£ 4.00
Bonus Ball:				£236.00
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE		SURPLUS (+ / -)
For the Month:	£1,745.89	£104.32		+£1,641.57

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. Andrew's has received **£2,122.97** more than it has spent

<u>Purton:</u>	104	£60	£50	£131.00
Tax Refund (<i>on Gift Aided Donations - 2020</i>)				£658.13
Charity:				£ 13.50
Wall Boxes:				£ 65.27
Donations: (<i>General</i>)				£111.00
Magazines:				£ 50.00
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE		SURPLUS (+ / -)
For the Month:	£1,138.90	£133.44		+£1,005.46

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. John's has received **£365.92** more than it has spent

<u>Slimbridge:</u>	25	£	£	£
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE		SURPLUS (+ / -)
For the Month:	£	£		£

No figures available at time of printing

FUNERALS:

We commended to the Lord's keeping:

GODFREY (Goff) RICHARD OLIVER TUDOR (*Sharpness*) 6th July

BERNARD (Buster) WILLIAM TUDOR (*Slimbridge*) 9th July

ASHES:

We laid to rest the remains of:

STANLEY THOMAS BALDRY (*Slimbridge*) 30th July

Close Attention to Text

Written by Andrew Davison

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:

Greetings.

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Let the believer who is lowly boast in being raised up, and the rich in being brought low, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field. For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the field; its

flower falls, and its beauty perishes. It is the same with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.

The Letter of James 1:1-11

The book of Esther, in the Old Testament, tells the story of God's deliverance of the Hebrews through the labours of the Jewish Queen of Persia. Famously, though, the book does not mention God at all. There is something a little similar about the Letter of James. It distills much of what lies at the heart of a Christian approach to life, and yet it hardly mentions Christ at all, beyond setting out the credentials of the author at the beginning and a brief mention in passing in chapter 2.

That need not trouble us. No reader, or writer, of the texts of the Early Church would have expected any particular document to do all the work that could be done, and neither should we. Some texts are biographical, some doctrinal and some about how to live; some do several things but with an emphasis more on one than another. The Letter of James may not mention Jesus a great deal, or recount his life, but it brings together much that he taught and exemplified, and provides some invaluable commentary upon it. As a Letter, the way it goes about things might remind us of the saying from Matthew's Gospel: "Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven". (Matthew 7:21).

Prayer

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
Graft in our hearts the love of your name,
Increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

Red Letter Days

‘Shall we not love thee, Mother dear?’ ~ 15th August

The Church responds with a resounding ‘Yes’ to that question, as we celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15th August. An ancient name for this day is the transition of Mary – her crossing over to eternal life – or the assumption of Mary. But her story begins in the Gospels, in Nazareth and Bethlehem.

At the Annunciation, Gabriel announces the good news to Mary. She becomes a mother and embarks on a journey that takes her to the temple in Jerusalem, a wedding feast at Cana, the Cross of Calvary, and the upper room of Pentecost. Through Christian history her story has spoken to people in every age and culture and land.

As we look at her life now, there are two qualities that stand out. The first is thanksgiving. Mary came from a people that realised the importance of thanking God, and her response to the good news is to raise her heart in the words of the Magnificat. ‘My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my saviour.’

The second quality is trust. Rowan Williams has written that despite the years of controversy about the place of our Lady, we still need to hold out our hands to her for guidance and succour. “For at the very least she is the first person to put her trust in God who is shown in Jesus.” Through all that happened to her – the amazing news of Gabriel, no room at the inn, the worry over wine at the wedding – Mary ponders and trusts. To the servants at Cana, she says, “Do whatever Jesus tells you. It will be all right. You will see.”

Thanksgiving and trust: easy enough to see in our Lady, but perhaps more difficult to own for ourselves. Yet Mary assures us that with God all things are possible. Holding on to that faith, we can journey with her Son through life and death to eternal life.

'On Holiday with Jesus'

Canon Paul Hardingham considers our need to find rest.

August is the month when schools are off and many of us go on holiday. This year will be very different, with many opting for a 'staycation'! The good news is that Jesus offers us a true rest:

'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.' (Matthew 11: 28-29). Are you feeling tired or burdened and in need of a holiday? Jesus invites you to spend it with Him!

The Invitation: Our holiday destination is Jesus Himself: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened.' We can come just as we are, with all the burdens and sadness we carry from the last 18 months. Jesus doesn't offer a 'quick fix' to deal with our issues; He simply offers Himself!

The Promise: Jesus promises us the gift of refreshing, sustaining and everlasting rest. When we go on holiday, we usually look forward to doing very little and yet this is not the kind of rest Jesus offers. His rest involves taking up His yoke and learning from Him! A yoke was the wooden collar that ran across the shoulders of a pair of oxen to enable them to work the fields. Jesus says: 'My yokes fit well. They do not rub your neck and shoulders. Come to Me and get yoked to Me. Make an act of loyal obedience and trust in Me. And you will find a deep peace and satisfaction that you could never find anywhere else. I have come for you!'

What's so amazing about this holiday is that you can get rest by simply staying at home!

Smile for a While

Quiet

Sad teenager: "Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was 'shut up'."



Baby

A three-year-old walked over to a pregnant woman on the beach. "Why is your stomach so big?" he wondered out loud.

"I'm having a baby," the woman replied, amused.

The little boy, with a puzzled look, ventured: "Is it a good baby?"

The woman smiled. "Oh, yes. It's a real good baby."

With even more surprise the toddler asked: "Then why did you eat him?"



Middle

The middle class consists of people who are not poor enough to accept charity and not rich enough to donate anything.



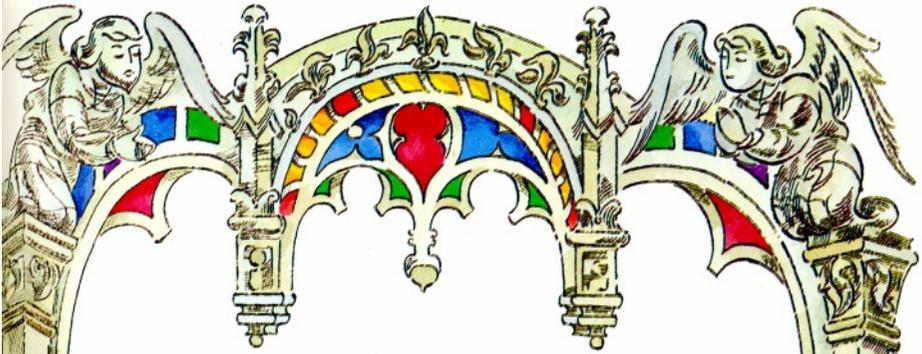
Good camping advice

Going camping this month? Take along a tuba or a drum and carefully place it beside your tent. It will keep the spaces on either side of your tent well and truly vacant.



Bread

Bread is a lot like the sun. It rises in the yeast and sets in the waist.



All in the Month of AUGUST

It was -

250 years ago, on 7th August 1771, that the first recorded ascent of Ben Nevis was made. Scottish botanist James Robertson ascended Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the British Isles. Nowadays, 100,000 people per year make the ascent.

125 years ago, on 17th August 1896, that the death of the first person killed in a motor accident in the UK took place. Bridget Driscoll was crossing a road in the grounds of London's Crystal Palace when she was hit by a car giving demonstration rides. By way of contrast, Brake.org.uk report that nowadays, an average of five people a day die on UK roads.

40 years ago, on 25th August 1981, that the US space probe Voyager 2 reached Saturn and sent back images and data. It travelled to Uranus (1986) and Neptune (1989) before reaching interstellar space in 2018. 43 years after launching, it is more than 11.8 billion miles from earth, but remains operational.

The Story Behind. . . Amazing Grace

*Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*

John Newton wrote this powerful hymn which has become beloved of many denominations. He had lived such a remarkable and riotous life before he sat down to write 'Amazing Grace' in Olney Rectory that books have been written and films, even a musical, have been made about it.

John Newton was born in Wapping, London. He was a sailor born and bred; he went to sea with his father aged 11 before going on to serve as midshipmen aboard *HMS Harwich*. When he was 18 he deserted and was caught, brought back in chains, flogged before his shipmates and demoted to common seaman. From this he went on to further tribulations, working on slave ships bound for Africa. He was eventually rescued from this life as 'a servant of slaves' and set sail for England on the *Greyhound* in 1748.

Newton's mother, who died when he was a child, had given him some religious convictions, but these he had lost during his life as 'an infidel and libertine'. However, on the voyage home a violent storm threatened the ship and all on it; Newton had what he called his 'great deliverance', calling to God 'to have mercy upon us. Thro' many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come', he noted, in words that 'Amazing Grace' echoes: 'tis grace has bro't me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home'.

In 1750 Newton married his longtime love Mary Catlett. Still he continued working the slave routes and only later in the century turned his talents to the abolition of the slave trade, advising William Wilberforce, and writing to support the campaign.

He was ordained into the Church of England in 1764 and made curate of Olney in Buckinghamshire, where his preaching attracted a large congregation, including the poet William Cowper. Newton and

Cowper together produced a collection of hymns, published in 1779 as *Olney Hymns*. Two hundred and eighty of these are Newton's compositions, including this hymn and 'Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken'.

John Newton died in London on the 21st of December 1807 having served the Lord and his church faithfully for almost 60 years. When he was nearing the end of his life he said: 'My memory is nearly gone but I can remember two things; that I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour'. The following words are found on his tombstone in the churchyard of his former parish at Olney: 'John Newton, Clark, an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy'.



LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR



Out of the Silence . . .

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

I was walking down at Purton and chatting, as I often do, to Nick the bridge-keeper, when he said that, though he read and enjoyed (I think he said he enjoyed!?) these monthly offerings to the Benefice Magazine, he was disappointed that these diary (journal) entries never recorded the fact that I'd seen him!!

So that has been put right now but I thought I would share something a bit different with you this month linked to our local waters and their staff. It was Sea Sunday in July and I reproduce here the piece I prepared for the worship section of our website on that day. It was also the basis for my sermons at both Purton and Sharpness.

<https://www.heuristika.co.uk/lfgdiscussion/>

Thoughts for Sea Sunday

Today is Sea Sunday so I have dug out the last talk I gave at the Sea Sunday Service at the Coastguard Station at Sharpness back in 2013 to share with you today.

It was 1979, our first holiday, I don't know why we chose it but we set off on a small 30 foot narrow boat called Daisy into a passion for life.

I'd been brought up in the Midlands, 'The Black Country', famous for having more canals than Venice, but they were just the back drop to our mining communities, little used, mucky, rat infested.

When we set off, from a more rural spot near Stafford, things had begun to change due to the efforts of a growing band of enthusiasts who became the Inland Waterways Association, and to British Waterways (now transformed into the Canal and River Trust). Narrow canals had begun to be rescued from the brink of destruction.

Round here, of course, things were different, though we didn't know it up there in the 'far north', bumping our way between the floating oil drums, filling bits of canal between locks as we went where local youths had drained them. In Gloucestershire you still had a viable commercial waterway. I remember well, in the early eighties, our shock when we first made it down to the Gloucester Sharpness, on another little hire boat called Muttley, at meeting huge heavily laden barges, carrying oil still I think. And others plying the canal from Gloucester to Purton, dredging out the mud from the city docks and

squirting it back into the Severn from an amazing structure which has only relatively recently been taken away from the Purton canal bank by the cottages.

In those days, in most places, the world turned its back on the narrow canals. They were fenced in, walled off and this was part of their charm.

Though central Birmingham, for example, has now embraced its waterways heritage and surrounded it with development making it a tourist attraction, there was something very special about mooring up in Gas Street basin amongst the old working boats along the Worcester Bar, a silent and smoky haven right in the centre of the city, knowing that no one knew you were there.

There was a certain pioneering spirit still that meant we were the only hire boat to make it all the way up to Ellesmere Port on the Mersey for an early Easter gathering of working boats. We were welcomed and included and began to feel what we have felt ever since, that we are part of this gypsy community, a travelling band, who may meet only rarely but who remember the name of the boat or the type of engine rather than the names of the people, but who always, without fail, greet each other with a cheery wave. A vagrant community, who warn each other of problems ahead, who share tall tales of the exciting things they've had caught round their propellers. Our two top ones actually are 30 feet of polythene that had been used to wrap a carpet and a length of the thick wire used to strengthen reinforced concrete structures - that was fun - not!

Of course all waterways are potentially dangerous places as the canal and Severnside communities know to their cost. On only our second trip, we arrived at a broad section of canal called Tixall Wide. to find the police divers frantically looking for the body of a father lost overboard trying to save his son. And in one of the more recent flood years we became trapped by waters filling and overflowing canals and rivers down in Oxfordshire whilst boats nearby were deposited in car parks and a woman in Banbury was swept away when her boat became trapped against the uprights of a bridge.

Here in our own docks down at Sharpness, as in many other places on the system, those who have reached the end of their tether have chosen to find a watery grave to the huge distress of those who have to deal with the consequences. And only two years ago, on our annual two month holiday we met staff of The Canal and River Trust at Stour-

port, having to deal with the tragedy of a child drowned in one of their locks.

The joy of the canals, however, is that still they are a place set apart, a place where the pace of life is slower, a place where different communities of boaters, walkers, cyclists and fishermen find a respite from what they might call real life or in these last 18 months from lock down.

But everywhere real life goes on, even on the waterways, and it is the strength of these communities, however dispersed, that they offer mutual support in times of distress. I wonder if we realise just how fortunate we are around these particular waters to have specialist teams available to pluck us from the jaws of disaster - voluntary organisations like SARA who have been around for years and whose availability and heroism gives me confidence every time we set out onto the unpredictable waters of our local and potentially most dangerous river.

I wonder as well if those from time to time propose to save money by cutting back on coastguard services and CRT lock and bridge personnel, understand the safety net of huge local expertise they provide for those who ply waterways and coastal areas for work or for leisure.

Whether they realise it or not I want now to offer a vote of thanks to all those people, SARA, our coast guards, our dock authorities and workers and all who work for The Canal and River Trust as well as the volunteers and members of local preservation and restoration groups.

Now given my role in the Benefice you may be waiting, with baited breath or some other feeling, for the moment when God comes into this. Well - he doesn't 'come into it' at all, rather he is, and always has been, an integral part of all that I have been saying.

It is the love of God which inspires and sustains all communities, including the transient water people; that moves people, whether they realise it or not, to serve and support one another in selfless and sometimes sacrificial ways. It is his creation that we celebrate as we gaze on the glorious countryside, wonder at the size of the huge lazy carp in the Marina or battle through the horizontal rain and gale force wind high on the embankments of the Shropshire union canal. It is his creativity, reflected in the engineering feats of humanity that amaze us as we pass, incredulous, across the Llangollen aqueduct 150 feet above the River Dee whose Welsh name I won't even try to spell or pronounce. And above all it is his generosity, reflected in the generos-

ity of spirit of so many of you, especially the other members of this ministry team, that allow us, Paul and me, a time set apart to take our boat and once again to take to the waterways to refresh our jaded spirits and come back renewed and refreshed to the daily life of this place. So to you all and to God I offer my sincere and hearty thanks.

*More next month
With love and many blessings
Mary Tucker*

If you go down to the sea today, beware!

The popular summer pastime of paddling our feet along the shoreline has become risky, due to a rise in venomous stinging fish along the British coast.

The weever fish may be only six inches long, but the venomous spines along its dorsal fin can inject fast-acting poison into your foot if you step on it, causing immense pain.

Sue Hickson-Marsay, from a life-boat charity off East Yorkshire, says: "The fish has been an absolute nightmare this summer. Just where the shoreline is, as the waves are going out, the fish lie just under the sand. So, if you are then paddling in the water, you could easily step on one. Then the spiny part of the fish goes straight into your foot. We've had lots of casualties, so people need to wear shoes if they're going paddling."



THE WAY I SEE IT!

Nick Bains reflects on the use of words

“Actions speak louder than words”. I hear that quite a lot; but, although I know what is meant, I think it is wrong. To speak is to act. Language is performative – it does something, changes something. For example, it is the speaking of the vows in a wedding that makes the marriage. The story goes that St Francis of Assisi told his friars to “Go out and preach the Gospel; use words, if you have to.” Well... if he did actually say it, was he right?

We use words all the time to think and speak and make sense of the world; so, language matters – words matter. They do something. The fourth Gospel begins with: “In the beginning was the word...”. Go back to Genesis and the word is: “Let there be.”

A few weeks ago I convened an online conference led by scientists for a couple of hundred clergy about the current pandemic. We started off asking why we use particular metaphors as a lens through which to see or think about what is happening. In brief, why is it that in the UK we use language of conflict and combat – fighting, struggling, defeating, cowering, bravery, and so on – whereas in Germany, for example, they seem to have used imagery of “damming a flood” – particularly pertinent at the moment? An enemy is personalised, a flood isn’t.

We normally just accept the language presented as the frame through which we then interpret what is going on. But, like cancer and serious illness, words of combat and fight might not be the best. If your loved one dies, have they been defeated? Were they not up to it? You see what I mean? Words are never neutral and always carry consequences – think of the impact of blessing or cursing. They also have limits.

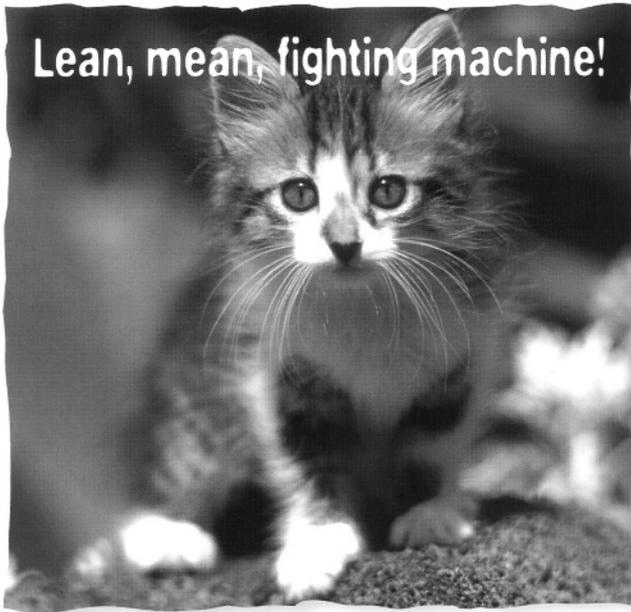
One of the metaphors I take from my reading of the Bible is that of “running the race that is before you” – and not just because the Olympics are on in Japan. This image insists on agency, seeing value in how I live and behave in whatever circumstances I find myself. Yet, racing conjures up different notions: a sprint is pure competition; a

relay involves both competitiveness and cooperation. At the heart of all this is an appreciation that we cannot control – or win – everything.

Coming full circle, words matter because they unconsciously shape how we see and look and think and act. The question I am left with is: do I pay enough attention to the words and metaphors I use – and the way they shape the world?

† † † † † †

Creature Feature



Continuing Rhyming History of Britain House of Hanover 1714 - 1901

Elector of
Hanover
1698

King George governed Hanover, a state
Within a great conglomerate -
The shrunken Holy Roman Empire,
Which would eventually acquire
The name and might of Germany.
Despite his perfect pedigree
The Tories and the Jacobites,

i.e James III

Who backed the Old Pretenders rights,
Protested at this foreign king

Riot Act
1715

With street parades and rioting.
(It didn't matter if George heard -
he couldn't understand a word.)

George, like William, had no use
For Parliament. It seemed obtuse
To have a king who couldn't do
Exactly what he wanted to:

In Europe there was no dispute,
Some monarchs there were absolute!

The answer was to choose MPs
Who would be very keen to please
(And see them voted to their seat
By covert threat, or perquisite);
And once all that was done, to get
The right man in his Cabinet.

James Muirden

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
2Sam 15, 16:15-19, 17:4-22, 18:1-12, 33, 19:1-8

King David had many wives and children. He loved his sons so much that he never punished them or told them off if they did wrong.

Also David had not said who would be king after him.



His son Absalom was very handsome, and he made friends with everyone.



People began to prefer him to David.



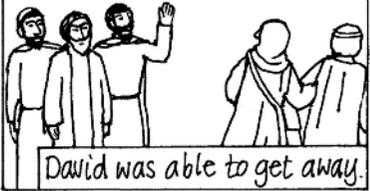
Absalom gathered an army of supporters and they headed for Jerusalem.



David and his supporters had to flee.



A few stayed behind to be spies and to give bad advice.



David was able to get away.

The two armies fought in a rocky wooded place.



Absalom was riding through it when his hair got caught in a tree.



Joab and his men killed him.

When David heard Absalom was dead, he was so upset...



My son!

..his soldiers were ashamed they had won.



Joab came back from the battle and found David crying



You should be ashamed! You care more for your disloyal son than for those who risked their lives for you!





BONUS BALL SWEEPSTAKE



**July
WINNERS**

Kath Clements 23



Shirley Brown 01



Shirley Brown 01



Marg Cole 59



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

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



One number is currently available



THANK YOU!



LETTERS TO UNCLE EUSTACE

Press one for vicar, two for curate.... 12 for prayer....

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Now you have got your new telephone system in the parish, I shall not be calling you again. I refuse to wait for ten minutes every time I ring to have to listen to the cycle of ‘press 1 for the vicar, 2 for the curate, 3 for the secretary’, until we end with ‘12 for requests for prayer.’ I was tempted to leave a message on 12 to ask that the wretched machine would break down, but then realised I would have to call a second time to leave a message on 13 for making a confession.

And if I have to listen one more time to someone playing ‘Thine be the glory’ on one finger on an electric organ while I am ‘on hold’ I will have him excommunicated. At least you have the grace not to ask me not to hang up, as my call is important to you. I would even warm to your system if a voice occasionally said that they couldn’t care less whether I hung up or not, as my call was utterly irrelevant to them.

Those poor people who have to wait to reach 7 for leaving messages regarding marriages might as well leave a second message on 8 for baptisms, and save on a large phone bill in months to come. As for 9 for funerals, entire families could be born, marry and die before they reach that one. And may I suggest that your car parking attendant who stuck a note on my windscreen telling me not to park there again is given the number 666.

My own answerphone tells people firmly that the machine does not accept incoming messages, and that I only answer personally on Thursdays between 10am and 12 noon, provided nothing better has turned up. Alternatively, they could write me a letter which may (or may not) be answered, at my convenience.

As for the few who have got hold of my mobile number, my response is to say that I am just about to enter a tunnel and then to switch it off. Callers from other parts of the country now believe that the parish of St James the Least is honeycombed by mile-long tunnels, making communication all but impossible.

You can now be assured that your new system means you will be contactable at any moment, wherever you happen to be. But don’t call me to complain and expect to receive sympathy; I shall be just about to enter a tunnel.

Your loving uncle,

WORD-SEARCH

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

sons

crying

king

hair

tree

spies

escape

armies

children

supporters

punished

handsome

Jerusalem

disloyal

prefer

loved

battle

Joab

ashamed

heard

friends

wooded

David

riding



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Backpage Picture



Members of the Vindicatrix Association standing in front of the VINDI Memorial at Sharpness Docks. From the 1920s to the 1960s over 70,000 boys were trained for the Merchant Navy at Sharpness. The memorial stands at what would have been the entrance of the training camp. Today around a thousand of the 'Vindi Boys' from all over the world return to Sharpness for their annual reunion, which includes a service at St. Andrew's Church. The reunion this year is held between the 6th and 8th August. The service is on 7th at 2.30pm. If you can offer any help, then please let the Vicar know.

'De Trinitate is published monthly By Revd. Bill Boon at Sharpness Vicarage
A an electronic version of this magazine is available in pdf - contact Bill Boon for details.