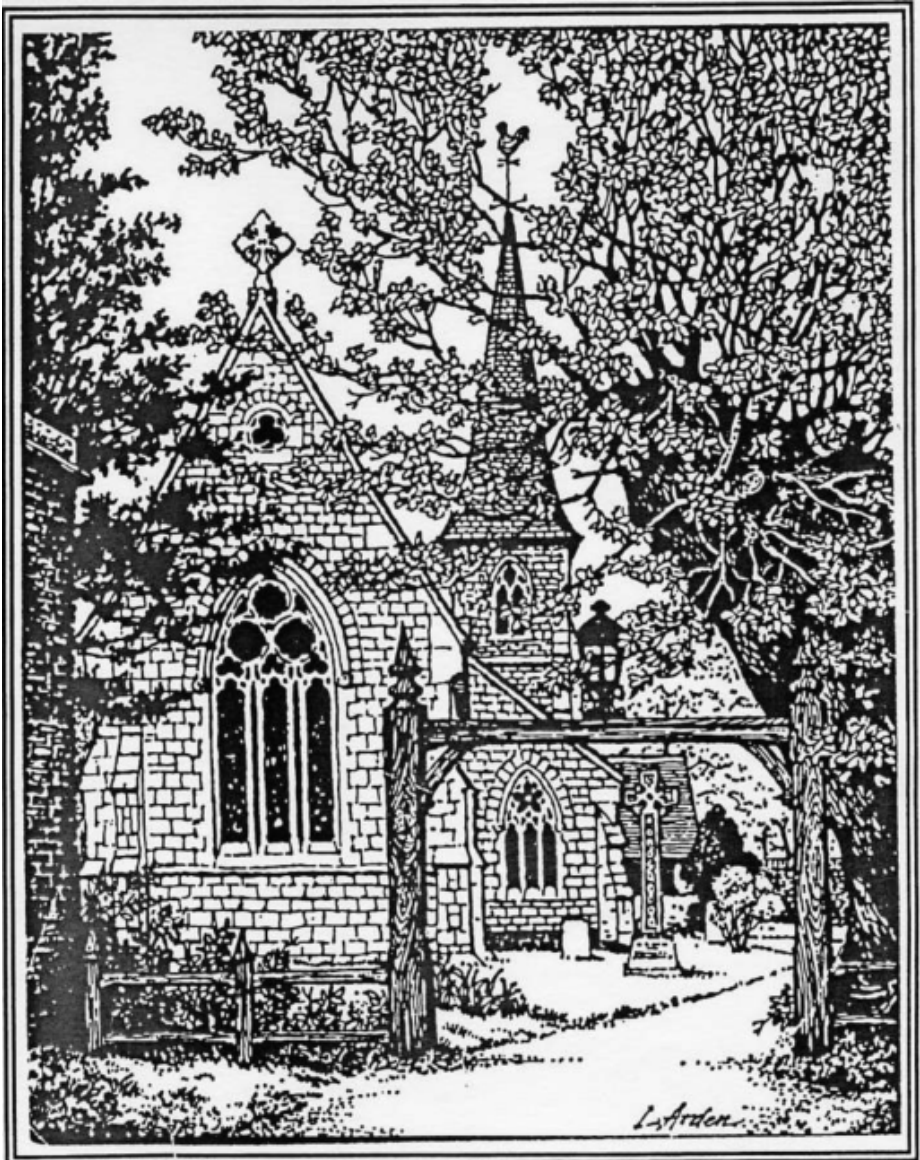


**The Parish Church of
*St. James, North Cray***

**50p
*June, 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
sblake stjames@virginmedia.com

St James Sunday Service

9.30am Holy Communion

(All age service with Uniformed Organisations on second Sunday)

TEAM RECTOR'S LETTER JUNE 2021



This month, we have 'commissioned' a special article from the Team Curate, Rev Matt Hodder, because we wanted you to know about something brilliant that is happening at St James Church.

Since I took overall responsibility for the parish church of St James, I have wanted to do something that reflected the building's lovely situation at the edge of the Foots Cray Meadows, and the beauty of our churchyard. When Matt was appointed as Team Curate I discovered that he had a background in working in Forest Schools, and so it all came together! The Forest Church Project enables us to really value the beauty of God's creation and encourages the next generation to care for it. I want to thank our church council and congregation for giving their backing and support.

Rev Ren

"In May 2021 we started a new venture for the Bexley Team Ministry - Forest Church! Held on the third Sunday of each month and based at St James's Church, North Cray, Forest Church is a new and exciting way to worship God in the beautiful surroundings that we have been blessed with. Forest Church originated from the Forest School movement, which in turn came from Scandinavia back in the 1990's. Its premise is very simple; God is present everywhere and one of the places that we often feel most connected with God is outdoors. Forest Church has tried to blend the excitement of exploring God's creation alongside creating a church community in its own right; one which is open to everyone from across the Bexley Team.

It's hard to say what a 'typical' Forest Church service looks like. In the two we've done so far we have attempted parachute making, nature bingo, seed planting, creating solar system mobiles (the baby kind not the phone kind!), treasure hunts, making meals for woodland animals and much more. There are two things that you can always guarantee will happen though... we will spend some time outdoors and we will marvel at God's amazing creation.

So I encourage you to come along to one of our upcoming services (3pm on 20th June, 18th July, 15th August) and see what it's like. It's suitable for all ages, children AND adults and everyone is most welcome. But don't take my word for it, here's what one of our regulars thinks....

*"Forest Church is good fun. The best bit was finding things in nature and making a parachute for an astronaut. It's fun to be outside for church because you can explore, and use magnifying glasses and jump around!" ** (Zach)*

Hope to see you there soon!

Rev Matt

and the Forest Church Team

*** I should tell you that jumping around is NOT compulsory! Rev Ren*





SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR JUNE 2021

SUNDAY 6 June

9.30am Holy Communion

SUNDAY 13 June

9.30am All-Age Worship

SUNDAY 20 June

9.30am Holy Communion

3.00pm Forest Church at St James

SUNDAY 27 June

9.30am Holy Communion

2.30pm Baptism

Wednesday 30 June

10.00am Bexley Team Midweek 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.

“Being truly our self”
David Stevens
Lay Reader, Sidcup Deanery

17th Century poet John Donne coined the words ‘No man is (or woman is) an island entire of itself’. We are all dependent upon those around us who understand love and care for us if we are to be truly ourselves; to be entire.

Our blood relatives may or may not be on hand to meet this need. To be truthful no family is perfect and most have their problems and stresses. Those with loving and supportive relatives are fortunate.

So let me use the word family to cover whoever it is who cares for you, looks out for you, can sense when you are feeling down and need a pick me up and when you need to keep yourself to yourself, but still take the trouble check up on you a day or so later.

The company of those who love us just as we are, want the best for us and encourage us each to flourish and grow is where we can feel entire.

One of the things Christians believe is that we are each created as a unique and precious person in the image of God.

And if we are most truly our unique and precious selves in the presence of one another just what does this say about God himself.

I would like to suggest there are similarities between God and our ‘families’

Our New Testament brings us many examples of the closeness between Jesus and his Father. 50 Days after Jesus was raised from the dead he returned to heaven. A few days later as Jesus had promised he sent his Holy Spirit to befriend us and guide us as we seek to follow him.

Christians believe there is one true God, who is experienced in three personalities, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This divine mystery holds than Father Son and Holy Spirit, though distinct are completely of one mind and spirit.

Whether you accept this idea of God or not I would urge you to reflect upon what this image may have to teach you about your 'family' and your place in it – a place when you can be truly yourself and truly one with those who you love and who love you.

A vision of heaven



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

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

MISCELLANEOUS QUOTATIONS

Without God the world would be in a maze without a clue. -
Woodrow Wilson

The universe seems to have been designed by a pure mathematician. - *James Jeans*

The world is the first Bible that God made for the instruction of man. - *Clemens Alexandrinus*

Nature is the art of God. - *Thomas Browne*

Anger is just one letter short of danger. - *Anon*

The contented man is never poor, the discontented never rich.
- *George Eliot*



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News and Issues



Churches to launch nature count within the ‘National Park’ of churchyards

Hundreds of churches have signed up to a week-long ‘nature count’ occurring this month (June), which will encourage people to visit churchyards and record what they see.

Churches Count on Nature, to run between 5th-13th June, is a citizen-science event covering churchyards across England and Wales.

Communities and visitors will be asked to make a note of the animals, birds, insects, or fungi in their local churchyard. Their data will then be collated on the [National Biodiversity Network](#).

It is being jointly run by the conservation charities Caring for God’s Acre, A Rocha UK, the Church of England, and the Church in Wales. Church land, often uniquely unploughed and undeveloped, can be a habitat for precious, endangered plants and wildlife. Together, churchyards cover a huge area –estimated to be equivalent to a small national park.

The week is open to anyone with a love of nature, and churches are seeking links with local schools and local wildlife groups.

Various online guidance about getting to know fauna and flora is being shared with the churches who are participating. A similar national event [Love Your Burial Ground Week](#) will be combined with this project.

Registration for the webinars is on the [Church of England’s website](#) and also at [Churches Count on Nature online](#).

Churches stepped up support for their communities during pandemic

More than 4,000 Church of England parishes have stepped up their support to local communities in the face of rising levels of poverty, loneliness and isolation since the Covid-19 pandemic, according to new research.

Church volunteers have delivered food, shopped, walked dogs and collected prescriptions this past year, according to a report by the

Church of England and Church Urban Fund.

Church volunteers have also done gardening projects, been 'phone buddies', aided with job-hunting, and helped people get online, as local people struggled with the social and economic effects of the pandemic.

Despite restrictions on meeting socially, nearly a quarter of churches even started a completely new activity during the pandemic. More than of them adapted two or more of their existing community activities in order to meet local needs.

Overall, 37% of churches reported that they were providing *more* support to their communities, with this figure rising to 41% in rural areas.

Food provision and pastoral support were by far the biggest area of support provided by churches, with nearly 80% of churches involved in running or supporting a food bank or similar service. Many opened food banks for the first time.

Church leaders reported that isolation, loneliness and mental health difficulties, food poverty, unemployment and debt are more widespread in their communities as a result of the pandemic.

Church buildings, because of their size and ventilation, have been well used for activities from ante natal classes to socially prescribed exercise. In fact, many became 'symbols of hope', with flags, posters and artwork as a "form of visual encouragement".

Church Urban Fund Chief Executive Rachel Whittington said: "2020 was a year like no other, and yet churches across the UK rose ... with undeterred compassion, displaying the love in action which lies at the heart of the Christian gospel."

Church Commissioners to reduce carbon intensity of its portfolio by 2025

The Church Commissioners for England have announced their goal to reduce the carbon intensity of their investment portfolio by 25% by 2025. The 25% reduction target, based on a baseline of 2019, is "a realistic goal in our mission to create real world change to transition to a net zero global economy."

The Church Commissioners have therefore committed to "increasing engagement activity with the highest emitting companies in our portfolio, as well as with our investment managers across all asset classes." The 2025 target includes the Commissioners' public equities and real estate portfolio.



MEETINGS and Events 2021

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

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Phone: 07931 811620
Email: davis54@btinternet.com**

ALL IN THE MONTH OF JUNE

175 years ago, on 28th June 1846 Belgian musical instrument maker Adolphe Sax patented the saxophone.

125 years ago, on 4th June 1896 Henry Ford completed his first automobile, the Ford Quadricycle, and gave it a test run around Detroit Michigan.

100 years ago on 10th June 1921 Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was born on a dining room table in Corfu. He was the husband of Queen Elizabeth II.

90 years ago, on 13th June 1931 Jesse Boot, 1st Baron Trent, British pharmacist and philanthropist, died. He had turned his father's Boots Company into a national chain of chemists.

80 years ago, from 22nd June to 5th December 1941 Operation Barbarossa took place. It was the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the largest military operation in history.

75 years ago, on 26th June 1946 Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery became Chief of the Imperial General Staff (head of the British army).

65 years ago, on 13th June 1956 the first European Cup final (soccer) was held, in Paris. Real Madrid (Spain) beat Stade de Reims (France) 4-3. The European Cup is now known as the UEFA Champions League.

60 years ago, on 6th June 1961 Carl Jung, Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, died. He was the founder of analytical psychology.

50 years ago, on 16th June 1971 John Reith (Lord Reith), 1st Baron Reith, Scottish business executive and politician, died. He was Manager and Director General of the BBC in its formative years. He also formed BOAC (now British Airways).

25 years ago, on 4th June 1996 the Second Severn Crossing was officially opened. The bridge spans the River Severn and links England and Wales via the M4 motorway.

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)
01322 528923
07836644782



Peace between neighbours

Peace between neighbours near,
Peace between kindred here,
Peace between lovers dear,
In the love of the King of us all.

Peace man with man abide,
Peace man to wife allied,
Mother and bairns to guide,
And peace of the Christ above all.

Bless, O Christ, bless my face,
My face bless every face,
Christ, bless mine eye with grace,
Mine eye give a blessing to all.

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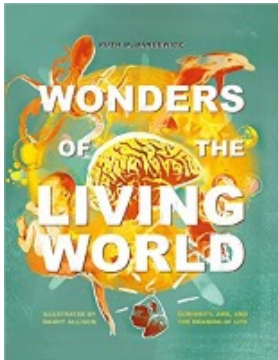
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Book Mark

Wonders of the Living World. By Ruth Bancewicz and Danny Allison, Lion Books, £19.99

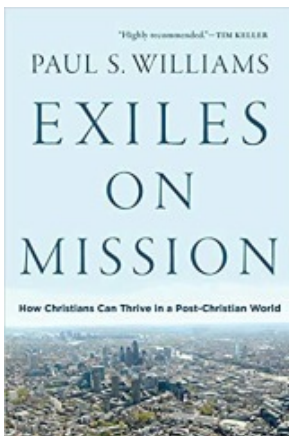
The living world is beautiful, intricate, and highly ordered. Organisms flourish across virtually every location on earth, and biological scientists are constantly discovering more about them. These findings spark awe in those who study the natural world, and also raise questions about the meaning of what we see: What's so special about life? Why are we here? Where is it all heading?



Drawing on the thoughts of six scientists of faith, the work of the theologian Alister McGrath, and the biblical scholar Hilary Marlow, Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz examines their research to assess the claim that the discoveries of science are consistent with the existence of a God.

Exiles on Mission: How Christians Can Thrive in a Post-Christian World. By Paul Williams, Bible Society, £13.99

Paul Williams, the CEO of Bible Society, explores the experience of living as Christians in the 21st century, including the dissonance with culture that is often felt.



He calls for a truly missional understanding of post-Christendom Christianity, providing constructive tools to help readers understand culture and form a missional response. Williams invites us to reimagine local churches as embassies of the kingdom of God and Christians as ambassadors in all spheres of life and work. It helps Christians to integrate their faith with everyday life, and see how their efforts can align with God's missional purpose for the world.

The beginnings of Boots the Chemist

By Tim Lenton

Jesse Boot, the British pharmacist and philanthropist, died 90 years ago, on 13th June 1931. He turned the Boots Company started by his father John – a former agricultural worker – into a chain of chemists branded ‘Chemists to the Nation’.



The 1st Baron Trent, as Jesse became in 1929, sold his controlling interest to American investors in 1920, but Boots continues to be a familiar name to all Britons. Ironically John Boot had offered his close friend and business associate John Harston

the opportunity of going into business with him, but Harston had felt it was not a good investment.

Jesse Boot was a great benefactor to the City of Nottingham. He gave land for what is now the University of Nottingham and was presented with the Freedom of the City of Nottingham in 1920.

He met his wife, Florence Rowe, in a Wesleyan Chapel in Jersey while he was recuperating from illness. She was also an astute businesswoman, who helped to develop the Boots business, and her home island of Jersey benefited from the couple’s generosity. After her husband’s death she commissioned the glass artist René Lalique to refit the Anglican church of St Matthew there as a memorial to him.

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Reflected Faith: Sit and be Still

By the Rev Dr Jo White



How do you 'sit' in church? I'm a wriggler and change my position on the seat often. I cross one leg over the other, then swap them over, stretch them out, then cross them at the ankles. I do the same with my arms. I lean one way and then the other.

In other words, 'I'm a fidget.' But having been absent from a church building for so long, I wanted to think this month about simply *sitting and being still* before the Lord.

I'm well aware we've done little else this last 18 months – but if you manage to get into a church building, for whatever reason I'd like to encourage us all to just sit still and breathe in the place. To relish being 'back'!

To sit 'heavily' in that spot. To feel the solidity of the surface you are sitting on. Lean into it. Feel how it supports you. Feel each part of your body where it is touching the chair or pew.

Look around you at all the distinctive seating set aside for the different participants of the church: the choir, the worship leader, a deacon or curate, the priest and so on.

In an Anglican church there will be a chair especially dedicated for the use of the Bishop.

However plain or fancy each piece of furniture is within your building, they all have the same purpose. To hold the person and keep them safe.

This month:

As you sit in the church building – or at home if you are not able to do so – think of all those people in the Bible stories who sat with Jesus. The number of times He taught in the Temple or in a synagogue, or

to crowds gathered on a hill. Recall the Last Supper and His friends gathered sitting with Him to eat and share the Passover meal, and then recall the meal with the men from the Emmaus Road. So many meal times with the bold and the weak, the saints and the sinners. With you and me.

Wake up! - By Tony Horsfall

Remember the story of Jacob, and how God met him in a dream when he was sleeping on the desert floor with a rock for his pillow? The story in Genesis 28 says this: 'When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it."'

I wonder what place you find yourself in today, and if you are aware of God's presence with you there?

It may be a geographical place, the place where you live or work. That may be a beautiful place to be, or it may be a very hard place to be, and you would much prefer to be somewhere else. Either way, God is with you there, for He is everywhere, and there is no place where He is not.

It may be an emotional place, as when we say, 'I'm not in a good place right now'. How are you feeling today – up or down? Again, whatever mood you are in, God is with you for He knows us through and through. Having become human, He understands all our fluctuating emotions. He can comfort us right where we are.

It may be a phase of life that you are passing through, a stage on life's journey or a transition as you move from one situation to another. You may be passing through the valley of grief and loneliness, or anxiously waiting for news of a loved one who is ill. No matter where you are, you are not alone, for God is with you whether you can feel His presence or not.

What is needed is for us to become more aware of God's surrounding presence, to wake up to His closeness as did Jacob.

Lord, wake me up to your abiding presence, even this day.

Remembering Carl Jung

By Tim Lenton

It was 60 years ago, on 6th June 1961, that Carl Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, died. He was the founder of analytical psychology.



Today he is thought of as a countercultural icon and an advocate of spirituality outside religion, associated more with New Age thinking than mainstream psychology. But he came from a traditionally Christian family, being the son of an impoverished rural pastor. Early on, he had ambitions to go into the ministry himself.

Instead, he created some of the most widely known psychological ideas, including synchronicity and the collective unconscious. Both he and his mother – Emilie Preiswerk – experienced disturbing paranormal phenomena, which he was determined to explore and explain.

Early in his career he was championed and encouraged by the pioneering Sigmund Freud, who secured his appointment as president of his newly founded International Psychoanalytical Association, but they soon went their separate ways, because their ideas were incompatible. Jung was disappointed at the schism, but it resulted eventually in the establishment of his own analytical psychology as an all-encompassing system separate from psychoanalysis.

He published many books, including the highly controversial *Answer to Job*; some of his work, such as his mysterious *Red Book*, remains unpublished.

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Solutions on page 31

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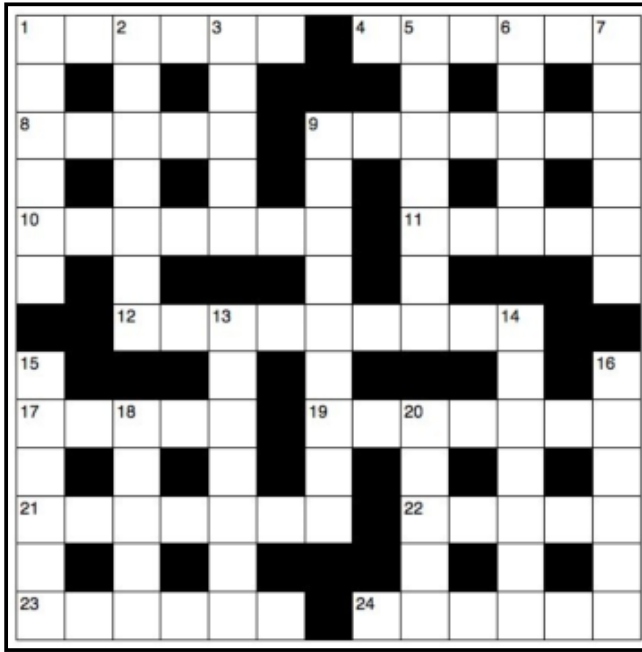
JUNE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1 Military tactic used by Joshua to attack and destroy the city of Ai (Joshua 8:2) (6)
- 4 Place of learning (6)
- 8 'When Moses' hands grew — , they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it' (Exodus 17:12) (6)
- 9 Unpleasant auguries of the end of the age, as forecast by Jesus (Matthew 24:7) (7)
- 10 Stronghold to which girls in King Xerxes' harem (including Esther) were taken (Esther 2:8) (7)
- 11 Where Saul went to consult a medium before fighting the Philistines (1 Samuel 28:7) (5)
- 12 Propitiation (Hebrews 2:17) (9)
- 17 Turn away (Jeremiah 11:15) (5)
- 19 So clear (anag.) (7)
- 21 'I have just got — , so I can't come': one excuse to be absent from the great banquet (Luke 14:20) (7)
- 22 Long weapon with a pointed head used by horsemen (Job 39:23) (5)
- 23 Musical beat (6)
- 24 What the Israelites were told to use to daub blood on their door-frames at the first Passover (Exodus 12:22) (6)

Down

- 1 Fasten (Exodus 28:37) (6)
- 2 Art bite (anag.) (7)
- 3 'The people of the city were divided; some — with the Jews, others with the apostles' (Acts 14:4) (5)



- 5 Contend (Jeremiah 12:5) (7)
- 6 Possessed (Job 1:3) (5)
- 7 Sheen (Lamentations 4:1) (6)
- 9 ' You love evil rather than good, — rather than speaking the truth' (Psalm 52:3) (9)
- 13 Large flightless bird (Job 39:13) (7)
- 14 They were worth several hundred pounds each (Matthew 25:15) (7)
- 15 'A — went out to sow his seed' (Matthew 13:3) (6)
- 16 How Jesus described Jairus's daughter when he went into the room where she lay (Mark 5:39) (6)
- 18 The part of the day when the women went to the tomb on the first Easter morning (John 20:1) (5)
- 20 Narrow passageway between buildings (Luke 14:21) (5)

(Solutions on page 31)

ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL



Beware the summer strawberry tea

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Never, ever feel aggrieved that your summer strawberry tea has to be held in the church hall rather than on a lawn, since there isn't a single blade of grass to be found in your entire parish. You have no idea of the potential calamities you are avoiding.

Here, during the previous week, the organisers will be desperately asking the opinion of local farmers about the weather. In doing so, they forget that for the farming community, it is always the wrong sort of weather anyway. I once received a heartfelt plea from the staff at Heathrow airport for our ladies to stop calling them at hourly intervals to find out if hurricanes may be imminent.

Naturally, the day will start out warm and sunny and so all the tables will be arranged on the vicarage lawn. By 10am, tablecloths will have been laid. By 10.10am, a brisk breeze will have sprung up and someone will be delegated to retrieve them all from deep within the nettle patch. By 11am, clouds will gather and a decision will be made to transfer everything into the church hall. Once that is completed, just when it is almost too late to change, the sun will re-emerge and there will be a frantic dash to put everything back on the lawn. This ensures that by 2pm when teas start, the ladies will already be in a state of collapse.

Last year, the dowager duchess of Trilby graced us with her presence. As she sat with her entourage, elegantly sipping tea under a giant parasol over the table, the thing – equally elegantly – closed around

her, leaving her looking like one of those unfortunate insects trapped by a carnivorous plant. To emerge from its depths looking entirely unflustered was beyond even her social skills.

Fortunately, attention was diverted from her predicament by the wife of one of our farmers. This substantial lady had been sitting in a chair with slightly too thin legs for the damp lawn. The rear two slowly sank into the grass, eventually catapulting the dear lady backwards into the lap of the local mayor. Disentangling red flannelette from mayoral chains took some time, and delicacy.

At least when I have had enough, the lawn can be cleared in minutes by drawing the raffle. The moment the last rubber shower cap and set of Christmas doilies has been awarded, there will be a dash to get home, giving my dog the opportunity to retrieve remnants of cream cakes from the flower beds.

Your loving uncle

Eustace



*...I think I must have missed that module
when I was at theological college!*

GOD AND THE ARTS

By The Rev Michael Burgess

'I do not know the man', the fearful Peter said



At the end of this month, on 28th June, we celebrate two of the great saints of the early church: Peter and Paul. We might relate more easily to Peter because his humanity and vulnerability spill out of the pages of the New Testament in everything he said and did. Peter was a fisherman, who was impetuous and headstrong, not once, but over and over again, saying one thing, and doing another. And yet our Lord chose Peter as the rock on which He would build His church, and at Caesarea Philippi Peter acknowledges that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Then, when Jesus is arrested, the same Peter in the High Priest's court-

yard declares with an oath, 'I do not know the man.'

That denial is in all four Gospels. We might have expected the evangelists would have had greater respect for this follower of Jesus. But they are not intimidated by his later fame and importance, and they record the episode in vivid detail.

That episode is recorded by Duccio in this month's painting, 'Christ before the High Priest and the Denial of Peter.' Duccio worked in Siena in the late 13th and 14th centuries. In his paintings Jesus and the saints are no longer remote, austere figures: he portrays them in a natural, simple way. His greatest work was a series of 45 panels called the Maesta.

This month's picture is the first painting to depict Jesus' trial and Peter's denial together. The scene is a two-storey building: the figures above, apart from the High Priest, are all on their feet. Below, the figures are all seated, with the exception of the serving girl. Notice the wonderful array of hair styles and beards that are typical of Duccio's work.

In the painting Peter is recognisable by his halo, like Jesus above. He is in a direct line below Jesus, but just look at the contrast between the two. Jesus is standing with His hands bound in front of Him and His head to one side. Peter below is seated, looking straight at the girl, raising his hand to protest his ignorance and warming his feet by the fire. It needed courage for Peter to be there, but the Gospels tell us how quickly his vulnerability is exposed. As he answers the questions and reveals his Galilean accent, he starts to curse. He denies Jesus three times, and the scene ends in bitter tears. For all the bravado, a human, broken figure leaves the scene.

On his feast day we rejoice in that humanity of Peter, which brought him low, but encouraged him to try again. In Duccio's painting his denial takes place by the fire of the courtyard. It will be by another fire lit on the shore of the sea of Tiberias that Peter will be asked another three questions – not by a serving girl, but by Jesus. This time he will respond with affirmation, knowing that his Lord has come in resurrection glory to bring a new way forward for him and for everyone as He offers life in abundance.

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9th

Ephrem the Syriac, prolific hymn writer



Ephrem the Syriac was born 306AD in Nisibis, Turkey. Baptised in 324, he joined the cathedral school in Nisibis, where it was soon obvious that he had an outstanding gift for writing both music and lyrics.

In an age of widespread illiteracy, he saw that hymns could be powerful carriers of orthodox Christianity. His poetry was so powerful, and his melodies so evocative, that soon his hymns were spreading far and wide across the Roman Empire. And wherever they went, his hymns took the Christian gospel along with them.

Some of Ephrem's hymns were written to refute heretical ideas, while others praised the beauty of the life of Christ. To Ephrem, everything around us could become a reminder of the presence of God, and thus an aid to worship.

Ephrem became the most prolific and gifted hymn-writer in all of eastern Christianity. His hundreds of hymns influenced the later development of hymn-writing in both Syriac and Greek Christianity.

Ephrem was also a well-respected Christian theologian and writer, always keen to defend orthodoxy from the widespread heresies of the time. Ephrem stressed that Christ's perfect unity of humanity and divinity represented peace, perfection and salvation.

After Nisibis fell to the Turks in 363, Ephrem fled to Edessa, where he continued to work. But plague struck the city in 373, and while nursing others with the plague Ephrem finally died of it himself on 9th June. But his music lives on - more than 500 of his hymns still survive today.

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COMMON ENGLISH

Over 400 years ago, on 9th June 1549, the Book of Common Prayer was first issued throughout the Church of England. It was called 'Common' because it was in English, the language people used in their everyday lives instead of in Latin which only the priests understood.

Imagine how strange it would be to say prayers in a language you don't understand? You can get an idea of what that is like when you are holiday in a foreign country where you don't speak the language. Some things will seem familiar but there will be long stretches when you don't understand what is going on. And the Book of Common Prayer changed that: suddenly people could understand and take part in the act of worship.



There have been lots of changes in church services over the years but few can have been as major as when our prayers suddenly became 'common'.

COMMON WORDS

Lots of words have 'common' in front of them. What would you add to 'common' to make...

1. Someone who isn't royalty
2. Place in a school where the staff meet
3. A group of countries under the Queen
4. Also known as the European Economic Union
5. Makes you sneeze
6. Is very ordinary



What did the maths book say to the history book?

Boy, do I have problems!



What did the book worm say to the librarian?

Can I burrow this book?



Answers:

1. commoner
2. common room
3. commonwealth
4. common market
5. common cold
6. commonplace

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

-

Weddings

-

Burials

-

Year's mind for June 2020



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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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