

Parish News in Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden



March 2021



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**Welcome to
Parish News in
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden**

Find us at: www.bromhambenefice.org



facebook Benefice of Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden

Please note: the Church Office is temporarily closed but you can reach the Administrator at 07957 126145 or the email below.

Clergy:

Vicar	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
		vicar@bromhambenefice.org
Assistant Priests:	Revd Paula Vennells	851594
	Revd Di Harpham	918691

Benefice Administration

Website &.....}	Administrator	
Wedding.....}	(Mon 9 -11.30a.m.	
organisation..}	Tues, Wed & Thurs 9am -1.00pm)	
Fees Accounts...}	administrator@bromhambenefice.org	
Safeguarding Officer -	Judith Denyer	07981 928522

Parish News

Editor	Mr Edward Jones	stowensnews@btinternet.com	826551
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<i>Pew Leaflet</i>	Sarah Smale, as Administrator		

Who's Who in Bromham

Church Officers

Churchwardens	Ms T Woodcock	340089
	Mrs F Bulmer	409916
PCC Secretary	Mrs Vivien Butler	407351
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Emma Harrison	823121

Organist & Choirmaster Mr David P Williams

Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers

Mrs Suzi Webb	07967 311628
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Altar Guild	Mrs M Parrott	824402
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Who's Who in Bromham cont....

Children & Young	}Carol Jones	823307
People's work	}Rene Farquhar	307996
Electoral Roll	Mr Terry Rooke	409916
Ringers	Mr Robert Jones	881741
Thursday Prayer Gp	Mrs C Wisson	306833
Friends of St Owen's	www.friendsof stowens.org	
Secretary:	Mr David Butler	407351
	 facebook Friends of St Owens	

Who's Who in Oakley

Church Officers

Churchwardens	Mr G Palmer	07710 462535
	Mrs H Worley	262166
PCC Secretary	Mrs C Ord	823477
PCC Treasurer	Mrs S Ball	823133
Organist & Choirmaster - contact	Jenny Sudworth	822859
Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers		
	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
Flowers	Mrs A Rolph	824849
St Mary's Ringers	Mr Bill Sellars	823473

Who's Who in Stagsden

Church Officers

Churchwarden	} Post holders names not published	
PCC Treasurer	} please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691
PCC Secretary	Caroline Heaton	
Ringers	Mr Richard Brown	823289
Flowers Team	please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691

If you know of further details for this page, or have information or articles to publish please send all material to the Editor by post or (preferably) by email - see details on page 3.

The Editor thanks Contributors and Advertisers for their material with acknowledgements to the "Parish Pump" website. Nevertheless, views expressed, and goods and services advertised are not endorsed by the PCC. **Please send material for publication to the Editor by the 22nd of the month.**



Principal Services in the Benefice

Due to extremely high infection rates locally, the Church Wardens took the decision to suspend services in our churches for the time being.

Everyone is welcome to join us at our services week by week as we meet online to worship; visit www.bromhambenefice.org for instructions on how to join. **Please follow Pew Leaflet, website or Facebook for changes.**

We look forward to the time when we can meet together again in person to worship together.

7th March

10.30am

3rd Sunday of Lent

Holy Communion by Zoom

14th March

10.30am

4th Sunday of Lent / Mothering Sunday

Morning Service by Zoom

6.00pm

Evensong by Zoom

21st March

10.30am

5th Sunday of Lent

Morning Service by Zoom

28th March

10.30am

Palm Sunday

Morning Service by Zoom

6.00pm

Evensong by Zoom



"How are you managing in the lockdown? How have you been getting through these months?" These questions and the replies have been a popular discussion point in the last year. People have found strategies for coping with life's restrictions, the losses and the disappointments. They were not competing for the best idea, the most inventive pastime, or the most productive vegetable garden, they gave encouragement to one another to keep active and motivated. Other common projects are researching the family history, writing up one's own life story for children and grandchildren, and sorting out holiday photos of past holidays. What a marvellous gift our memories are!

Terry Waite and John McCarthy described the years they endured in prison, much of it was solitary confinement. Their captors devised a punishing regime, but the men used their memories to escape into the freedom of the past and recall people, places and experiences they treasured. Their memories fed their hopes and anticipation for the future when they hoped to return to all that they loved and also find new opportunities. Terry depended on his faith. He drew strength from the sense of God's presence with him in his cell, so although he missed human company he was never alone.

Paul (the apostle who also experienced prison) wrote: "we are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair; struck down but not destroyed. We always carry within us the death and life of the risen Jesus". (2 Cor 4: 8-10)

This pattern we have as individuals we also adopt as a faith

community. Currently, we are being creative with how we cope with the present difficulties, we also look back with fond memories to the time when we were free to meet in different ways, to worship, pray and learn together, even to socialise! During this Lent we have time to focus on what lies ahead for us – to pray that we will be ready to start back with excitement and energy for what we will be called to be and do. Through the last year the new extension to St Owen's church has been taking shape but the building itself will not bring people to know and experience God's amazing and transforming love. It will be a much-needed tool which will support and facilitate our life and mission and give us new opportunities to serve God and the community.

This Lent is not too soon to be looking forward in prayer, in trust and hope, listening to God and beginning to think how we will plan and shape the future.

Loving God, help us to prepare for the future in prayer and thinking, to be open to the Spirit's guidance and open to new possibilities. Give us confidence in you as we discern what the future will be.

Dí Harpham

May the strength of God pilot us,
may the wisdom of God instruct us,
may the hand of God protect us,
may the word of God direct us.
Be always ours this day and for
evermore. – *St Patrick*

St Patrick's Day - 17th March



Lent in Bromham



Water Aid this Lent are promoting fund raising for people in poverty who are most affected by climate change and are most vulnerable to dangerous diseases and viruses especially at this time of COVID 19. This Lent we would like to ask you to, once again, collect in a jar your loose change or whatever you can afford and every penny will go to WaterAid towards providing clean, safe water which will help not only now but for generations to come.

Please use a jar you that have; we hope by Easter to collect the jars either at church or I can collect them. This of course will depend on lockdown but we hope that by then it will have eased. If you wish to donate direct you can contact me for details - Gift Aid forms will be available later.

As a country we don't have to think where clean and safe water is available, we hope to raise money to allow Water Aid to provide this to people who have no reliable water supply and are open to get diseases especially at this time of pandemic.

Thank you in advance for your help, any questions please call me.

Frances Bulmer Telephone No 01234 409916

Editor: 14th March is Mothering Sunday.

In praise of Mothers

A mother's love endures through all. - *Washington Irving*

Life doesn't come with a manual. It comes with a mother. - *Anon*

Mothers are like buttons. They hold everything together. - *Anon*

A mother understands what a child does not say. - *Jewish Proverb*

Parish News

Electronic or Print?

When the first Covid lockdown struck we asked you to consider receiving Parish News by e-mail to reduce the need for physical copies.

Parish News is now also available on the Benefice website at www.bromhambenefice.org.

With the prospect of the current lockdown coming to an end, **the question now for those taking the e-mail edition is this:** would you like to return to a printed copy of News?

We will continue to ask for a donation of 50p per copy towards printing costs.

Please let me know whether or not you wish to receive a printed copy at stowensnews@btinternet.com or 01234 826551. Thanks

Edward Jones
Editor

From the Registers:

Funerals at Crematorium:

2nd February Peter Churchman (Bromham)

16th February David Hodgkins (Oakley)

23rd February Betty Sadler (Oakley)

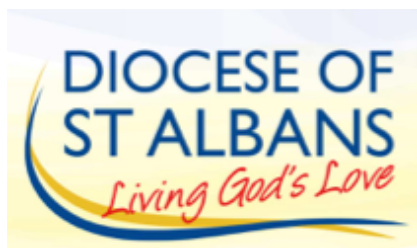
Funeral:

11th February Margaret Saunders (Oakley)

Burial/Burial of Ashes:

5th February Grace Weightman (Bromham)

8th February Gillian Harris (Bromham)



Editor: The Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the CofE, reports on one initiative against gambling.

Rt Revd Allan Smith
Bishop of St Albans

Battling bishop takes on the bookies

When a grieving family came to see the Bishop of St Albans, the encounter sparked a campaign that could transform the role of gambling in British public life. Church of England bishop Alan Smith was deeply impacted by the visit from a family whose son had taken his life because of his struggle with problem gambling.

In his role as a member of the House of Lords, he has since fought to combat gambling-related harm. Bishops who sit in the Lords are sometimes themselves reluctant to speak of their role in the House – concerned that some churchgoers may wish them to devote all their time to their dioceses.

But the bishop's response to the family's grief demonstrates the positive role that CofE bishops in the Lords can play. In a recent podcast interview with Church Times, the bishop recalled the visit from the family. "They sat in my study, they broke down. They said we don't know what to do.

We don't want this to happen to anyone else. Can you help?

"I felt very helpless. I listened to them, prayed with them, then I put some questions down in the House of Lords."

It became clear that the government did not have a lot of statistics

about the extraordinary growth in online gambling and the harm it was having, with possibly one or two people taking their lives every day in the UK.


After he raised the issue, Bishop Smith was inundated with people writing to him. Many told him about a family member who had taken their life because of problem gambling and urging him to continue with the campaign.

Several years on, there is now a coalition of around 150 peers – the largest lobby group in the Lords – seeking to lessen the impact of problem gambling. A report by a Select Committee is calling for widespread changes to the Gambling Act dating from 2005.

They want TV advertising of gambling to be restricted, and for the gambling industry to pay levies to meet the costs of tackling problem gambling. They point out that the NHS runs 14 problem gambling clinics at a time when funds are under desperate pressure.

Bishop Smith is also concerned about what he describes as the ‘gamblification’ of sport. He explained: “When I was young, we loved watching football and cheering our side on, but you didn’t have to gamble. The gambling industry has persuaded people that the need to bet is integral to sport.”

The Bishop has called on the Football Association to lead the way in tackling gambling, rather than having to respond to mounting public concern.

Debates around the bishops’ role in the Lords will no doubt continue, with critics calling for their removal. Supporters say the bishops maintain strong grassroots contacts in their dioceses and bring perspectives from local organisations and people. Many bring insights from their work with charities and other non-governmental organisations, as well as an important faith perspective. 

In response to a cover story in *the Spectator*: '*Holy Relic – The Church of England as we know it is disappearing*' published 4 February 2021, William Nye, Secretary General, Archbishops' Council of the Church of England has responded with the following Letter to the Editor (for publication). The letter reads as follows:

Sir,

As a longstanding and loyal reader of the *Spectator*, I was disappointed in your cover story about the Church of England.

I was amazed to read the ludicrous claim that the parish system is being dissolved like the monasteries, repeated without even a cursory check on whether this could possibly be true. We read of a supposed central take-over of independent dioceses and an imaginary national plan to roll out cuts and sell assets to fund more managers. The old canard that the Archbishops decided to suspend public worship last year at the height of the first wave of the pandemic, rather than the Government, did not even get a rudimentary qualification.

No one from the *Spectator* called the Church of England to ask whether any of these things were true.

This matters because truth matters. It matters because this kind of misinformation is damaging and demoralising to clergy and laity in every corner of England who have been worshipping God and serving their neighbours in extraordinary new ways, despite the restrictions we have all faced during this pandemic.

There is no national plan to roll out cuts to clergy or to buildings. We need our clergy and our lay volunteers - all are part of the people of God - and we need our church buildings, which are a precious resource for the whole nation. Some dioceses are having to adjust the balance of stipendiary (paid) clergy and other ministers; and to shift where clergy are deployed, following movements in the population. Yet we rejoice that we have seen an increase in the number of people coming forward to be trained and ordained as clergy. This year the

number of people being ordained into stipendiary ministry will be 43% higher than eight years ago.

Nor is there is a national drive to close churches. Yes, a small number of church buildings do close every year after a complex process in which alternatives are carefully explored. Yet we rejoice that we have also been reopening churches, and planting new congregations. In the last five years, we have planted or reopened or revived over a hundred churches – in towns and cities across England, in places such as Blackpool, Preston, Rotherham, Wigan, Dudley, Goole, Stockton-on-Tees, Mansfield, Swindon, Hastings, and Plymouth.

These are challenging times but facts and perspective are important. The Church of England has been worshipping God and serving our neighbours for many generations. I am confident that we will continue to do so, bringing the Gospel of Christ to every community for many generations to come.

William Nye

Secretary General, Archbishops' Council, The Church of England

Your daily walk

For many of us, that daily walk has become the high point of our day. After all, it is one of the few liberties we have left at the moment. Some of us go early, to enjoy the relative peace and quiet. Some of us go midday, to at least see other people, even if we can't talk to them. Others of us opt for dusk, the dark comfort of a street with lit houses and stars in the sky.

Whatever time you most enjoy, make sure you do make the time to go for your walk. Your mental and physical fitness can only improve!

Parish Pump website

St Owen's Extension Project - Update



A much anticipated milestone was reached on 18th February when the new door to the North Porch was installed. The door has been made taller than before by removing an unsightly "filler" between the top of the doorframe and the lintel and raising the original frame on stone blocks.

For Sale !



Two oak-framed glazed doors for sale (as seen)

formerly the entry to the North Porch
at St Owen's Parish Church, Bromham

Offers in the region of £250 to

e.jones142@btinternet.com or

tel 01234 826551

Thought to be at least 150 years old - Buyer collects

Dimensions 1920 x 600mm (each door)

Why not contact a lonely neighbour?

The public have been urged to write letters to their lonely neighbours, as the Government has announced a £7.5million cash injection for community-boosting activities.

It is hoped that people will “reach out virtually and help combat loneliness”, says Robert Jenrick, the Communities Secretary. This could be done either by “picking up the phone or writing a letter.”

He urges, “Let’s all do what we can to connect with our older neighbours, in a Covid-secure way, so they feel less alone and know how valuable they are to their communities at this time.”

The charity Age UK has said it reckons there to be about 1.4million older people in England who are “chronically lonely.”

Parish Pump website

FRIENDS OF ST OWEN'S 100 CLUB

**The Monthly Draw
will resume on Sunday 11th April
The draw will be made at
St Owen's Coffee on Zoom**



Dear Friends

We are once again collecting the yearly fee for membership of the Friends of St. Owen's. For those of you who may be unaware of this group you will not only be kept informed of projects, large and small, and events that happen in the Church but have the chance to participate in planning such events as well as having the right to vote at meetings of the Friends.

The yearly fee is just £5 per person and will, in future, be collected at the beginning of the year.

If you wish to become a member, or to renew your membership, please complete the form overleaf and return to me at 74 Woodland Drive, Bromham MK43 8JU or send an email with your details to francesbulmer@btinternet.com

Payment can be made by cheque payable to Friends of St Owen's or by bank transfer to NatWest Bank:

Acct name: Friends of St Owen

Sort code: 60-02-13

Acct no: 63010321

Please include as a reference - FOSO/Your name

Many thanks for your support

Frances Bulmer

Membership form on reverse

Membership Form for the Friends of St Owen's



Name(s):

Address:

Tel No:

email address:

Membership Fee:

Donation:

Thank you for wanting to become a Member. On receiving the completed form and fee your Membership Card will be issued.

Signature(s) of Member(s)

Membership No(s)
if known

Data Protection Policy

It is the policy of the Friends of St Owen's to retain only that data in relation to members, donors and interested parties that will enable the Friends to keep correspondents abreast of progress with projects in support of the Parish Church of St Owen, Bromham and to inform them of forthcoming projects and events. We do not share data with any other organisation. Anyone wishing to inspect the data held about them or have it removed from our records, should contact the Hon Secretary FoSO.

WALK WITH BROMHAM WI - A VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE

My friend and I met early in the morning to catch the bus to Cambridge. I hadn't been there for some time so was looking forward to it with some anticipation. After a short while the bus arrived – a double decker no 905 - replacing the usual X5.

Having boarded the bus, we went upstairs to find the two front seats were empty and we sat down to enjoy our journey, hoping the driver was a careful soul. He was, thankfully.

It was lovely seeing all the changing colours of the trees even though it suggested autumn is nearly here, but we were well wrapped up against the wind. The new bus took us along the familiar route through St. Neots and on towards Cambridge until the turn off for Cambourne, which we hadn't expected.

At this point we began taking greater notice of our journey, neither of us having been through there before. Although it is a relatively new development, it has settled in well with trees and flower beds growing healthily. Some of the buildings were not to my taste but there were many variations, which made it look more interesting than some new towns. The roads were rather twisty, though, but the driver took them at a reasonable pace and we didn't feel as though we were on a fairground ride.

Returning to the main road we wondered where we would be taken next. This turned out to be beyond the Maddingley park and ride, going on to the next junction which took us eventually to the Science Park. This was a totally new experience going past very modern buildings and wondering what was going on inside each of them. New sites are being developed and there were silver birch trees laying in their sides ready to be planted among the buildings, with huge stones being hauled into place to enhance the area. It was a very interesting circuit and, on the return journey there were lots of young workers to be picked up and we felt sorry for them because the bus driver wouldn't let them on the bus as it was full to Covid

capacity.

When we finally arrived in Cambridge and got off the bus we walked into the centre of the city for coffee (and a cake, of course) before first exploring the shops and then the byways of the old area. There was an odd atmosphere as there were not many people around – mostly students – but that gave us the opportunity to see the tourist sites more clearly.

We made our way to Michaelhouse for lunch and the staff there were well prepared for their customers, with sanitizers and contact forms or codes plus well-spaced tables. After a warming soup and a delicious lemon and raspberry drizzle cake we made our way towards the Whipple Museum, but it is closed. Turning away from the front door we noticed a tipsy house with windows and doors which defy gravity but somehow remain standing. We proceeded to the river to enjoy a walk along the bankside, but we didn't get far as we decided to sit and watch the happenings close to the weir.

First, we noticed a group of young girls being given a lesson in punting from a young man, too well-dressed for it. The girl who was standing on the back of the boat was very slight and the pole seemed rather heavy for her, but her feet were firmly planted and she bravely gave it a go! The punt veered slowly from one side of the river to the other, while her friends sat and giggled in the seats. The 'driver' was not aware that the pole doesn't push the punt in the direction which you would expect, so her friends eventually realised they would have to push off from the bank or the moored punts if they were not to crash. I felt very sorry for her but it was quite amusing all the same. Next to them was a party of Japanese students; one of their party hadn't turned up so there was a lot of running along the tow-path and shouting before they got going.

While this was happening a man and his grand-daughter cycled by. They had obviously been enjoying a day out with a visit to a burger venue, where they had been given a party bag, which unfortunately chose this moment to fall to pieces. A plastic toy and two pieces of

paper fell to the path followed by a loud wail from the little girl. Faced with this dilemma the man had to make the decision which we've all had to make if we have children! He had a screaming child and an unstable vehicle to cope with as well as people around watching what he would do.

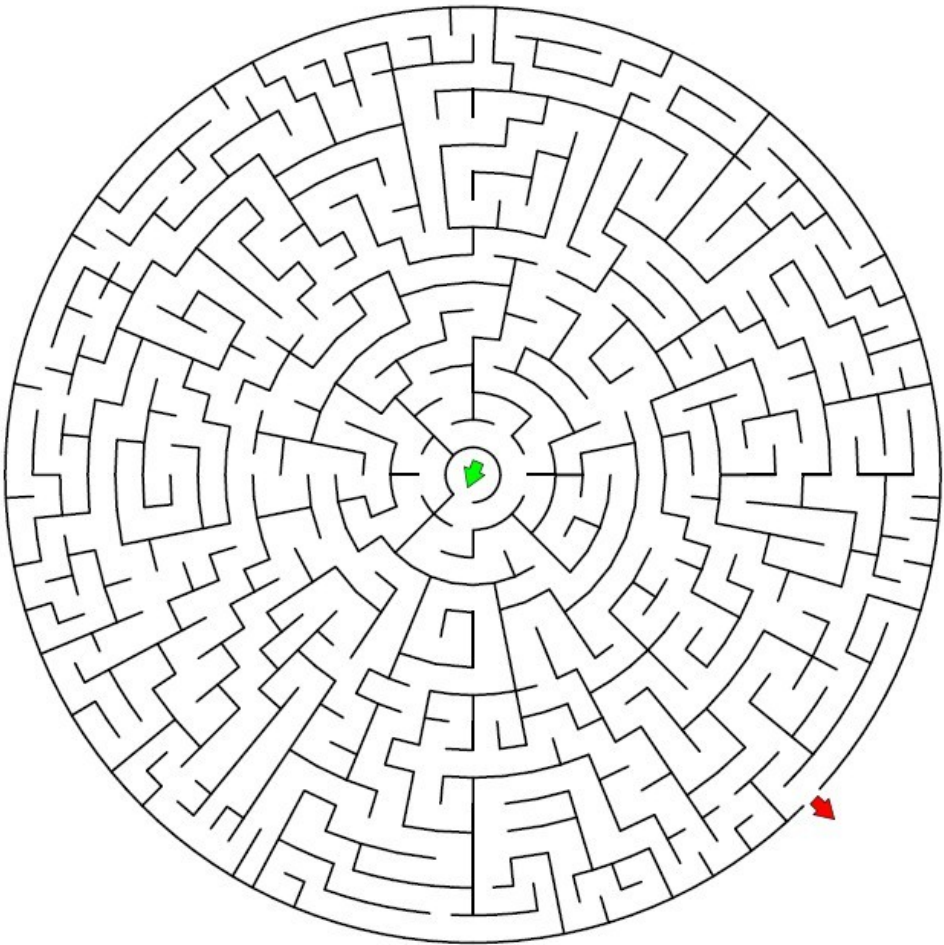
The man realised that if he tried to balance his bike and left it to retrieve the toys, the cycle might over balance with the wriggling child, so he put down the bracket and also leaned it against the next bench. Unfortunately, the wind picked up at this point and blew the pieces of paper into the river. More screams from the girl. 'I want the sticker,' she sobbed. He went to the bank and looked down into the water and he could see the paper, which he reached for but it wasn't the sticker which she wanted!

The poor man took his grandchild away, with goodness knows what promises to try to calm her down, and we watched him walk away from us into the distance. As it was getting colder, we decided to make our way back to the bus, via narrow lanes and passing many houses being renovated. One site was a Georgian terrace and outside a builder was putting scaffold poles on his lorry. He put the end down and pushed it along the base which made the most awful screeching sound - think of fingernails scraping down the blackboard! Ugh! I made a comment and the builder laughed. Probably he didn't get much reaction to his work but the sound took me straight back to the classroom.

We arrived at the bus stop to board the one standing there and we found we were the last passengers to be allowed on this one, so we were grateful not to have to wait in the cold for another half an hour. We couldn't go upstairs this time due to spacing, but we enjoyed the journey home with a different view. We also enjoyed the visit as there were fewer people to jostle with and we could see more – one unexpected advantage of Covid 19.

Best wishes to everyone from Bromham WI - *Diane Bell*

Can you find a way out from the middle?

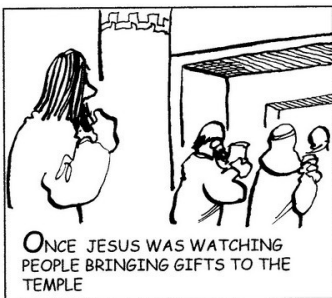


For younger readers.....

The Widow's little coins



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE JESUS WAS WATCHING PEOPLE BRINGING GIFTS TO THE TEMPLE

HE SAW THE RICH PEOPLE BRINGING THEIR MONEY

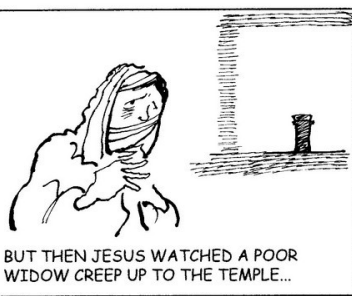


THEY MADE A BIG FUSS

THE PROUD PEOPLE WANTED EVERYONE TO SEE HOW RICH THEY WERE.



THEY MADE SURE EVERYONE COULD SEE THEM PUTTING THEIR MONEY IN THE BOX



BUT THEN JESUS WATCHED A POOR WIDOW CREEP UP TO THE TEMPLE...

...AND DONATE TWO SMALL COPPER COINS.



"THE WIDOW HAS GIVEN THE GREATEST GIFT", EXPLAINED JESUS. "IT IS WORTH SO MUCH MORE THAN ALL THE RICH PEOPLE'S GIFTS!" see Luke 21:1-4

God in the Sciences

This series is written by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

What will March bring? Mental health ideas for uncertain times

We may all have rather mixed feelings on reaching March this year. On the one hand, it is lovely to see the onset of Spring, and vaccinations and better weather may make handling the pandemic a little easier. On the other hand, marking a year from the start of the first UK lockdown will be painful for some, especially as many of us are likely to be experiencing restrictions or ongoing hardships for quite some time. We may need to find new ways to keep going, so here are some suggestions that draw on both science and Christian theology.

Getting outside

Time outdoors in a natural environment is very good for you – and you can't argue with the happy hormones produced by exercise. Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood, and increased life satisfaction. Enjoying creation can also help us connect with God.

Looking outside

If you are truly stuck indoors, try putting bird feeders outside your window so creation comes to you. This is also an act of kindness (see below)!

Lament and praise

The Psalms are a rich resource to help us express both our grief and our thanks to God. Try reading one or two each day.

Journaling

Keep a journal of thoughts, experiences or practices you have engaged with during the day. Constructing a personal narrative or story is

now recognised as a very powerful psychological and spiritual tool for building resilience. It is also a vital learning tool that we can go back to when tough times return in the future.

Acts of kindness

Helping or encouraging someone else is obviously a good thing to do in itself, but it also has a very positive effect on the giver - spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and even physically. Whichever way you look at it, finding new ways to show kindness to others can be a very effective way to help ourselves feel better too.

Gratitude

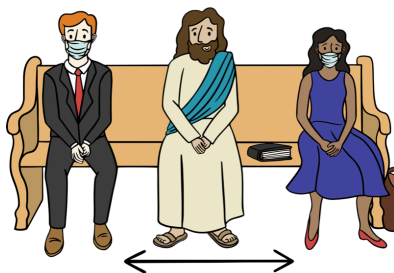
Gratitude is another natural drug – in a sense – that can help us feel better. Try keeping a grateful diary, adding a few things each day.

Laugh, sing, make music, dance

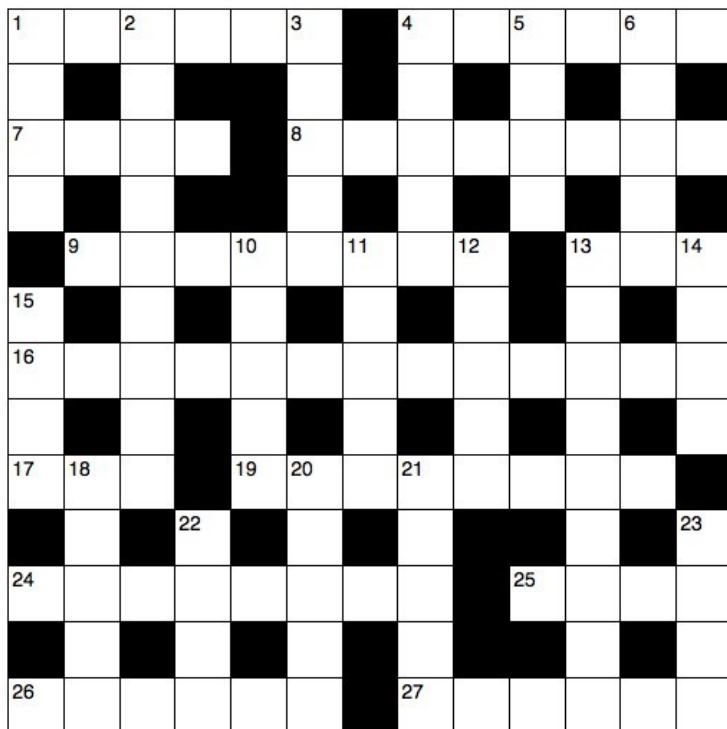
All of these activities are deeply rooted in our physical and mental makeup. You may have forgotten how great they feel, especially in times of sadness, but we can learn from children who do them very naturally.

I hope these ideas may help bring us closer to God, each other, and His creation.

LEAVE ROOM FOR JESUS



Please sit 6 ft. apart



Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
- 4 'On a hill far away stood an old — cross' (6)
- 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)
- 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth(Luke 2:1) (8)
- 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus'(Philippians 2:5) (8)
- 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this (Luke 8:16) (3)
- 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)
- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
- 19 Where the Gaderene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)

- 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23) (8)
- 25 The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical scholar (4)
- 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)
- 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)
- 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)
- 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
- 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 9:18)
- 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
- 6 To put forth (5)
- 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
- 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
- 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26) (5)
- 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
- 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me' (Luke 22:34) (4)
- 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
- 18 'When I — , I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
- 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
- 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
- 22 Does (anag.) (4)
- 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)

Solution on page 34

Editor: The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'... this letter was written before the pandemic.



On how to deflect those staff appraisals

The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

So, your vicar has introduced staff appraisal for all the officers who work for your church, including yourself. It seems a very dangerous innovation; as far as I am concerned, ministry is only successful when parishioners have no idea what the clergy get up to.

I imagine that he will look at the number of services you take in a year. Funerals can only be increased if you resort to murder, which is likely to be frowned on – although I have been sorely tempted during endless church council meetings. Perhaps if you take a flask of water wherever you go and if you find a baby unattended, you could resort to a spontaneous baptism. That would get your numbers up, even if returning mothers may marvel at the highly localised and brief shower that seemed to have taken place over the pram.

Visiting targets are easily increased. Compile a list of when parishioners will be out and call on those days; a card through their letterbox will prove to your vicar that you were there. Should they happen to be in, mention that you are collecting for the organ fund and they will immediately excuse themselves for an important appointment. You are then free to move on to clock another visit.

Your vicar is also bound to want to see the congregation increasing. This is not sustainable, and you should put a stop to such ambitions at once. It is easily done. All you have to do is to approach your

friends at the local football club and bribe them with your homemade beer to come along to church several Sunday mornings in a row. If you give them enough beer BEFORE the service, they will be likely to make just enough muted disruption as to leave your vicar a bit rattled, and thinking that perhaps after all, 'less' is 'more' when it comes to the congregation.

But whatever you do, make sure that you never preach a better sermon than he does. You don't want anyone thanking you at the door for your 'so interesting sermon' in front of him, when they have been sleeping through his sermons for years. If you offend the vicar this way, he will take swift revenge, and ask you to organise the parish summer fete.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Peace

After a very long and boring sermon the parishioners glumly filed out of the church past the minister. Towards the end of the queue was a thoughtful person who always commented on the sermons. "Vicar, today your sermon reminded me of the peace and love of God."

The vicar was thrilled. "Nobody has ever said anything like that about my preaching before. Tell me why."

"Because it endured forever."

A Prayer for Families

Dear Father God,

In this month when we especially think about mothers, we thank you for the families and friends you have given us. You know how hard it has been to have been separated over these past months, how much we have missed and longed for their hugs, their physical presence and fellowship.

As we hold on to the hope of overcoming the pandemic, help us to be strengthened by the power of the love we receive – and to strengthen others by the love we give.

May we know that, wherever we are, whatever our circumstances, we and our loved ones are held safe and connected by your unfailing love for us, revealed in Jesus – who is alive – and from whom nothing, no pandemic, no man-made turmoil, absolutely nothing and no-one can separate us, when we put our trust in Him.

Thank you, Father, that we belong to your family. Thank you for the love and security we have in you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

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Where there's a need there's also a SCAM!

Remember to remain vigilant as criminals begin to take advantage of the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine to commit fraud. The vaccine is free - you will NOT be asked to pay.

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If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up.

If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to **report@phishing.gov.uk**.

Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Observations on modern life

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

A filing cabinet is a place where you can lose things systematically.

Two choir members recently got married. They met by chants.

The most welcome guest is the one who knows when to go home.

Sudoku - Medium

	5		8			4	6	
		1				3	7	
			2					
		8	6	7				
7								9
				5	9	2		
					6			
	2	3				5		
	7	4			2		9	

Solution on page 34



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Solution to puzzle on page 26

P	L	A	N	E	T		R	U	G	G	E	D
A		D			R		I		U		X	
T	R	U	E			A	U	G	U	S	T	U
H		L			C		I		T		D	
	A	T	T	I	T	U	D	E		B	E	D
S		E		R		R		S		L		E
P	A	R	T	I	C	I	P	A	T	I	O	N
E		E		S		E		U		N		Y
W	A	R		H	I	L	L	S	I	D	E	
	W		O		D		Y			N		L
B	A	L	D	H	E	A	D		B	E	D	E
	K		E		A		I			S		A
C	E	N	S	U	S		A	R	I	S	E	N

Solution to puzzle on page 32

9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1
4	8	1	9	6	5	3	7	2
3	6	7	2	4	1	9	5	8
2	9	8	6	7	3	1	4	5
7	4	5	1	2	8	6	3	9
1	3	6	4	5	9	2	8	7
5	1	9	3	8	6	7	2	4
8	2	3	7	9	4	5	1	6
6	7	4	5	1	2	8	9	3



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