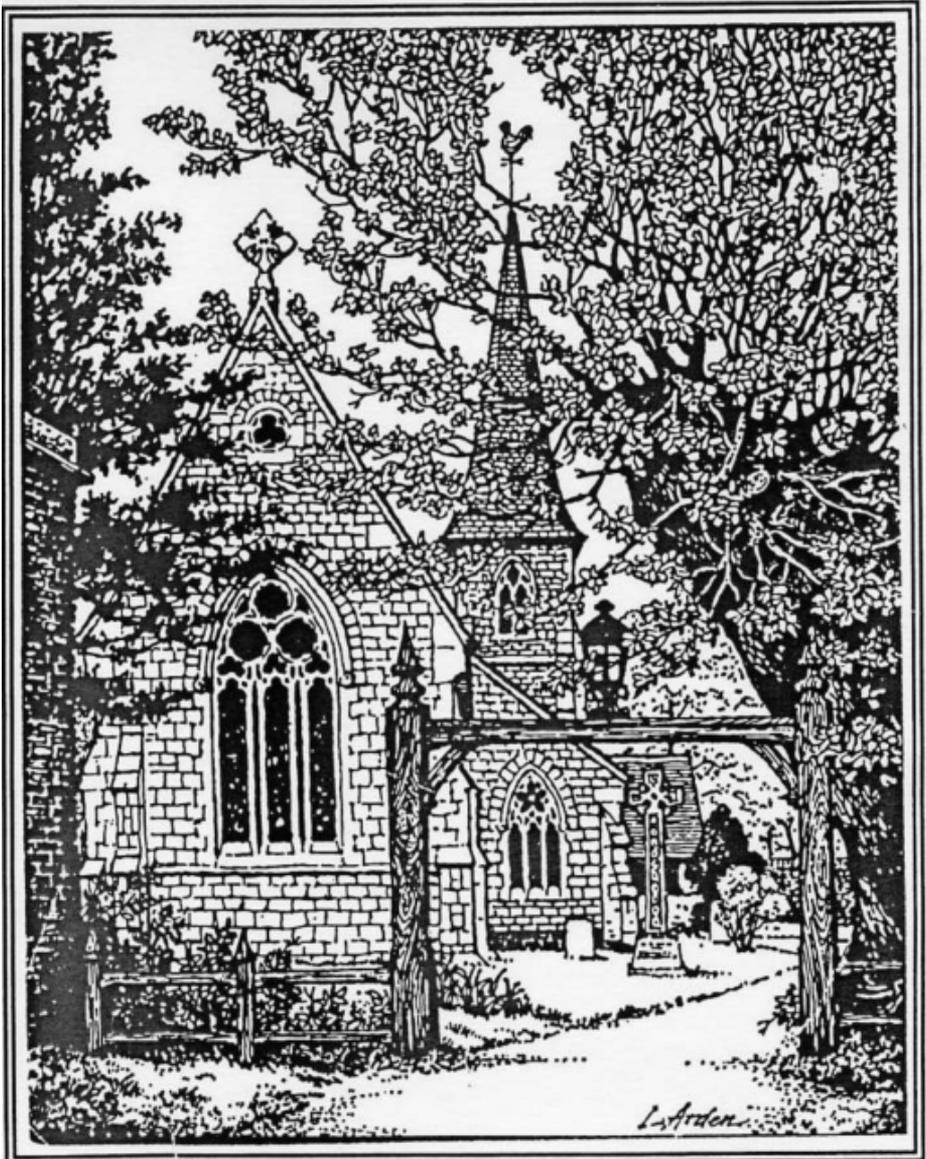


**The Parish Church of
*St. James, North Cray***

**50p
*August, 2021***

(Part of the Bexley Team Ministry)



St JAMES, NORTH CRAY PARISH STAFF

Team Vicar: Reverend Ren Harding 01322 528923
The Vicarage, 6 Tile Kiln Lane,
Joydens Wood, DA5 2BB
renharding@hotmail.co.uk

Lay Reader: David Stevens 020 8300 0867

Church Wardens: Suzy Higgs 020 8302 5719
suzyjhiggs@gmail.com
Maxine Heath 020 8468 7895
maxinejheath@gmail.com

Treasurer: Position vacant

PCC Secretary: Rhonda Collins 020 8300 3797

Sacristan: Stephen Hills 020 8302 7236

Bothy Bookings: Lynne Meads 07966 315518

Parish Safeguarding: Rhonda Collins 020 8300 3797

Magazine Editor: Steve Blake
sblakestjames@virginmedia.com

St James Sunday Service

9.30am

Holy Communion

(All age service with Uniformed Organisations on second Sunday)

TEAM RECTOR'S LETTER AUGUST 2021



You may be wondering how churches are managing opening up after the lifting of some of the Covid regulations. Bishop Sarah Mullally chairs the Church of England Recovery Group and has issued the following statement:

“Many will welcome the possibilities now before us, not least increased numbers at life events and a long-awaited return of congregational and amateur choir singing.

“However, this is a difficult point in the course of the pandemic. Despite vaccination rates, cases are up, hospital admissions are up and long covid remains an ongoing concern. Therefore our approach needs to be cautious and careful.

“Taking personal responsibility means responsibility for our neighbour, not just for ourselves, and taking precautions to protect those more vulnerable than we consider ourselves to be. Local church leaders know their communities and their own circumstances, and we will support them making local decisions to keep themselves and their community safe.

“We would ask everyone to support those making local decisions and respect risk assessments, which are in place to protect everyone as we enter the next phase”

So as a local church we are being asked to make our own decisions about Covid-safe opening according to local conditions. We have carefully considered the way forward, mindful that local infection levels are still high, and that most people I have spoken to are still wary of the complete relaxation of precautions.

For the moment, we are strongly encouraging people to wear face-masks, but this is no longer compulsory. Hand sanitiser will continue to be available, and we encourage you to use it. We will continue to receive communion in one kind, and to maintain social distancing. We are able to sing once again, which is a delight!

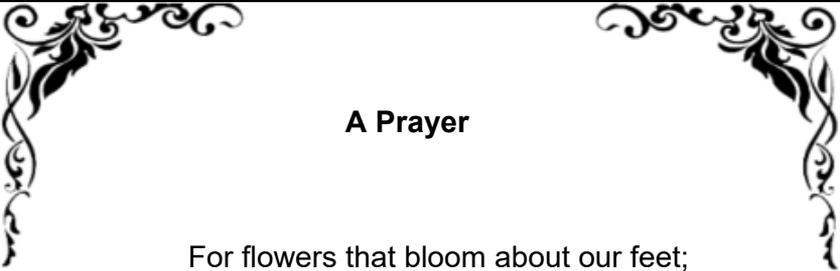
Reverend Ren Harding (Team Rector)

contact me at Joydens Wood Vicarage,

6 Tile Kiln Lane, Joydens Wood, Bexley, DA5 2BB

01322-528923

renharding@hotmail.co.uk

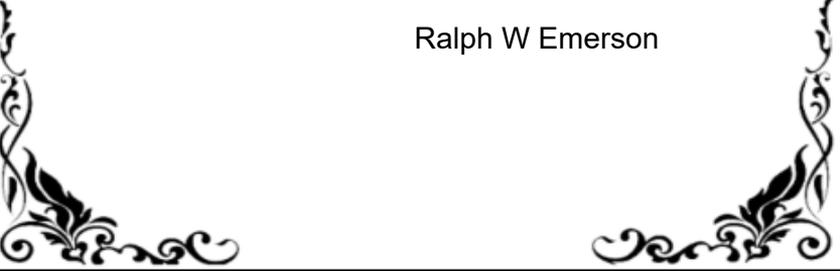


A Prayer

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird, and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

Ralph W Emerson



THE BOTHY

Are you looking for a small hall for a function?

The Bothy (in St James Church Grounds) has all the facilities
you need and can seat 35 people.

If you need further information please contact

Lynne Meads on 07966 315518

SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR AUGUST 2021

SUNDAY 1 August

9.30am

Holy Communion

2pm

Baptism Service

SUNDAY 8 August

9.30am

All-Age Worship

2pm

Wedding

SUNDAY 15 August

9.30am

Holy Communion

3.00pm

Forest Church



SUNDAY 22 August

9.30am

Holy Communion

SUNDAY 29 August

9.30am

Holy Communion

There will be music on this link

www.stjamesnorthcray.org.uk/welcome/music/

We hope you find the music helpful and inspiring.

We will continue to circulate worship material via email, and also make worship available online, on Zoom, or via a phone-in link on Zoom.

Details are emailed out each week.

Please contact the Team Rector or a member of the clergy team to be included on the emailing list or see our website for further information.

Also, do contact any of our clergy team if you are concerned, or if you would simply like a chat, or prayer.

BEXLEY TEAM MINISTRY

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. .”

2 Corinthians 1:10-11 (NIV)

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Wash hands frequently with soap & water or alcohol-based hand rub. It has been suggested that instead of singing Happy Birthday to ensure we wash our hands for long enough - that we say the Lord's Prayer!

Avoid touching eyes, nose & mouth as this can transfer the virus.

Stay informed (but not obsessively so!) on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your own healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer. National & local authorities have the most up to date information for your area.

A CALL TO PRAYER

Wherever you are, and whatever your personal circumstances, we invite you to pause at midday each day, to join with your brothers and sisters across the Bexley Team Ministry to pray for our churches, our community, our nation and the world. We pray the prayer that unites all Christians, the Lord's Prayer. This is the Traditional version:-

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory; for ever and ever. Amen.”

You may wish to use this prayer written by Malcolm Duncan of Spring Harvest: -

“May you be given the gift of simple faith. When the world around you is full of uncertainty, may God remind you that you are not alone and you do not need to be dominated by fear. May you find peace amidst chaos from God's promises. Hold onto the God who holds you.”

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Pray for those infected or in quarantine

Loving Jesus may they feel your power of healing through the care of medical staff. Take away fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.

Pray for those at high risk

Dear Lord, we lift to you the elderly and people with chronic health conditions. Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty.

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Adapted from prayers of World Vision

<https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/prayer>

WORSHIPPING AT HOME

The following are resources which you may like to use as aids to your own personal prayer and worship. As the weeks progress we will make additions to the list via a weekly newsheet, and will endeavour to make these prayer resources available in paper form in the coming days.

If you have access to the internet this is a good site to visit.
<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>

Radio 4

Prayer for the Day @ 5.43 am – if this is too early for you it can be found at a time to suit you online at bbc.co.uk

Daily Service Monday to Friday @ 9.45 am – on Longwave and DAB
Sunday worship @ 8.10am

Ren, is available to talk to anyone who is feeling the need of a church minister at this time, to talk over a difficult circumstance or to ask for prayer. We also have a resource that can be used at home if you are unable to attend a funeral because of the current restrictions, and a weekly newsletter that is going out on email, with news, reflections and prayers. All you need to do is ring, or email me (see inside cover) and I will do what I can to help, and I can also put you on the circulation list so you receive weekly information. Your email will not be given to anyone else.

Suzy Higgs, Churchwarden

Remembering Sir Walter Scott

By Tim Lenton



Sir Walter Scott, the Scottish historical novelist, poet and playwright, was born 250 years ago, on 15th August 1771. His best-known works include *Ivanhoe* and *Rob Roy*.

Often considered to be both the inventor and the greatest writer of historical novels, he was inspired by a stay with his grandparents in the Scottish borders during his early childhood, while he recovered from polio. From them he heard stories and ballads about the area and became fascinated by the history and culture of Scotland, where all his early work was set – often published anonymously.

On a visit to the Lake District in 1797 he met Charlotte Carpenter, who he married after a whirlwind romance, much to the disapproval of his parents, who suspected she was a French Catholic. But she was a British citizen who had been christened in the Church of England: the couple were happy until her death in 1826.

Scott was widely admired for both novels and poetry and was once offered the post of Poet Laureate, which he declined. He was plagued during later life by financial problems, largely brought about by taking on the debts of friends and colleagues, but also by expenses incurred from his Abbotsford estate, near Galashiels.

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News and Issues



Christian Aid launches emergency Global Hunger Appeal

Christian Aid has launched an emergency appeal, warning that more than 30 million people in 20 countries are “teetering on the brink of famine”.

The Covid health pandemic, climate crisis, and continued conflict has exacerbated hunger and food insecurity in 20 countries. Countries like South Sudan, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Nigeria (in the North East) and Afghanistan are particularly affected.

In South Sudan, 60% of the population are struggling to get enough food to eat, and 82% are living in extreme poverty. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, six of the country’s counties are already categorised as being in IPC Phase 5 Catastrophe - which means people face starvation, death, destitution and debilitating levels of acute malnutrition. 34 states are in the emergency acute food insecurity phase as people experience very high acute malnutrition and excess deaths. The most food insecure states are Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, Lakes, Warrap and Northern Bahr el Ghazal. 7.2 million people are now affected during this lean season, expected to be the worst on record.

James Wani, Christian Aid’s South Sudan Country Director, based in Juba, said: “Floods, drought, conflict and Covid-19 have joined forces to deliver devastation and fuel the food crisis in South Sudan - the combined result is the destruction of crops, livelihoods, houses and dwellings, while roads have become impassable, markets have stopped, supply chains have been crippled, and food prices have soared.”

Key role for faith communities

Faith communities in the UK have played a critical role in supporting many disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people during the

pandemic. And the Government is going to need their active support if it is to speed up the process of recovery. So says a recent report, *Stepping Up and Stepping Out*, from the Good Faith Partnership. The report calls for a social covenant for the post-Covid recovery phase that would strengthen partnerships between faith communities and the Government, local authorities and government agencies.

A key recommendation is the appointment of a Faiths Commissioner, on the model of the Children's Commissioner, together with an expert panel of faith leaders, with the aim of seeking ways of working which are more integrated. The partnership's survey identifies mental health and well-being, unemployment, and poverty as three special areas of concern.

The Bishop of London, the Rt Revd Sarah Mulally, writes in the foreword to the report about the importance of creating positive connections and collaboration between faith groups, government and local authorities.

The Queen on York Minster

York Minster is to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee next year with a statue of the monarch, placed in a niche high on its medieval west front.

The figure of the queen will be slightly larger than life, and she will be holding the historic symbols of monarchy: the orb and sceptre. She will be the first British monarch to have reigned for 70 years.

The statue will be the centre point of a makeover of the open space in front of the Minster, where a new Queen Elizabeth Square is to be created. More details are expected in the autumn.

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MEETINGS and Events 2021

**Planning for The "Welcome to the Meadows"
Educational Day which was scheduled for
19th July 2020 is on hold.**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

We may pray most when we say least, and we may pray least when we say most. - *Augustine*

The cross is the ladder to heaven. - *Thomas Draxe*

One day we stand to lose everything - except those qualities that have eternal value. - *David Watson*

Death is but a path that would be trod, if man would ever pass to God. - *Thomas Parnell*

There is no stronger test of a man's character than power and authority. - *Plutarch*

ALL IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST

250 years ago, on 15th August 1771, Sir Walter Scott, Scottish historical novelist, poet, and playwright was born. His best-known works include *Ivanhoe* and *Rob Roy*.

125 years ago, on 17th August 1896, the death of the first person killed in a motor accident in the UK took place. Bridget Driscoll was crossing a road in the grounds of London's Crystal Palace when she was hit by a car giving demonstration rides.

90 years ago, on 19th August 1931, the Yangtze River and Huai River floods peaked in China. It was one of the worst natural disasters of the 20th century; up to four million people died, and the floods lasted from July to November.

80 years ago, on 15th August 1941, the German spy Josef Jakobs became the last person to be executed at the Tower of London. (He had parachuted into Britain during WWII.)

60 years ago, on 13th August 1961, East Germany sealed off the border between East and West Berlin to prevent the exodus of refugees to the West. Initially barbed wire fences were erected; construction of the Berlin Wall began on 15th August. The border reopened in 1989.

40 years ago, on 25th August 1981, the US space probe Voyager 2 reached Saturn and sent back images and data. It travelled to Uranus (1986) and Neptune (1989) before reaching interstellar space in 2018.

43 years after launching, it is more than 11.8 billion miles from earth, but remains operational.

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BEXLEY TEAM MINISTRY
“EXPLORING CONFIRMATION” 2020



This series of informal sessions is designed to help you discover more about the Christian faith and to explore it in greater depth.

It is also designed to help you to decide whether it might be right for you to take the step of being 'confirmed' as a member of the Anglican Church.

THE CONFIRMATION SERVICE ON 3 MAY HAS BEEN POSTPONED - TBA

The preparation sessions will take place at
The Joydens Wood Vicarage, 6 Tile Kiln Lane
Joydens Wood, DA5 2BB

PLEASE NOTE... Coming to the sessions does NOT commit you to being confirmed. That is your decision nearer the time.

Each of the three sessions will help you to look at some aspects of the Christian faith, and give you plenty of opportunity to bring and share your own questions, doubts, hopes and uncertainties.

Believing	Who is Jesus? The Bible
Belonging	The Eucharist Christian Symbols
Behaving	Prayer and the wider church
	Preparing for the Service

There will be a Rehearsal at St Francis, Petts Wood nearer the time

Reverend Ren Harding (Team Rector)
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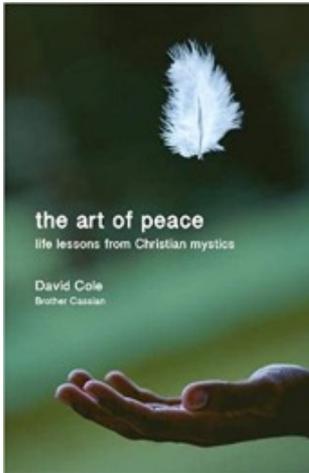
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Book Mark

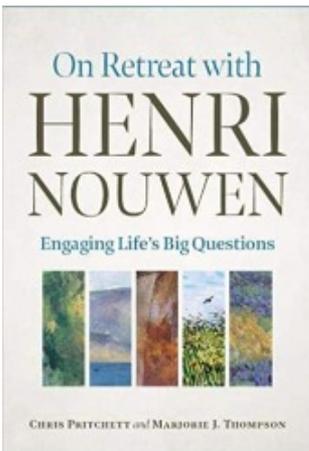
The Art of Peace: Life lessons from Christian Mystics
By David Cole, BRF, £8.99



Deep inner peace and peace of mind with spiritual balance is something everyone wants, but how does one attain it? More importantly, how does one maintain it in the midst of everyday life?

With sections on Stillness, Silence, Solitude and Sanctuary, this book draws on the lived experience of the author, as well as wisdom of Christian contemplatives and mystics from the past, to help people walk the mystic path of peace through life.

On Retreat with Henri Nouwen – Engaging Life's Big Questions
By Chris Pritchett and Marjorie Thompson, Canterbury Press, £12.99



Nouwen's own spiritual journey, marked by a restless quest and yearning for an experience of the divine, led him down paths familiar to many spiritual seekers today. The questions he wrestled with are the same: Who am I? Who is God? How do I know God loves me? How can I find interior peace in anxious, troubled times? The book offers connections to contemporary life, points for reflection, prayer pauses for contemplation and prompts for engaging in one's own spiritual quest.

The Great Flood of China

By Tim Lenton

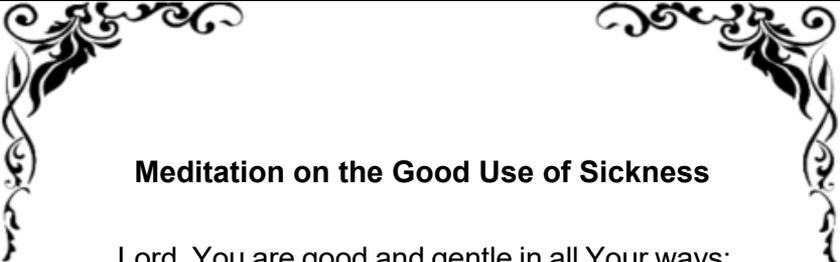
Just 90 years ago, on 19th August 1931, the Yangtze River and Huai River floods peaked in China. It was one of the worst natural disasters of the 20th century: up to four million people died, and the floods lasted from July to November.

The inundation followed a two-year drought and a particularly harsh winter which included nine cyclones, and then a massive amount of continuous rain. The floods covered an area equivalent to the size of England and half of Scotland, including widespread destruction in a number of cities, such as Wuhan, where a wall of water demolished nearly every house.

Here the calamity was blamed on the demolition shortly beforehand of the Temple of the Dragon King – a rain-making deity – as part of an anti-superstition campaign. Others blamed it on poor management of the rivers.

Thomas Harnsberger, a missionary of the Presbyterian Church, was a key figure in raising funds for reconstruction and relief efforts, but the floods, though massive, remain largely unknown in most of China. The waters killed 15 times the number of people lost in the Indonesian tsunamis of 2004, but historians looking at 1931 concentrate on the war between Communists and Nationalists and the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.

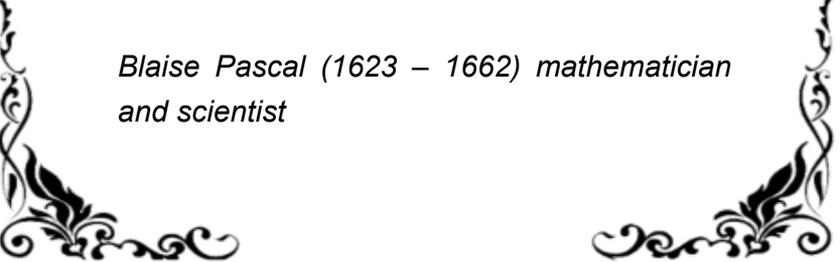




Meditation on the Good Use of Sickness

Lord, You are good and gentle in all Your ways; and Your mercy is so great that not only the blessings but also the misfortunes of Your people are channels of Your compassion. Grant that I may turn to You as a Father in my present condition since the change in my own state from health to sickness brings no change to You. You are always the same, and You are my loving Father in times of trouble and in times of joy alike.

Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662) mathematician and scientist



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The Parable of the Prodigal Son

By Canon Paul Hardingham

The parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) is one of Jesus' best-known stories. It beautifully presents the good news of the gospel: the story of God's generous and undeserved love towards us. It's the story of us being lost yet also found by Him.

The younger son is lost when he demands his inheritance early, deliberately making himself independent and treating his father as dead! This reflects our own lostness as human beings, when we are cut off from the presence and grace of a loving heavenly Father.

After squandering his wealth, he finally comes to his senses: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' (18,19). However, even before he arrives home, his father sees him, runs to greet him, and welcomes his son back home. The celebrations for the son reflect the 'rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents' (7) for our own homecoming.

This story graphically demonstrates the amazing grace of God for each one of us. The older son's misunderstanding of the father's actions is a warning not to harden our hearts to the work of God's grace in ourselves and others. 'There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. There is nothing we can do to make God love us less.' (Philip Yancey).

The story is told of a father and son who had become estranged, and the father searched for him to no avail. In desperation, he put an advert in a local newspaper: 'Dear Paco, meet me in front of this newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you. Your Father.' On the Saturday 800 Pacos showed up!!

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REFLECTED FAITH

By the Rev Dr Jo White

Who is in the building?

In England, hopefully by the time you read this, all the lock-down and social isolation measures will have been relaxed. Church buildings and services will be 'back to normal'. Working folk will be back in their workplaces, and all will be well with us all.



I live in hope – but I am well aware that the reality will probably be different. It's the difference between a switch that turns the light fully on or fully off and a dimmer switch that allows the brightness to increase or

decrease slowly. All of us will need time to 'rest' before we get our mojo and energy levels back up again. This last 16 months or so have been hectic and traumatic for everyone in different ways. That's why coming into the quietness and space of a church building can be so uplifting.

This month:

Listen out for / read the opening words of the service. Most often they will be the following or very similar: 'The Lord be with you'. And the congregation replies, 'And also with you'. It's a simple acknowledgement that we have come together with the same intention – to meet with God. And that He is with us. With all of us. We are encircled by His love and grace.

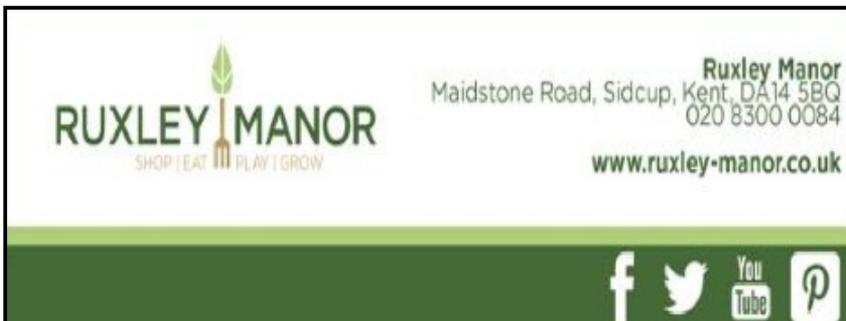
Just pause for a moment and drink in those words and the huge meaning contained in those short phrases. God is not just here for some of us, but for all of us. We are not only with those we can see, but with God Himself. How amazing is that! May those words enable you to stand up straighter again and give you strength for the days ahead.

WORDSEARCH



Transfiguration	Radiant	Dwelling	Exodus
Mountain	Beloved	Mankind	Mount
Peter	Son	New	Sinai
James	Well	covenant	Sealing
John	Pleased	Face	Moses
Law	Elijah	prophets	

Solutions on page 31



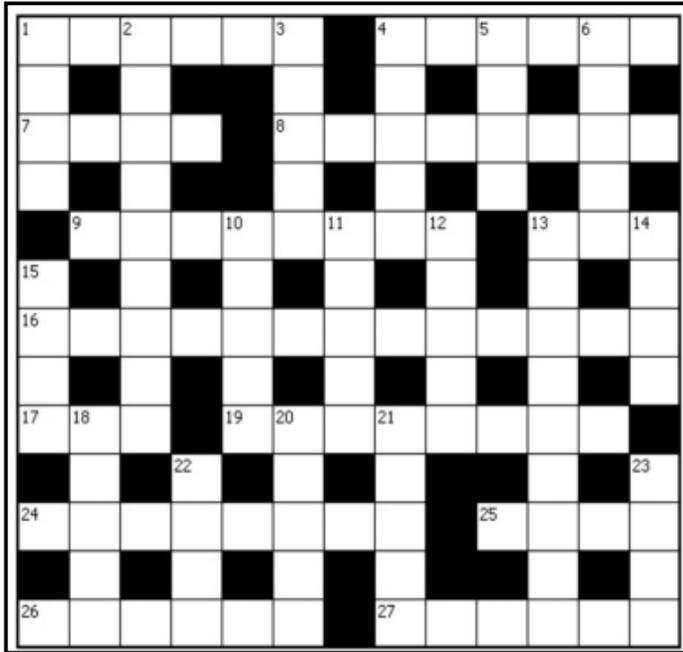
AUGUST CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1 Of Moses (6)
- 4 'You have been weighed on the — and found wanting'
(Daniel 5:27) (6)
- 7 Where Jesus performed the first of his miraculous signs
(John 2:11) (4)
- 8 Roman emperor who ordered all the Jews to leave Rome
(Acts 18:2) (8)
- 9 Member of a conservative Jewish party in the Sanhedrin which
believed there was no resurrection (Acts 23:8) (8)
- 13 South London Mission (1,1,1)
- 16 Sure of one's own ability (2 Corinthians 11:17) (4-9)
- 17 'At this the man's face fell. He went away — , because he had
great wealth' (Mark 10:22) (3)
- 19 Airs used (anag.) (8)
- 24 'The Lord is my — , I shall not be in want' (Psalm 23:1) (8)
- 25 'He has sent me to — up the broken-hearted' (Isaiah 61:1) (4)
- 26 At or towards the rear of a ship (6)
- 27 Cross-carrying evangelist and world traveller, — Blessitt (6)

Down

- 1 Ridicule (Luke 18:32) (4)
- 2 Encased in strapped-on light shoes (Song of Songs 7:1) (9)
- 3 Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (1,1,1,1,1)
- 4 'Father, give me my — of your estate' (Luke 15:12) (5)
- 5 Assistant (4)
- 6 On a par (John 5:18) (5)
- 10 Credo (anag.) (5)
- 11 Beaten with a rod (5)



- 12 The fourth of Job's 'comforters', who deferred making his contribution because of his junior status (Job 32:6) (5)
- 13 Chosen as a temple attendant, he was described by Ezra as 'a capable man' (Ezra 8:18) (9)
- 14 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where — and rust destroy' (Matthew 6:19) (4)
- 15 Employs (4)
- 18 Associated with penitence for sins, along with sackcloth (Matthew 11:21) (5)
- 20 Association of South-East Asian Nations (1,1,1,1,1)
- 21 Sub-continent to which Baptist missionary pioneer William Carey devoted his life (5)
- 22 Recess at east end of a church (4)
- 23 One of the nine sons of Beriah (1 Chronicles 8:15) (4)

(Solutions on page 31)

ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL



On the discovery of a long lost crypt

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Since your church is a former cinema, I suspect that were the floor to be removed, cigarette ash, sweet wrappings and tickets for the last Charlie Chaplin film would be revealed. Our marble flooring in the chancel was raised last week to try and find the rat that had died on an underfloor heating pipe. It made its presence so un-ignorable last Winter that it gave me the excuse to use incense.

But we have made an exciting discovery: the long lost crypt containing the tombs of the Lords Staveley, who flourished in this area until a little domestic disagreement with Henry II made the family realise that life in Italy might be pleasanter if they wished to retain their heads. The stone from their manor house soon became our lady chapel; an example of re-cycling as a euphemism for theft.

Inevitably, as soon as we had made the discovery, rumours of vast treasure flew round the parish. Long before anyone had descended into it, the treasurer had the fortune earmarked for re-wiring the church, the organist decided it should be spent on enlarging the organ, and Mrs Millington had decided it should keep the flower arrangers in chicken wire until the next millennium-but-one. I confess that even I toyed with the idea of a conservatory with discreet drinks cabinet at the rectory.

Sadly, it was not to be. Our 'treasure' consisted of rows of coffins in various stages of decay, enough bat droppings to keep our Verger's vegetable patch enriched for the coming year and long-lost

peppermints dropped by generations of choristers sitting above, as they munched their way through the sermons.

Later that evening, when the workmen had left, I decided to have one last look. Taking a torch, I descended the stone steps, but lost my footing. The now-broken torch went one way and I another. After floundering round in total darkness and unable to find the stairs to get out, I resigned myself to an uncomfortable night in the crypt until daybreak.

In the early hours, I heard steps on the same stairs and in their torchlight, saw it was someone who must have heard the rumours of treasure and decided to liberate some of it. He, too, tripped, fell and lost his torch and in the total darkness I heard him fumbling about at the other end of the crypt among the coffins.

Intending to be helpful, I shouted out that I'd been trying to get out of here myself for a long time and had never made it, so he may as well give up. But do you know, he found his way out in no time.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace



Yet another of the vicar's money-raising wheezes, I see

GOD AND THE ARTS

By The Rev Michael Burgess

'The Lord is in this place'

In the 3rd century a Chinese philosopher, Chang Tsu, had a very vivid dream. He dreamed he was a butterfly, happily flying here and there. When he awoke, he thought to himself, 'Did Chang Tsu dream that he was a butterfly, or did the butterfly dream that it was Chang Tsu?' Dreams are often like that: crucial experiences which cause us to ponder and wonder about their meaning. The prophet Joel suggested that it was old men who dream dreams, while young people see visions. But dreams invade and colour our sleeping hours, whatever age we are.

In the Bible dreams are vital events. Think of Joseph in the Old Testament dreaming of his superiority among his brothers, the dreams of the cup bearer and baker at Pharaoh's court, Daniel interpreting



Nebuchadnezzar's dreams, and Joseph's dreams in the Gospels that were so crucial for the safety of the Holy Family. This month in our paintings we focus on 'Jacob's Dream' by Ribera.

Jusepe de Ribera was a Spanish artist, whose most productive years were spent in Naples, where he died in 1652. This painting from 1639 is based on Genesis 28. After depriving his brother Esau of his birthright, Jacob is sent to Laban. At Bethel he rested and in his sleep received the vision of God's angels on the ladder to heaven with God's reassuring words of promise and blessing. When he awoke, Jacob set up an altar at Bethel, which he declared was the house of God and the gate of heaven.

To baroque artists, this scene in Genesis was seen as a prefiguration of the coming of Jesus, and in John's Gospel Jesus Himself told Nathanael that he would see the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. For Ribera the subject of Jacob's dream is treated with great tenderness as Jacob sleeps beneath the luminous expanse of sky, which occupies a major part of the canvas. Not for him the depiction of winged messengers; no, the light of heaven falls down upon the sleeping figure, casting shadows on the ground. The angels, ethereal and insubstantial, are contained in the glory of light. The tree at the other side looks like a fallen cross, and Jacob almost like a sleeping disciple in Gethsemane. But here, he is in deep repose as his face is lit up with the golden glow of the heavenly messengers.

For Jacob, the dream is the golden assurance of God's blessing. As his saga continues in Genesis, he marries Laban's daughters, wrestles with the divine stranger, is given the name Israel, and his 12 sons become the ancestors of the 12 tribes of God's people. So, the blessing of the dream is worked out in his life and the life of Israel.

Dreams can come to give visions of the way life should be. Like Jacob, or perhaps like Martin Luther King and his prophetic words in 1963. In this month of August many of us will go on holiday to enjoy rest and recreation. As we end the days with sleep, we pray that like the Psalmist we will lie down in perfect peace and safety and know the refreshment Jacob found at Bethel: a repose which will restore our souls and bodies to bring life and vision wherever we may be.

8th

Dominic - the saint who believed in learning



Dominic was the founder of the Order of Preachers also known as the Dominicans, or Black Friars because of the black cape they wore over their white habits. He was born in Castile in 1170, the youngest son of the warden of the town and nephew to the archpriest of Gumiel d'Izan. Becoming an Austin canon of Osma cathedral, Dominic spent seven years as a priest, devoted to prayer and penance. In 1201 he became sub-prior to his community.

In 1208 the Papal Legate was murdered. It sparked a crusade or 'holy war' against the Albigensian heretics. Dominic worked for reconciliation, refusing to join in the violence and massacres against them. Instead he used instruction and prayer to woo the heretics back, which led to him playing a leading role in founding Toulouse University. That became the foundation for his work in establishing the Friars Preachers at Toulouse in 1215, which occupied the last seven years of his life. (Three times he refused a bishopric, believing that this work was more important.)

Dominic's 'order' provided communities of sacred learning, with monks devoted to study, teaching and preaching as well as the usual prayer. Dominic believed monks should do more than just commune with God; they should proclaim God's love to others. Dominic was an excellent organiser, and soon his order spread rapidly all over Italy, Spain and France. It met an acute need in the medieval church, and in time the Black Friars became a pioneering missionary force in Asia and even (much later) the Americas.

Dominic travelled widely from 1216 until his death in 1220. His simple tomb was later embellished by Michelangelo, and his usual attributes in art are a lily and a black and white dog, which is a pun (Domini canis) on the name of Dominic. The dog holds a torch in its mouth as a herald of the truth.



BIBLE BIRDS

There are lots of birds in the Bible - Noah sent them out from the Ark to see if the flood waters had gone down, first a raven and then a dove (Genesis 6: 6-13). Elijah was fed by ravens while he lived in the desert (1 Kings 17: 1-8).

Mary and Joseph made an offering of 'a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons' (Luke 2: 22-24) when they took baby Jesus to the Temple. When Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist, the Spirit of God descended like a dove (Matthew 3:3-17). That is why the Holy Spirit is usually shown as a dove. The dove is also a symbol of peace.



But my favourite bit about birds is Luke, chapter 12, verses 4-7. 'Aren't 5 sparrows sold for 2 pennies? Yet not one sparrow is forgotten...' It reminds us that God loves and cares for everything, even the smallest part of his creation.

BIBLE BIRD WORDS

Some clues are in the first column, but can you answer these Bible questions all about birds? Which bird...

1. Didn't come back when Noah sent it out of the ark. (Genesis 7)
2. Flocks of these fed the Israelites in the desert. (Numbers 11)
3. Those who wait on the Lord will rise up with wings like... (Isaiah 40)
4. The first bird Noah sent out of the ark. (Genesis 7)
5. Saul hunted David like one of these in the mountains (1 Samuel 27)
6. Jesus said this bird would be at a scene of desolation (Matthew 24)
7. cost 2p for 5? (you shouldn't need a clue for this one!)



What do you give a sick bird?

Tweetment.



Why can't a duck fly upside down?

Because he'd quack up.



- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 1) dove | 2) quail | 3) eagles | 4) raven |
| 5) partridge | 6) vulture | 7) sparrow | |

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FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

-

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Year's mind for August 2020

8th August

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ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

If you are going to attend our church and you have accessibility needs please let us know and we will be happy to make arrangements for you. There is level access to the church and the Bothy and we have a sound loop system and large print orders of service. Please feel free to telephone the Team Vicar Rev Ren Harding who will be happy to discuss the matter with you.

THE BEXLEY TEAM CLERGY - POINTS OF CONTACT

Team Rector: Reverend Ren Harding

renharding@hotmail.co.uk 01322 528923 07836644782

Associate Priest: Revd Sue Twynam

susantwynam@btconnect.com 01322 559501 07952 468127

Team Vicar: Reverend Clive Wood

revclivewood@gmail.com 01322 270942 07982 392809

Team Vicar: Reverend Edward Barlow

fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com 01322 521786

Team Curate: Matt Hodder

matthodder10@gmail.com 07889 873125

For enquiries concerning St Barnabas, Joydens Wood

website www.joydenswoodchurch.co.uk

email - joydenswoodchurch@virginmedia.com

CONTACT the Team Rector

For enquiries concerning St James, North Cray

website www.stjamesnorthcray.org.uk/

CONTACT the Team Rector

For enquiries concerning St John the Evangelist, Bexley

website www.stjohnsbexley.org

CONTACT the Team Vicar: Reverend Edward Barlow

fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com 01322 521786

For enquiries concerning St Mary the Virgin, Bexley

website www.stmarysbexley.co.uk

CONTACT the Team Vicar: Reverend Clive Wood

revclivewood@gmail.com 07982 392809

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