

SPS

De Trinitate

Slimbridge, St. John

Purton, St. John

Sharpness, St. Andrew

OCTOBER 2021



50p

Trinitate 2

MINISTRY TEAM

VICAR: Revd. Bill Boon Email: bill.boon@btinternet.com
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**For Baptisms, Confirmations, Home Communions,
Wedding Arrangements etc...**

Please contact the Vicar.

Benefice Website: www.heuristika.co.uk/lfgdiscussion/

CHURCHWARDENS

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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

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Parish Diary - October 2021

SATURDAY 2nd

9.00am Morning Prayer St. John's, Slimbridge

(1st) SUNDAY 3rd - HARVEST

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 9th - *Robert Grosseteste. Bishop. Scientist. 1253*

9.00am Morning Prayer St. John's, Slimbridge

(2nd) SUNDAY 10th - TRINITY 19

9.30am Morning Prayer St. John's, Purton

10.00am Sung Communion St. John's, Slimbridge

11.00am Sung Communion St. Andrew's, Sharpness

SATURDAY 16th - *Nicholas Ridley & Hugh Latimer. Bishops. 1555*

9.00am Morning Prayer St. John's, Slimbridge

(3rd) SUNDAY 17th - TRINITY 20

9.30am Sung Communion St. John's, Purton

10.00am Family Service St. John's, Slimbridge

11.00am Informal Communion Service St. Andrew's, Sharpness

2.30pm Holy Baptism St. John's, Purton

SATURDAY 23rd

9.00am Morning Prayer St. John's, Slimbridge

(4th) SUNDAY 24th - BIBLE SUNDAY

10.00am Benefice Communion St. John's, Slimbridge

No Services at Purton or Sharpness Today!

SATURDAY 30th

9.00am Morning Prayer St. John's, Slimbridge

(5th) SUNDAY 31st - ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

9.30am Morning Prayer St. John's, Purton

10.00am Sung Communion St. John's, Slimbridge

11.00am Sung Communion St. Andrew's, Sharpness

In 1563, Queen Elizabeth I realised that the 1552 Act of Uniformity, which required church services to use English instead of Latin, wasn't working in Wales. There, the vernacular was not English, but Welsh. Thus the first full translation of the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer* into Welsh appeared in 1588.

Fast forward a couple of hundred years. In a chapel in a remote part of Snowdonia, a nine-year-old girl called Mary Jones is entranced by stories from the Bible, read in her native Welsh. She has learned to read at one of the "circulating schools", and more than anything she wants a Bible of her own. Welsh Bibles are scarce and expensive, and few people can afford to own personal copies – most are to be found in churches and chapels. Mary,

however, is determined, and over the next six years she saves up until, in 1800, aged fifteen, she has enough money to buy a

Bible. However, the nearest place to buy one is twenty-five miles away in the town of Bala. Undeterred, Mary walks across the mountains to Bala, obtains her Bible from Revd Thomas Charles, and returns home triumphant.

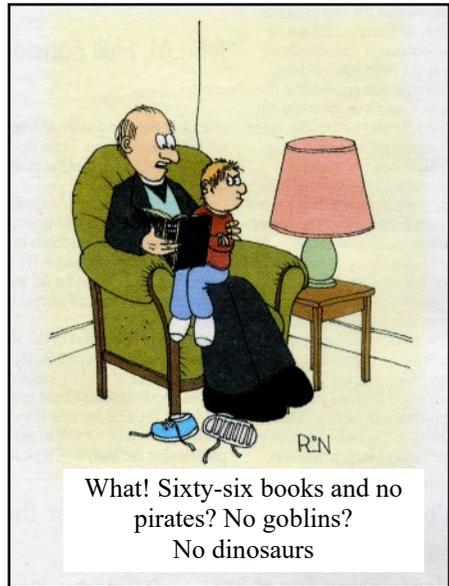
Parsonally Speaking

*"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."
(Matthew 24:35)*

But the story doesn't end there. Thomas Charles is so moved by Mary's commitment that he tells her story in London. One thing leads to another, and within five years the British and Foreign Bible Society is formed, to make the Bible in the vernacular available to people everywhere – not only in Wales, but all over the world.

Sunday 24th October the Church keeps as Bible Sunday and the readings set for that day are all about God's word and its implications for us. On this day Christians are reminded of the importance of keeping the discipline of reading the Bible; of following those who rejoiced to hear God's Word and understood it when it was read and explained to them. St. Paul urges early Christians to live lives which reflect the love of God that they have experienced, enabled by the word of Christ. Jesus assures us that his words will remain, whatever else disintegrates.

Mary Jones understood how important the words of scripture were in her everyday life, and she did not rest until she was so used to them that they felt part of her, in a language she could understand. Through her example, countless people throughout the world have been able to do the same because of the work of the Bible Society. We are challenged to hunger as much as Mary Jones did for the words of scripture, so that we too may know God better and work out how best to live in the here and now.



You can find out more about the work of the Bible Society by logging on to their website: www.biblesociety.org.uk

Like a Pumpkin

A lady had recently become a Christian and been baptised. Curious, one of her colleagues at work asked her what it was like to be a Christian.

The lady was caught off guard and didn't know how to answer. Then she saw the office 'jack-o'-lantern' on a nearby desk and blurted: "Well, it's like being a pumpkin."

Her colleague asked her to explain that one. So she said: "Well, God picks you up out of the patch and brings you in and washes off all the dirt on the outside that you got from being around all the other pumpkins.

"Then He cuts off the top and takes all the yucky stuff out from inside you. He removes all those seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all to see.



"It is our choice to either stay outside and rot on the vine, or come inside and be something new and bright."

Are you something new and bright? Will you be smiling today, and shining with His light?

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 October 1947

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

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My dear People, [October 1947]:

Parish Notices:

Sunday, October 5th Dedication Festival:

Preacher – Morning Rev. T Wintle, Dursley;

Preacher – Evening, Rev. J Fisher, Berkeley.

Don't forget this is a special day, when we thank Almighty God that we have a church. Be present at one of the Holy Communion Services if possible.

Friday's 10th and 24th October, Mr Tucker continues the Adult Education Group Lectures on International relationships.

Wednesday 15th October Young wives;

Thursday 30th Mothers Union;

Sunday 19th October we are asked to pray for the work of Medical Missions.

Tuesday, 28th October, the parochial representatives, Clerical and Lay, attend Diocesan Conference at Cheltenham.

Friday 31st October, The bell ringers are advertising a dance in aid of bell tower renovations and alterations.

Saturday 1st November, All Saints Day, Holy Communion at 8am.

Sunday 2nd November, Commemoration of All Souls.

Important Notice:

All Parochial Church Councillors attend to meet the Lord Bishop of Gloucester at Dursley on Wednesday 5th November at 7pm.

Gift Day result:

A few offerings have been received and the total amount has now reached the marvellous sum of £75. This is a magnificent result for 'Direct Giving' and all concerned are to be heartily congratulated on the special effort. It just shows what can be done by co-operation and goodwill.

Graves:

For permission to reserve grave spaces, application must be made to Gloucester, to the Chancellor of the Diocese, through the Diocesan Registrar and the Rector.

Altar flowers:

On 4th October Mrs Thomas; 11th Mrs Smith and Mrs M Gallop; 18th Mrs Crompton; 25th Mrs Fisher; November 1st, Miss H Pearce.

Brasses:

On October 4th, Mrs Crompton; 18th Mrs Thomas; November 1st, Mrs G Tudor.

Children's Corner:

On October 4th I Pattenden; 11th J Snow; 18th J Vellacott; 25th N Hall; November 1st F, C and M Evans.

Harvest:

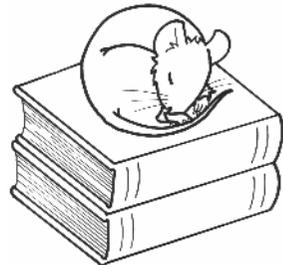
There was an increase in the number of Communicants this year. The collection for Hospitals and R.A.B./I. amounted to £8. 3s. 8d. All services throughout the day were well attended, and were very hearty.

Your friend and Vicar

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 Church Warden*



Dracula's Grave

The Yorkshire seaside town of Whitby and its parish Church of St. Mary have been associated with the legendary vampire Count Dracula ever since Bram Stoker first made the link in his novel published in 1897. Over the years, those who oversee the opening of the church have explained to enquiring tourists that the Count is fiction, and thus is not buried in the graveyard. But tempers have frayed, and the church has now pinned up a notice requesting visitors to stop asking for directions to his grave.

“It has got particularly bad recently and we have had some quite aggressive behavior”, the Team Rector of Whitby, the reverend Michael Gobbett, said. “It's something we have always had to live with because of the story. We've put a poster up because a member of staff had suffered some very strong and upsetting verbal abuse from a person who didn't believe when told that Dracula was not true”.



Father Gobbett continued: “I wonder if people expect us to make more of the story. Perhaps they expect us to provide some sort of tourist attraction. We have to accept that it is part of Whitby's culture: Bram Stoker was inspired by Whitby Abbey and the church; so it does attract people, but we are trying to get across to people what the real purpose of Saint Mary's” is.

The real Count Dracula is said to be the 15th century warlord Vlad Tepes, known as Vlad the Impaler, who is buried at Snagov Monastery, near Bucharest.

Sorry, Lord, I just couldn't make it

The bells ring out on Sunday morn,
O did you hear their call?

They call the faithful ones to prayer
To Church they summon all.

But Lord, I cannot come today,
I live a busy life,
Still, when there's something special on
I'll try and send the wife.

It poured with rain last Sunday
An inch or two, I bet.
You surely can't expect me then –
I'd get my new suit wet.

Today the sky is blue and clear,
but the car's as black as ink.
And if I do not clean it soon,
What will the neighbours think?

You know I do my bit, dear Lord
I have a golden rule,
I sometimes send my kids along
To be at Sunday school.

But I really couldn't come as well,
There's grass to mow, and beds to weed
Shelves to fix, a dog to walk, and
Sunday newspapers to read.

And now this day has ended, Lord
How fast the weekends go!
I ask for faith and strength this week
For I feel (spiritually) quite low.

Inflame, O Lord, my feeble faith
My lamp burns rather dim,
For God depends on me, of course,
And I depend on Him.

Author unknown

From the Registers - August 2021

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Gift Aid</u>	<u>Envelopes</u>	<u>Cash</u>
<u>Sharpness:</u>	48	£204	£100	£ 81.90
Donations (<i>Gift Aided</i>)				£ 30.00
Donations (<i>General</i>)				£ 16.00
Bonus Ball:				£234.00
Fund-Raising:				£345.47
Magazines:				£ 20.00
PCC Fees:				£ 7.00
Rent:				£300.00
		INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)
For the Month:		£1,338.37	£1,037.17	+£301.20

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. Andrew's has received **£2,508.54** more than it has spent

<u>Purton:</u>	27	£60	£60	£ 61.40
Donations (<i>Gift Aided</i>)				£ 17.00
Wall boxes:				£ 48.26
PCC Fees:				£ 7.00
		INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)
For the Month:		£253.66	£1,017.29	-£763.63

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. John's has spent **£252.62** more than it has received

<u>Slimbridge:</u>	59	£375	£0	£0
Fund-Raising:				£302.63
CBF (<i>Interest on Land Investment</i>)				£289.37
Charity Plate Collections:				£ 20.00
War Graves:				£ 12.00
PCC Fees:				£259.00
		INCOME	EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS (+ / -)
For the Month:		£1,297.57	£1,541.49	-£243.92

From 1st Jan. 2021 St. John's has received **£2,391.52** more than it has spent

Our thanks to all of you
 who continue to support our churches

BAPTISMS:

We welcomed into the Lord's family:

HENRY PETER NOBLE (<i>Purton</i>)	19 th Sept.
DOUGIE PALMER (<i>Purton</i>)	26 th Sept.
ARCHIE PALMER (<i>Purton</i>)	26 th Sept.

WEDDINGS:

We joined together in Holy Matrimony:

JOSEPH CHALLINOR & EMILY VARNAM (<i>Slimbridge</i>)	4 th Sept.
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FUNERALS:

We commended to the Lord's keeping:

BERNARD JOHN DAVIS (<i>Slimbridge</i>)	14 th Sept.
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ASHES:

We laid to rest the remains of:

MARTIN LUKE BENNETT (<i>Sharpness</i>)	26 th Sept.
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Close Attention to Text

Written by David Runcorn

Mark 14:1-11

It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him; for they said, 'Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.'

While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. But some were there who said to one another in anger, 'Why was the ointment wasted in this way? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.' And they scolded her. But Jesus said, 'Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.'

Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

'Why was the ointment wasted in this way? (v.4)

"Why this generosity?" would have been a more accurate question than "why this waste?" The story is happening just a few days before Jesus' self-offering on the cross - also a gift poured out beyond any practical measure or costing. But excessive generosity has been a consistent feature of so much of Jesus' ministry and teaching. When he wants to speak of the gift and character of the Kingdom, Jesus tells stories of lav-

ish feasts and banquets at which those who have no way of ever earning or deserving an invitation find an honored place.

So why this waste? Because this is how God loves. Divine love has no interest in restricting itself to what is 'necessary'. The cross is not a proportionate, costed response to the needs of the world. Jesus' love is not means tested, or tied to productivity or deserving. His sacrifice cannot be summarized in sober moral equations or legal judgments. God's love is simply not sensible like that. It is beyond measure, poured out in overwhelming excess over an ungrateful, uncomprehending world.

In this story, told in the shadow of the coming cross, is someone who understands all this. An unnamed woman mirrors the wastefulness of God. She is loving as God loves. She is poured out like God and for God, beyond thought of cost and beyond any notion of what is 'sensible'.

Almighty God,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:
pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,
and so bring us at last to your heavenly city
where we shall see you face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.



Red Letter Days

All Hallows Eve – 31st October:

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times.

In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or ‘Summer’s End’. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

Then the Romans arrived, and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1st November - All Saints’ Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called ‘All Hallows’ Day’. The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called ‘All Hallows’ Eve’, The Holy Evening, later shortened to ‘Halloween’.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. During the Middle Ages, animal costumes and frightening masks were worn to ward off the evil spirits of darkness on Halloween. Magic words and charms were used to keep away bad luck, and everybody believed that witches ride about on broomsticks. Fortune telling was popular, and predicting the future by the use of nuts and apples was so popular that Halloween is still sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap-Apple Night.

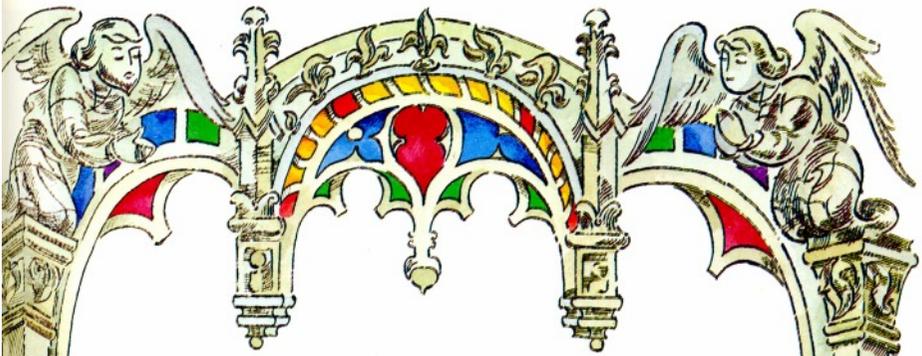
Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows’ Eve, should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.

Smile for a While

PARAPROSDOKIANS...

(Winston Churchill loved them) are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected; frequently humorous.

1. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on my list.
3. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
4. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
5. We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.
6. War does not determine who is right - only who is left.
7. They begin the evening news with 'Good Evening,' then proceed to tell you why it isn't.
8. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
9. Buses stop in bus stations. Trains stop in train stations. On my desk is a work station.
10. I thought I wanted a career. Turns out I just wanted the pay cheques.



All in the Month of OCTOBER

It was -

150 years ago, from 8th to 10th Oct 1871, that the Great Chicago Fire took place. A fire in a barn quickly spread, following a long period of hot, dry weather. About 300 people were killed, over three square miles of the city was destroyed, and around 100,000 people made homeless. Also at this time was the Peshtigo Fire of Wisconsin – it burned 1,200,000 acres and killed up to 2,500 people – the deadliest wildfire in US history.

80 years ago, from 2nd Oct 1941 to 7th Jan 1942 that the Battle of Moscow took place. Nazi Germany launched a massive offensive against the Soviet capital. It was one of the largest and most important battles of World War II. Soviet victory.

70 years ago, from 15th to 17th Oct 1951 that the first party election broadcasts were televised in the UK. The three main parties, Liberal, Conservative and Labour, were allocated 15 minutes each.

The Story Behind. . . Be Still My Soul

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide;
In every change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*

We have the words of ‘Be Still My Soul’ thanks to the combined talents of two very different women who lived a century apart, and the music thanks to a great Finnish composer. There's tantalizingly little known about Katharina Von Schegel's life. She wrote down this hymn in 1752, drawing from the Psalms the reference, ‘Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.’ (Psalm 46:10).

Katharina lived in Kothen and may have been a canoness of an evangelical women's seminary in that central German city. From an aristocratic background, she was an outstanding figure of the revival of spiritual evangelism in Germany, known as Pietism, which resembles the Puritan and Wesleyan movements in England. Spiritual revivals have often gone hand in hand with outbursts of song and though the leader of this new movement, pastor Phillipp Jakob Spener (1635 – 1705), was not a noted hymn writer himself, his unashamed encouragement of congregation singing gave birth to this great German revival of hymns characterized by piety and faithfulness in the word of God.

A century later, in 1855, Jane Laurie Borthwick sat down to translate Katharina Von Schegel's words. The elder daughter of the manager of the North British Insurance Company in Edinburgh, Jane was a devout and active member of the Free Church of Scotland, supporter of missions abroad and social worker in her home city. She and her sister Sarah Findlater brought together their translations of German hymns into ‘*Hymns from the land of Luther*’. Jane's translation of ‘Be Still’ was one of these, with this note attached: ‘In your patience possess ye your souls’. (Luke 21: 19)..

The hymn is sung today to a melody borrowed from Jean Sebelius' symphonic poem *Finlandia*. In some ways *Finlandia*, written in 1899, is a surprising source for the reflective words of this hymn; *Finlandia* was composed for a protest against Russian censorship and represents Finland's national resistance to Russia's advancing empire.

In the 20th century, 'Be still My Soul' came to be associated with another act of resistance. It was the favorite hymn of the 'Flying Scotsman' Eric Liddle, the athlete who became famous in the 1924 Olympics and again in the 1981 Academy Award winning film '*Chariots of Fire*', for refusing to run on the Sabbath. Liddle became a missionary in China and was imprisoned during the Second World War. This hymn is an expression of total trust in God; that whatever negativity life throws in your way - salvation will prevail.

Slimbridge Church Coffee Mornings

Many thanks to everyone who attended our coffee mornings in August and September. It's good to be back.

In response to recent events

we will be raising funds on October 2nd for GARAS – Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers,. This organisation provides help and support to people who have arrived in this country, often after very traumatic experiences.

On Saturday 6th November we will be supporting Help for Heroes.

Come along to the Village Hall, 10am-12noon to enjoy a cup of coffee and a cake or two. Donations for the Produce Stall very welcome.

Out of the Silence . . .

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

Sometimes phrases used too often can become irritating! I must admit I feel like this about, 'The New Normal'. I know it's right and proper that we should learn lessons from our recent (and ongoing) experiences and change accordingly to keep our world and each other safe but . . . there's a bit of me that hankers for what you might call 'The Old Normal'.

So this month I have looked at Octobers past to find the things that continue 'normally' despite everything and chief among these I find the rolling on of God's creation and its seasons and his presence and love for us - couple of 'Old Normals' (or perhaps we could call them 'Eternal Normals') to bring us a sense of comfort and security in our ever changing lives.

Thursday 18th October 2017

One of those really early mornings where I'm up because I want to be. Not because I have to be. Pitch black outside of course in this fourth quarter of the year but I love the enclosure of it all. Also great to sit here with you, Lord, and to glance up from time to time to find the distant horizon being gradually outlined and the dawn creeping on.

Thursday 3rd October 2018

"O what a beautiful morning!"

To wake with a thankful heart – what a gift.

A glorious red-gold sunrise, a pot of tea and the heating leaping comfortably into life – what joy!

I did, yesterday, some tasks I desperately didn't want to do and you made a great success of them as soon as we were underway and the team you had provided were there – thank you, thank you, thank you! I was ready to do two visits today which could have been long and potentially very draining but you've lifted that necessity too so an unexpectedly gentle day of pottering preparation ahead. I MUST get the geraniums out and the winter pansies in!!! and if that's the extent of my immediate anxiety that too is a great gift.

Wednesday 14th October 2020

Wait!

Wait on God.

Low light, candle light, warm tea, quiet.

Slow.

Ticking of the clock but no checking of the time.

Wait.

“ . . . with less of you there’s more of God.”

Eugene Petersen

In silence

things can appear

impossibly, unexplained

like acorns in the sealed bag of compost.

“Wait. Wait on God. Silent and still. . . “

R J Foster

Suddenly the clock chimes the half hour. There was no sense of wanting time to pass, rather for quietness to continue. Something is reborn perhaps.

“ . . . turn us again, O God.”

Psalms 80

Reborn – return – repent – retry – reward – retreat!

“As for God his way is perfect;
the word of the Lord is tried in the fire;
he is a shield to all who trust him.

Psalms 18

Thursday 15th October 2020

“God is as great in minuteness as in magnitude.”

Charles Caleb Colton

Thoughts around this thought.

God is as much present

. . . in a wavering final flame as in the still, apparent solidity of a new

. . . in the low sliver of the crescent moon this early morning as in the confident apparent completeness of the full

. . . in youth and old age, in brash confidence as in fearful uncertainty

... as great in the darkness as in the dawning light – more necessary
if not always noticed
... greater perhaps in hope than in apparent certainty.

Friday 23rd October 2020

A bright, bright morning star in the pitch black sky seems to sound
‘distant music from a far country’ (to misquote C.S. Lewis writing on
the beauties of earth as a forerunner of heaven.)

The sharp bark of a fox in the otherwise quiet lane, the steady candle
light, the mellow half hour chime, all also speak of your presence,
‘the silent music of the unseen Trinity’.

“If I spread out my wings to the morning,
or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
even there your hand will lead me
your right hand shall hold me fast.”

Psalm 139

More next month

With love and many blessings

Mary Tucker

Dogcollar



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mark 6:17-28, Matthew 14:1-11

After Herod Antipator died, the Romans allowed his son Herod Antipas to rule Galilee and Peraea. He was hated by the Jews

Herod Antipas divorced his wife and married his brother Herod-Philip's wife, Herodias.



John the Baptist told him he had broken Jewish law by marrying his brother's wife*



*Lev 18:19,20:21. She was also his niece.

Herodias hated John and wanted him dead.

Herod was afraid of John and wouldn't kill him but put him in prison.

Herod liked to listen to John.



Finally, Herodias got her chance.

Herod had a big party for his birthday.



(Birthday parties were a new trend from Greece.)

He invited everyone important in Galilee.



Herodias sent her daughter to dance for Herod and his guests.



(No decent girl would do this.)

They were very entertained.



I will give you anything, even half my kingdom



(Which wasn't really his to give.)

Salome asked Herodias, then said



I want John's head on a plate.

Oh, no! But I made a promise in front of everyone!



So John was killed* and Salome was given his head. She gave it to her mother.



*Illegal without a trial

Continuing Rhyming History of Britain House of Hanover 1714 - 1901

With all this business going on
They still had to rely upon
The roads the Romans left behind,
By now completely undermined:
In less than favorable weather
Some brave souls vanished altogether.
Each parish spent a week a year
(In theory) keeping its part clear;
But since the locals rarely went
Beyond their farthest fields extent,
Why should they throw their time away?
Let those who used the damned things pay!

The roads were, as the crow flew, shorter,
Most people, wisely, went by water:
No gangs of highwaymen to fear,
And usable throughout the year
Except when winter's breath congealed

'Little Ice Age
1450-1850

It's marble glaze on stream and field.

That's why canal-building began,
To take freight where no rivers ran.

Turnpike Acts
From 1700

But roads got better everywhere
Once Turnpike Trusts began to share
Their costs and upkeep, by a charge

French Motorway
toll

Anticipating *Le Peage*.

James Muirden

THE WAY I SEE IT!

Angela Tilby on the struggles of anxiety and depression

Good morning. Yesterday a report was published by the children's commissioner for England about young people and mental health. It told an increasingly familiar story of high levels of anxiety and depression, with girls more affected than boys. The report claimed that one of the reasons children struggle is immersion in social media. You can see how popular platforms aimed at young people might amplify random fears until they intrude into every moment. Think what it might be like to be plagued with negative thoughts about your body, or your prospects in life.

Like many people I enjoy social media, but every now and then I sense a whiff of sulphur about it. I was hacked over the weekend and found my friends had been contacted with weird requests. Nothing that a change of password couldn't deal with, but I still felt as though I'd been, well, possessed, by an alien entity. In the Bible and in Christian tradition there are many stories of possession. In the Gospels there is a story of a troubled man who lived in a graveyard and wandered about naked injuring himself with stones. When he was asked his name by Jesus, he answered 'Legion', adding, 'for we are many'. A poignant picture of possession, disintegration and deep human distress. There are anecdotes and folk tales about possession and how the presence of evil makes places go cold. Think of those dementors in Harry Potter, preying upon young people, sucking out their joy and hope.

St Augustine defined evil as an absence of the good. I think what he meant was that when we experience evil it is as a negative energy which always depersonalises. Whether the origins of evil are metaphysical or in the human mind it is this lack of personality which is most telling. In the Gospel story it is when Jesus addresses the demons as a person that they tumble out of the sick man and he is found sitting restored to his real self, calm and in his right mind.

I would be less alarmed by the effect of toxic internet content on young people if it were the fault of a few deranged operatives who could be addressed as persons, but because of the way platforms are set up damaging material spreads beyond individuals through the mindless play of algorithms.

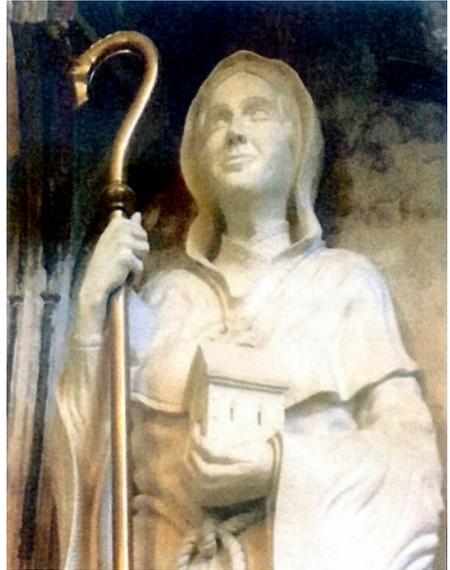
Many years ago the theologian Paul Tillich spoke of the human vocation as 'the courage to be'. And for those with mental distress, fear, and depression every day requires that courage. Sometimes we need to take the plugs out of our ears, turn away from the phone and show our faces. Face to face, we are stronger than we know.



The Company of St. Kyneburga

Each year the Bishop of Gloucester presents long service awards to people who have served the life of the Church in and around Gloucestershire. Ten people, from all different backgrounds, who have played different roles in the life of the Church, are invited to become new Members of the Company of St. Kyneburga. I was privileged to be added to their number this year in ceremony which took place at the Cathedral on 28th September.

St. Kyneburga was the co foundress and abbess in the 8th century of the first religious community at what is now Gloucester Cathedral. The association with Kyneburga is a reminder that those who are honored for their service today are the latest in a long line going back 1300 years of those who built up, maintained and enriched the life of the Church in Gloucestershire.



Membership of the company of St. Kyneburga recognizes and honours service to the diocese, usually over a very long period of time, by people in a variety of roles lay and ordained. I am honored to be one of the latest members.





BONUS BALL SWEEPSTAKE



**September
WINNERS**



Dilys Roberts 34



Charlie Trotman 39



Helene Jones 12



Muriel Forward 53



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

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



There is currently ONE number available.



THANK YOU!



LETTERS TO UNCLE EUSTACE

When the film makers come to church

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

It has all been excitement and activity here this last week, with a period drama being filmed using our church. It was remarkable how many people felt the need to drop in to church to collect magazines, check the reading rota or arrange flowers, just happening to stumble over the film stars en route. If only they were filming every week, then our brasses would be permanently gleaming, woodwork smothered in beeswax and the notice board kept in a state of perpetual tidiness.

Our Ladies Guild was thrilled to be asked to take part in a crowd scene. I saw little point in the wardrobe department taking hours fitting them out with Victorian dresses, as the result was little different from normal. The only awkward moment came after filming, when Mrs Simms was told she could now remove her bustle. She told the girl she already had.

The producer thanked me for taking the trouble of going round church before they arrived, removing all those modern conveniences that would not have been there in the nineteenth century. I hadn't the heart to tell him that nothing was any different from normal.

Lord Marchmount was thoroughly miffed that they were not also using his castle for filming, even though the producer explained with exemplary patience that they needed a nineteenth century setting, not one which looked as if the cast had just returned from the Crusades. His revenge, getting the farm staff to spread slurry in all the surrounding fields throughout filming, has apparently meant that film stars now have a clause in their contracts protecting them from rural life.

When all was finished, I thought it only right to invite the film crew and actors to the vicarage for sherry. When the producer left, I was delighted to be told he had just discovered the perfect home for filming his next project – which is about Elizabethan poverty.

Your loving uncle,

WORD-SEARCH

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

prison

killed

finally

Salome

birthday

plate

head

chance

daughter

listen

party

mother

John

important

entertained

dead

guests

Herod

Galilee

brother

dance

promise

Herodias

kingdom



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Backpage Picture



Severn Rail Bridge

A picture looking across the Severn to the Forest of Dean.
The swing bridge in the foreground crosses the canal, opening
to allow the passage of ships to Gloucester Docks.

The bridge was destroyed in October 1960
when two petrol barges collided with it.

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