

Parish News in Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden



May 2021



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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 Di Harpham	918691
	Revd Paula Vennells	

Benefice Administration

Website &.....}	Administrator	
Wedding.....}	(Mon, Wed & Thurs 9.30 -12.00	
organisation..}	Tues, 9.30am -1.00pm)	
Fees Accounts...}	administrator@bromhambenefice.org	
Safeguarding Officer -	Judith Denyer	07981 928522

Parish News

Editor	Mr Edward Jones	stowensnews@btinternet.com	826551
Distribution	Mrs B Cryer		825463
<i>Pew Leaflet</i>	Sarah Smale, <i>as Administrator</i>		

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

2nd May

9.00am

10.30am

10.30am

5th Sunday of Easter

Holy Communion (Bromham)

Holy Communion (Oakley)

Morning Service by Zoom

9th May

9.00am

10.30am

10.30am

6.00pm

6th Sunday of Easter

Holy Communion (Stagsden)

Holy Communion (Bromham)

Morning Service by Zoom

Evensong by Zoom

13th May

Ascension Day - Zoom Service at 7.00pm

16th May

9.00am

10.30am

10.30am

7th Sunday of Easter

Holy Communion (Oakley)

Holy Communion (Bromham)

Morning Service by Zoom

23rd May

9.00am

10.30am

10.30am

6.00pm

Pentecost

Holy Communion (Stagsden)

Holy Communion (Oakley)

Holy Communion by Zoom

Evensong by Zoom

30th May

9.00am

10.30am

Trinity Sunday

} Services and venues to be confirmed
}

NB To avoid breaches of Covid-19 requirements please do tell a Churchwarden in advance if you wish to attend a service in church. Also, please check the Pew Leaflet or our website as venues sometimes have to change at short notice.

From the Vicarage



The great 'forgotten' festival of the church almost always happens during May (13th this year): coming 40 days after Easter Sunday, Ascension Day falls on a Thursday and is overlooked by most in the busyness of daily life. In my schooldays, we went to church on Ascension Day for a service and then had

the rest of the day off – this was unusual even then, and only happened because it was a Church School with its own tradition. Another tradition to mark Ascension Day began in some Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, where students go to the highest accessible point of their College, often the Chapel tower or roof, and sing an appropriate anthem or hymn.

A couple of weeks ago, I ascended the tower at St Owen's for the first time, to check the roof for leaks rather than to sing an Ascension Day hymn. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon, so we had a clear view of the landscape around, and it was a great opportunity to see the parish – indeed the whole benefice – from a new perspective, the river winding past, Stagsden in the distance to the west and a glimpse of Oakley in the opposite direction. I could watch the cars driving along the new A6 and builders working on the new houses going up nearby.

Looking down into the park below the tower, people were enjoying walks, some alone, others with dogs or a friend, and someone was tending a grave. I was above it all, enjoying the moment and appreciating a real 'bird's-eye view' of the area.

And then we came back down the spiral staircase to ground level, to the realities of day-to-day life and the tasks that were waiting for me.

Many people, and most religions, think that God is somewhere 'up there', like being up in the tower, but higher. When life is sunny he is present but remote, looking down on them from afar but not knowing or caring about what is happening way below. And on a cloudy day, when things are difficult, he appears completely cut-off from the world. But Christianity is unique in its belief that God has experienced life 'on the ground', when he came to earth as the man Jesus who lived a human life, suffering the pain of death by crucifixion, and then rising from the dead as we have just remembered at Easter.

On Ascension Day we celebrate Jesus going back to heaven to reign as King, which St Luke describes as going up and into a cloud – the sense of physical ascension as well as of his return to his rightful place in glory. So perhaps its true – God is indeed 'up there', having done his bit and left the world to continue in its own way?

Before he went, Jesus promised that he wouldn't leave the disciples alone, but would send them the Holy Spirit – and 10 days after Ascension Day we celebrate his coming at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is God present here on earth, active and involved in our world, caring when people hurt, loving the poor, reaching out to each and every one of us. Jesus has ascended back to heaven – but his work goes on, and empowered by the Holy Spirit we all have our own part to play in it.

Rev'd Catherine

During Christian Aid Week, will you make a stand for better futures?

We have **7 days** to make a huge stand with families like Rose's, and millions more people across Kenya whose lives are threatened daily by storms, flash floods and drought. Let's stand together against climate chaos. Let's work with communities to help build reliable water systems – and better futures.

Low cost dams save lives. And help people stand stronger.

Every drop of water that falls is precious. So there needs to be a simple, sustainable and ingenious way to successfully collect it. Earth dams do just that. And your gift today can help build them.

These huge basins are dug in the ground to collect and store rain water. It's then piped into taps for people like Rose to draw from. You only have to look at Florence and her community in the image opposite to see the difference an earth dam can make.

Crops grow, land can be farmed, and families no longer go hungry. People stand strong and are better prepared for whatever life throws at them.



**TODAY
WE
DIG**



**TODAY
WE
BUILD**



**TODAY
WE
THRIVE**

Everyone should be given the chance to thrive. Please give a gift today.

H R H PRINCE PHILIP DUKE OF EDINBURGH

BOOK OF CONDOLENCE

**In normal times your Parish Church
would provide a Book of Condolence
for parishioners to express their appreciation of
the life of His Royal Highness.**

**Due to Covid-19 precautions this is
not practicable at this time, and there are opportunities
online to record a message.**

**However, we shall be compiling a Book of local messages
for future reference, and you are invited to send a note to our
Churchwardens for inclusion.**

**Either email to trelydan@me.com
or put a written note in the box outside
74 Woodland Drive, Bromham MK43 8JU**

Benefice APCM Dates

11 May Oakley APCM at 7.30pm by Zoom

16 May Bromham APCM after 10.30am Service by Zoom

17 May Stagsden APCM at 2.30pm by Zoom



The Emerging Church of England

The Emerging Church of England is the name for four strands of work which together will help leaders in every diocese to discern the shape, life and activity of the Church of England in the

2020s. The main aim of the Emerging Church of England is to follow a shared vision - to share what God has done for us in Jesus Christ and continues to do through the Holy Spirit - with simpler national governance structures.

This work began before the coronavirus pandemic but has been intensified and adapted in light of the changing circumstances. The work is to:

- Review our strategic context: the Church and the impact of the social, political and economic world around us
- Determine key strategic priorities for the next ten years through a shared Vision and Strategy
- Deliver simpler governance structures
- Transform our national operating model for the future i.e. the practical ways the Church is organised and functions.

The work is overseen by a Coordinating Group, chaired by the Bishop of Manchester and made up of members of the Church Commissioners, the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops. Its job is to recommend proposals to the governing bodies to ensure the necessary changes happen at the right time, as well as ensuring the different areas of work join up well.

Four groups - Recovery, Vision & Strategy, Governance, and Transforming Effectiveness - have been tasked with consulting the wider Church, providing recommendations

and guidance, and transparently communicating their progress and findings.

Recovery

The Recovery Group, led by the Bishop of London, looks at how to respond to and interpret changing government advice on church buildings and services. Its responsibilities also include supporting churches in reaching out to existing and new worshippers through digital means; the Church of England's response to social need; and the wellbeing of church and communities.

Vision and Strategy

Led by the Archbishop of York, this group works with dioceses on how best to use the resources, abilities and time available to make decisions about what our priorities should be and how they will work themselves out through the complex and dispersed diversity of a church like ours.

Governance

The Governance Group, led by the Bishop of Leeds, will review the effectiveness of the national governance structures and functions of the Church of England, and make recommendations to the Archbishops for possible changes to improve the functioning and effectiveness of those structures, processes and activities.

Transforming Effectiveness

This group, led by the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, focuses on the practical ways the Church is organised and gets things done that enable the local church to flourish. The whole system will be looked at: what should continue as is, what should be changed, and what should just stop. *[Your PCCs are already playing their part at Deanery level - Ed]*

Famine may be on the way

That is the stark warning of the Disasters Emergency Committee coalition of UK aid agencies, who says that the economic devastation caused by the pandemic is leading to increasing hunger in poorer countries.

Thousands are likely to die this year as the knock-on effect of Covid-19 worldwide has left millions less able to afford food. South Sudan and Yemen are already on the brink of famine, and Afghanistan and Democratic Republic of the Congo are also in deep trouble.

Just at a time when Covid-19 and wars have crippled the economic and health systems of many countries, humanitarian funding has dropped as donor countries also struggle.

Saleh Saeed, the committee's chief executive, explained: "People living in places made perilous by conflict, violence and climate disasters are coping as best they can, but the odds are stacked against them. The knock-on effects of the pandemic have crippled economies, making the world's poorest people even poorer."

From the Registers:

Funerals:

15 April Alan Brown (Oakley)

Burials of Ashes:

24 April Betty Dewar (Bromham)

23rd May - Not a Ghost but a Gift

By Canon David Winter

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

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

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

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



Pentecost is in effect the birthday of the Church.

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

Coming soon...



Following on from our online Lent groups, starting in May we will be using The Bible Course (published by Bible Society) to explore the bigger picture of the Bible, and its relevance to us today. We will meet on Wednesday evenings on Zoom for 8 sessions – including video

content, discussion times, opportunity for personal reflection and encouragement to dip into the Bible individually between sessions.

St Owen's Extension Project - Update



While there is still a deal of finishing work to be done plus the kitchen to be fitted and the meeting room to be carpeted, a provisional date has been chosen for Bishop Richard to bless and officially open the extension at the 1030 service on this date.

SPONSOR THE FINISHING TOUCHES!

With construction work almost finished on St Owen's extension, it's time to turn our attention to fitting out the kitchen and carpeting the hall. We have already been promised a set of crockery and we are now asking if you could sponsor any of the items on the shopping list below.

There's lots to choose from starting at £10 for a sq mtr of carpet tile to £1434 for a dishwasher. We are looking at commercial standard stainless steel units which are a bit more expensive than domestic units, but desirable for longevity and robustness. This is important if we are to let out the facilities to outside parties.

But if your budget won't stretch to the whole of a large item then you could part sponsor an item like the cooker.

Any offers would be welcomed by Bill Wilgress FoSO Treasurer at 17 Molivers Lane, Bromham MK43 8JT [Chqs payable to Friends of St Owens & endorsed "Kitchen" on the back or transfers to Natwest Sort Code 60-02-13 Acct No 63010321 using reference "Kitchen/Your name".]

Carpet tiles at £10 / Sq Metre.
(approx. 50 Sq Mtrs required)

Corner units: 2 at £490

Sink base: £428

4 Drawer unit: £721

Full height base unit. 2 off at
£267

Full height corner unit:
£492

End panels: 5 off at £104

Deep base end panel: £130

Base filler: £54

Base solo support panel: £332

Wall cupboard: £471

Handwash basin: £123

Taps : £35 (Already
sponsored)

Mixer taps: 2 off at £247

Fridge: £335 (Already
sponsored)

Commercial standard cooker:
£1240 (Half sponsored)

Cooker hood fume filtration
unit: £1064

Commercial standard
dishwasher: £1434

**FRIENDS OF ST OWEN'S 100 CLUB
PRIZE WINNERS APRIL 2021**

First Prize - Paula

Second Prize - Margaret

Third Prize - Matthew

Fourth Prize - Emma

Fifth Prize - Clair

Editor: Julian of Norwich also lived in a time of plague.

How long, O Lord?

How long until life gets really back to normal, and the pandemic is brought under control?

If you feel like asking God that, you're in good company. This past year has taken its toll on our relationships, our economy, and on our collective mental health.

'How long, O Lord?' is a question that has been commonly asked by the Bible's poets, as well as many saints down the centuries.

Mother Julian of Norwich, whose feast day we remember this month, asked the question back in the 14th century. She was no stranger to pandemics herself, having suffered from the plague in 1372.

After much prayer and meditation, she was given an answer that has echoed down the centuries. In her 'Revelations of Divine Love' she wrote that God had revealed to her that:

"All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well." "He said not 'Thou shalt not be tempested, thou shalt not be travailed, thou shalt not be dis-eased'; but He said, 'Thou shalt not be overcome.'"

That is a promise that we can hang on to: all shall be well in the end. But it is also necessary to add: if it is not well with you today, then it is not yet the end.

This is a perspective on life that is full of faith, of hope, of trust in the goodness and victory of God. The psalms are full of it, and always trust in God for the final outcome.

We can have this perspective, too, and perhaps share it with our neighbours.

Parish Pump website

100 years of the British Legion

One hundred years ago, on 15th May 1921, the British Legion was founded in the aftermath of the First World War, to provide support to veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependants. 50 years ago – on its golden anniversary – it became the Royal British Legion under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.



It was created at a time when two million people were unemployed. More than six million had served in the war: of those who came back, 1.75 million had suffered some kind of disability, and half of those were disabled permanently.

Four organisations came together at the instigation of Lancastrian Lance Bombardier Tom Lister, who was angered at the Government's unwillingness to help, and Field Marshal Earl Haig, who had been Commander in Chief of the British Forces. The Legion campaigned for fair treatment of those who given everything for their country, and it continues this work today.

In 1922, the Legion's poppy factory opened in the Old Kent Road, London, with 40 disabled men manufacturing 1000 poppies a week. The first Poppy Day was held that same year. The Festival of Remembrance began in 1927.

At first membership of the Legion was confined to ex-Service personnel, but it was expanded to include serving members of the Forces in 1981.

Parish Pump website

1st May - Philip, the apostle with common sense

Is there someone in church whom you respect for their spirituality and common sense combined? Someone you feel easy about approaching to ask questions? That person's patron saint should be Philip.

Philip came from Bethsaida and was a disciple of Jesus from early on. He knew how to lead others to Jesus; he brought Nathanael (or Bartholomew) to Him in a calm, kindly way. He knew how to do some financial forecasting; at the feeding of the 5,000 it was he who pointed out that without divine help, even 200 pennyworth of bread wasn't going to feed that crowd.

He was the one whom the Greeks approached when they wanted to ask Jesus to show them the Father, but didn't quite have the nerve to approach Jesus directly.

People had confidence in Philip's spirituality, common sense and kindliness. Such a person is a gift to any church! In art, the Apostle Philip has been represented either with a cross, or with loaves of bread. *Parish Pump website*



A Christian may not always be conscious of the Holy Spirit's presence, but he would not even be a Christian in his absence.
- John Blanchard (English preacher and writer)

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.

Finding Expression – and God’s Response – in Lament

The question of suffering comes up regularly in discussions about science and faith. I once visited a school to speak to some of the older teenagers. One of the pupils had sadly passed away from cancer a few weeks before and his classmates asked, “How God could let this happen?” Of course, these young people’s questions about where God was in this situation were important. But the chaplain also gently reminded the class that their friend’s family were Christians, and that they were finding that their experience of loss had brought them even closer to God than before.



One way that grief can bring us near to God is when we share it with Him, telling Him exactly how we feel. The biblical writers had no scruples about expressing themselves to God, giving vent to emotions we often hold back in a church context. As my colleague Roger Abbott has written in his book on ‘Unanswered’ Prayer, “Let us not confuse reverence with spiritual prudishness. Perhaps honesty, the way it feels, is precisely what God is waiting to hear from us.”

About one third of the Psalms express some form of grief. The

book of Job is a series of responses to one man's suffering as he loses his children, property and health in quick succession. Lamentations is also one long outpouring of sadness at what happened to Israel under the Babylonians. Some of the prophets, especially Jeremiah, also express their pain at these sorts of events – which reflect something of God's own feelings at the suffering of His people.

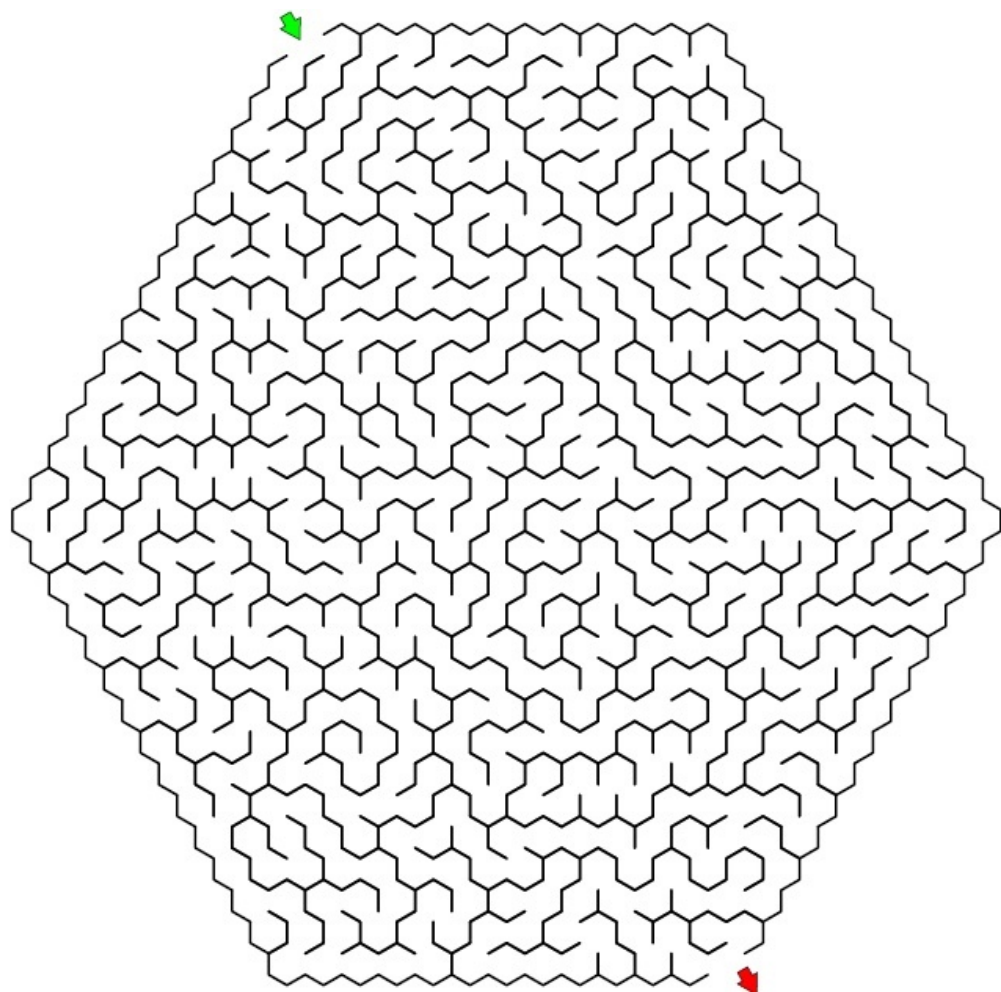
Most of these biblical authors would have had access to Scriptures that encouraged them to turn to God whatever the circumstances. Emboldened by their knowledge of His character and promises, these divinely inspired writers even express their anger to God about the things He lets happen, or complain that He seems to act unfairly or ignore them in their plight. Not only do these people let out all their feelings without fear of reprisal, but they also clearly expect a helpful answer. Some record a resolution to their troubles – often simply because God speaks to and comforts them, enabling them to keep going.

The biblical writers demonstrated that God can handle pretty much anything – anger, blame, bitterness – if we are actively looking to Him for help. As Pete Greig of the 24-7 prayer movement has written, “pain that is not expressed can never be transformed”.

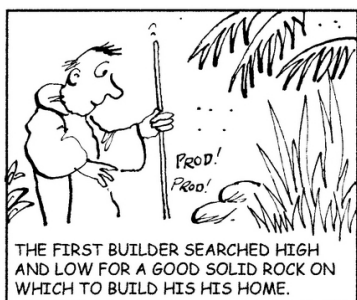
Finding

The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in the dark.

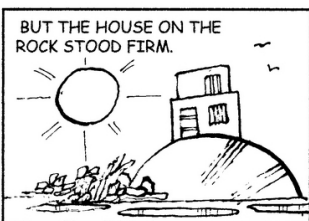
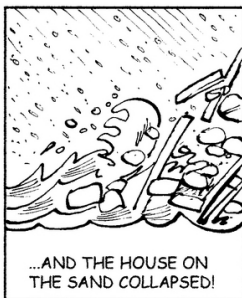
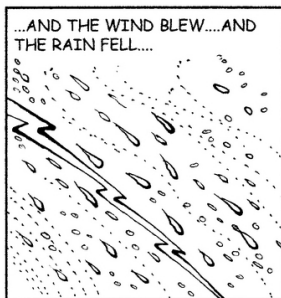
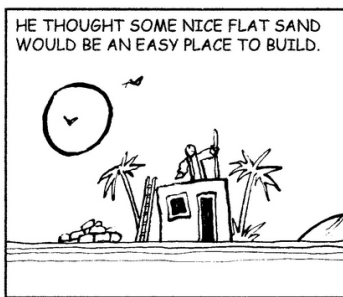
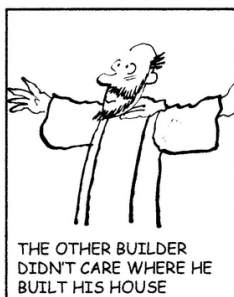
Can you find a way through from top to bottom?



For younger readers.....



AT LONG, LONG LAST HE
FOUND THE IDEAL SPOT.



**JESUS EXPLAINED -
IT'S IMPORTANT OUR LIVES HAVE
A FIRM FOUNDATION.**

Editor: This is a part of a comprehensive report on the amazing progress that the C of E has made this past year through moving more online.

Millions join worship online during the pandemic

The Church of England's national online services alone have attracted more than 3.7 million views since the first restrictions on gatherings for public worship to limit the spread of Covid-19 were introduced.

Clips and content from the services have been seen 40 million times on social media channels.

The Church of England's prayer and discipleship apps – through which people can join in ancient services of morning and evening prayer from wherever they are – have been accessed eight million times, up 50 per cent on the previous year.

The figures for the online services are thought to be just the tip of the iceberg, as churches' response to the pandemic triggered a major change in the way Christians worship and reach out to their neighbours.

At least 20,000 services and other online events are now listed on the Church of England's 'church-finder' website [AChurchNearYou](#). 15 months ago, there were none.

And a special hymn download service, designed for local churches to use as part of online worship, has seen more than a million downloads.

As churches look ahead, many are assessing how to incorporate the lessons of the last year into their regular patterns of worship and outreach after the pandemic.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "The last year has been a time of loss, separation and pain for everyone.

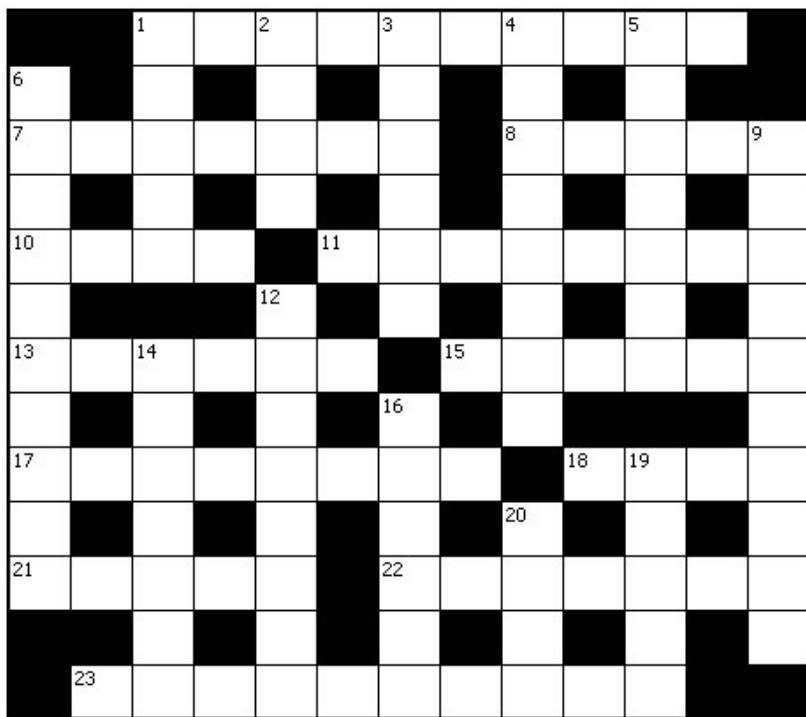
Not always being able to meet together for prayer and worship has made that even more difficult and I long for the day when we can gather together before God's face.

"Yet amid all of this, God has been with us and has done something new which we could not have imagined a year ago. We have sung the Lord's song in a virtual foreign land. As we look and plan ahead it's not a question of either online worship or meeting in-person, but of how we will be shaped by the experience and commitments of the last year, to try new things, to value the things we perhaps took for granted before, and to reach out to more people with the invitation to participate in the good news of Jesus Christ."

There are several apps that you may find useful including the Church of England's Daily Prayer app, offering traditional services of Morning, Evening and Night Prayer, which was accessed 4.4 million times, a rise of 55 per cent. The Lectionary app, which includes the calendar, readings and prayer for the Church's year, was accessed 1.7million times, up 21 per cent.

Other apps include Time to Pray, which offers simple Daytime and Night Prayer services with audio, and Reflections for Daily Prayer, offering daily Bible reflections, were each accessed 400,000 times; Sunday Worship which had 240,000 opens, and the Reflections on the Psalms and Daily Prayer for Thy Kingdom Come with 160,000 together.

To spend an hour worrying on our knees is not prayer. Indeed, there are times when it is our duty, having committed a problem to God in prayer, to stop praying and to trust and to do the necessary work to arrive at a solution.
- Oliver Barclay (*British academic and Lay Reader*)



Across

- 1 Sense of right and wrong (*1 Corinthians 8:7*) (10)
 7 Coming (*John 11:17*) (7)
 8 'All I have is — , and all you have is mine' (*John 17:10*) (5)
 10 Smarten (*Acts 9:34*) (4)
 11 Hold back (*Job 9:13*) (8)
 13 Member of the Society of Friends (6)
 15 At ague (anag.) (6)
 17 Citizen of the Greek capital (8)
 18 So be it (*Galatians 6:18*) (4)
 21 Twentieth-century poet and dramatist who wrote *Murder in the Cathedral*, T.S. — (5)
 22 Empowers (*Philippians 3:21*) (7)

23 Imposing (1 Samuel 9:2) (10)

Down

1 Healed (*Luke 7:21*) (5)

2 Central space in a church (4)

3 Co-founder of Spring Harvest and General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance 1983–97, Clive — (6)

4 Moses killed one when he saw him beating a Hebrew labourer (*Exodus 2:12*) (8)

5 Bravery (*Acts 4:13*) (7)

6 It interrupted Paul and Silas singing hymns in a Philippian jail (*Acts 16:26*) (10)

9 Transgression (*Psalms 36:1*) (10)

12 Irish province in which Dublin is situated (8)

14 Same hit (anag.) (7)

16 'The Spirit of God was hovering over the —' (*Genesis 1:2*) (6)

19 Author of the immortal stories of Winnie the Pooh, A.A. — (5)

20 Cab (4)

Solution on page 34

Editor: David Pickup, a solicitor, considers the challenge of dealing with emails.

Emails - a blessing or a problem?

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. (James 3 v 9-10)

I wonder what St James would say about emails! He had plenty to say about how what we say can cause lots of damage. He wrote that the tongue is a like a spark which

starts a forest fire. It is easy to say a thoughtless thing or inadvertently spread gossip or speculation.

Emails are a great way of communicating. You can send a message to someone in the same parish or across the world almost instantly. Lawyers always ask, "have you got evidence in writing?" Telephone calls or face to face conversations are still evidence but it is difficult to prove what was said. Conversations are recorded so you can see the chain of who said what and when. Emails are quick and free.

Emails can, however, easily be harmful. You can accidentally send a personal or private message to the wrong person or even worse copy it to lots of people. It is also difficult to judge the tone of an email, whether it is light-hearted or serious, cross or joyful. When are on the telephone or speaking face to face it is easier to tell whether the speaker is feeling angry or light-hearted.

Sometimes we need a break. Emails are good but many people find you can never get away from them and constantly check for business messages while at home or on leave. Perhaps we should not send emails to the vicar on a Sunday night while she is watching *Strictly*. Some discussions are better face to face, and always double check who you are sending it to or copying to. *Parish Pump website*

[And don't get me started on Twitter!! where the aphorism "act in haste - repent at leisure" seems most appropriate - Ed]

Finger

The Moving Finger writes, and, having writ, moves on. And so, I stare and wonder - where does the ink come from?!

Book Reviews

How Not To Be Afraid – seven ways to live when everything seems terrifying

By Gareth Higgins and Kathleen Norris, Canterbury Press, £14.99

We live in a time where we seem more afraid than ever. The rise of populism, polarisation and aggression in politics, the media and popular culture, and the climate crisis have coincided with the collapse of previously cherished norms and expectations about economic stability, community life, and even the future of the planet.

And all this before the pandemic struck. No wonder we are overwhelmed by anxiety. Popular speaker, storyteller and activist Gareth Higgins exposes the root causes of fear and shows how we can break its power through life-giving stories, simple spiritual exercises and practical steps to take as individuals and communities.

Borders and Belonging – the Book of Ruth – a story for our times

By Padraig O Tuama and Glenn Jordan, Canterbury Press, £11.69

A leading poet and a theologian reflect on the Old Testament story of Ruth, a tale that resonates deeply in today's world with its themes of migration, the stranger, mixed cultures and religions, law and leadership, women in public life, kindness, generosity and fear.

Ruth's story speaks directly to many of the issues and deep differences that Brexit has exposed and to the polarisation

taking place in many societies. Padraig O Tuama and Glenn Jordan bring the redemptive power of Ruth to bear on today's seemingly intractable social and political divisions, reflecting on its challenges and how it can help us be effective in the public square, amplify voices which are silenced, and be communities of faith in our present day.

Editor: The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

On the perils of holding a Rose Queen celebration

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

On reflection, inviting your parishioners to join in our annual Rose Queen celebrations may not have been entirely wise. It was cheering to see that your people arrived on carnival floats, although it was less happy that some of them should have chosen to dress up as coronavirus bugs, full of those nasty spike proteins – that startled some of the timid residents in our community.

Once the procession started, your drivers did not seem to have grasped the fact that the vehicles were expected to tour the village slowly, for the benefit of spectators, instead of treating it as a competitive race. I noticed that numbers on your floats gradually diminished as they were flung off while careering round corners. Those who had a walk of several miles back

home while dressed as pirates and ballerinas had my sympathy. Our tea ladies, however, were less sympathetic when one of your hay bales was spun off on a tight corner and went through our Women's Guild like a row of skittles.

The local police normally use the afternoon to do a little gentle point duty while drinking gallons of sweet tea; this year, the number of tickets issued for speeding, and not social distancing, should boost our constabulary's figures for the next 12 months.

I must concede that the group who decided to make a *papier mache* swan for one of your floats showed great imagination. It was such a pity that they did not know a 15-foot-high swan would be driven under a 12-foot bridge. The drama of its emergence, headless, was only exceeded by the following float which appeared to have a group of Brownies being savaged by a demented, bodiless, vulture.

I am sure that some of your people's offers to help this year's Princesses campaign for election for Rose Queen next year were well-meant. However, I don't think our parish really wants a full-blown social media campaign for next year's Rose Queen, and so we will have to decline your offer.

The crowning of the Rose Queen is always a high point to the afternoon, but could I point out that the 'gold' crown is only metal foil, and the 'diamond' sceptre is only a piece of glass? So, whoever it was in your crowd who walked off with them, please may we have them back before next year?

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Sudoku -
Medium

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

Solution on
page 34

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Solution to puzzle on page 26

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

Solution to puzzle on page 32

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



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